

Celebrating the Life of



Lea June Foster

Sunrise
May 15, 1949

Sunset
August 3, 2020

Friday, August 14, 2020 - 10am

UNITY FUNERAL CHAPELS, INC.

2352 8th Avenue • New York, NY 10027

Rev. Lee Arrington, Officiating

Rev. Dr. Eric B. Turner, Organist

Obituary

Lea was born on May 15th, 1949, to Edward and Glenna Rohan. She is the second oldest of four children. Lea was fiercely loyal and protective of those she loved. If there were a battle, Lea is the one you would want on your side. She was always a warrior and grew into an advocate for anyone in need. Lea had an infinite capacity for empathy and was generous to a fault.

Though Lea was a beautiful woman, she grew up feeling like an ugly duckling. She received a lot of unwanted attention, which forced her to hone her defense skills. She was born with blond hair and grey eyes that took on different blue or green hues, depending on what she wore. To blend in, her mother dyed her hair with henna turning it a bright red. Lea was mortified. Lea's awkward stage gave way to her striking good looks though she never truly appreciated how beautiful she was inside and out.

Despite becoming a teenage mom, Lea fought to take care of her children and make a better life.

She left the only home she knew to start a better life in Ohio with her two sons with support from her Uncle Haziell. When she returned to New York, she met and married Lindsey Foster, and their family expanded with the birth of two more boys. After their divorce, she began to focus on her education.

Lea supported herself through five years of college, by cleaning laundry rooms and babysitting. At this time, Lea was now a single mom of six children and was able to graduate with a Bachelor of Arts degree from the College of New Rochelle Magna Cum Laude. Lea was very ambitious and successful in her new career path. She became a Special Education Teacher, then a Truancy Officer. As the only woman in her office, she excelled in an environment of mostly white men. Lea was very proud to achieve the title of Director of the A.I.D.P. (Attendance Improvement Dropout Prevention) program at P.S. 140. In this position, Lea flourished because all of her passions, skills, and positive attributes were utilized to better the school community. Her staff became her school family, and the students became her surrogate children. Lea connected with this community in a way that only she could because she cared so much for every one of them, and they not only felt that but reciprocated. Concurrently, Lea worked weekends at the Catherine Street shelter in the Emergency Assistance Unit. She taught children whose families were waiting to be placed in the New York City shelters. Lea created a haven for them in difficult times. She treated every family with compassion and dignity. Lea did everything in her power to assist them in the time they were there. As always, Lea went above and beyond.

Being diagnosed with AIDS in 1988 was no different. Lea put aside her fears and once again accepted the challenge. She attended an HIV/AIDS support group at United Bronx Parents. True to form, Lea, became the coordinator for that group. For women living with AIDS, Lea was "a model for living"! The New York Times said precisely that in an article written about her and her work there. In the last turn of her career, she set her warrior spirit to advocate for her community, which she did fiercely.

Against all the odds, she surpassed doctor's expectations. Her valiant fight ended August 3rd, 2020, after many years spent lovingly with family and friends. Lea leaves behind: six children, Dervin, Desmond, Derrick, Dushon, Denine and Darneice; one daughter-in-law, Mary; one son-in-law, Leroy; twenty-seven grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren; two sisters, Sharon and Deidre; one brother, Eddie Jr.; four aunts, Sylvia, Lorraine, Beverly and Barbara; a host of nieces, nephews, cousins and godchildren; and all the adopted family and friends.

Order of Service

Processional

Selection

Scripture Readings

Prayer

Selection

Acknowledgements

Remarks

Obituary

Selection

Eulogy

Committal

Viewing

Recessional

Interment
Trinity Mausoleum
New York, New York

I'm Free

Don't grieve for me, for now I'm free,
I'm following the path God laid for me.
I took his hand when I heard his call,
I turned my back and left it all.

I could not stay another day,
To laugh, to love, to work, to play.
Tasks left undone must stay that way,
I've found that peace at the close of the day.

If my parting has left a void,
Then fill it with remembered joy.
A friendship shared, a laugh, a kiss,
Ah yes, these things I too will miss.

Be not burdened with times of sorrow,
I wish you the sunshine of tomorrow.
My Life's been full, I savoured much,
Good friends, good times, a loved one's touch,

Perhaps my time seemed all too brief,
Don't lengthen it now with undue grief.
Lift up your heart and share with me,
God wanted me now, He set me free.

Acknowledgement

*The family acknowledges with deep appreciation all acts of kindness extended to them during this bereavement hour.
May God bless you for all your thoughtfulness and concern.*

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