



## Debra May Dean-Ciriani

February 12, 2017

Debra Dean-Ciriani died of cancer on February 12, 2017, at her home in West Hartford, Conn. She was 66 years old. Debra Dean-Ciriani was born on September 27, 1950, in St. Cloud, Minn. She was the daughter of the late Priscilla Baston Dean and Donald Albert Dean, and step-daughter of the late Kathryn Freund Dean. After graduating from St. Cloud Technical High School, she attended Stephens College, a women's college located in Columbia, Missouri, where she received a B.A. in voice. Upon graduation she moved to New York City to pursue an operatic career. She attended the Juilliard School of Music and procured her first professional contract singing Handel's Messiah at age 24. Of her 16 years in New York City, she spent close to two and a half years in Germany. She sang 22 roles, 6 oratorios and 6 concert recitals. During her last permanence in Germany she met her husband, and two and a half years later they were married in West Hartford, Conn., where her husband had found employment. There she went back to study, and obtained her Master in Music at the University of Hartford. Her daughter was born in 1990, and eight years later the family moved to Solighetto, Italy. Debra acquired double citizenship, learned the language, and started working as a private and public school teacher of English. After returning to the Hartford area in 2006, Debra started pursuing a master's program in Marriage and Family Therapy at Central Connecticut State University. While attending school, she was diagnosed with breast cancer and received treatment, never interrupting her studies. Upon graduation in 2010, she found immediate employment as a

licensed marriage and family therapist at the Bridge Family Center, West Hartford, Conn. In 2013, the cancer metastasized in the bones. At the beginning of 2015 she left the Bridge, and went into private practice with two colleagues, opening an office in Canton, CT. At the end of 2015 the cancer metastasized in the brain. She is survived by her husband Giovanni M. Ciriani, a daughter Anna P. Ciriani Dean, and two sisters Susan L. Dean and Sandra D. Zwilling. Calling hours will be held on Friday, February 17, 2017 from 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM. in St. Thomas the Apostle Church, 872 Farmington Avenue, West Hartford, Conn. A Mass of Christian Burial will take place on Saturday, February 18, 2017 at 10:00 AM. in St. Thomas the Apostle Church. Burial will be private and at the convenience of Debra's family. Expression of sympathy may be made online at [www.molloyfuneralhome.com](http://www.molloyfuneralhome.com).

In Lieu of flowers donations may be made to the Nature Conservancy or the World Wildlife Fund.

Nature Conservancy at [www.nature.org/donate](http://www.nature.org/donate) or CT Chapter, 55 Church St., Floor 3, New Haven, CT 06510-3029.

World Wildlife Fund at [www.supportworldwildlife.org](http://www.supportworldwildlife.org) or P.O. Box 97180, Washington, D.C. 20090-7180

# Previous Events

## Calling Hours

FEB **17**. 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

St. Thomas the Apostle  
872 Farmington Ave.  
West Hartford, CT  
(860) 233-8269

## Mass of Christian Burial

FEB **18**. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

St. Thomas the Apostle Church  
872 Farmington Ave.  
West Hartford, CT 06119  
(860) 233-8269

# Tribute Wall

GS

“ *In memory of Debra May Dean Ciriani on her birthday, 9/27, from a friend from long ago- Greg . R. Sonderman*

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**Greg R. Sonderman** - September 27, 2021 at 11:13 AM

BO

“ *Debra m'a vraiment impressionné quand je l'ai rencontré, par son charisme et le charme fou qu'elle dégageait, c'était il y a 5 ans, avec un duo d'une rare complicité, d'admiration et de sensualité avec sa fille "love as got a fresh strawberry taste" je crois.  
Paix à votre âme et à celle de toute la famille.*



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**Bonato** - February 21, 2017 at 12:33 PM

PP

“ *To Debra, our beloved ray of sunshine, thanks for the memories.*

*And to Giovanni, Anna, Susan, and Sandy, thanks for sharing her with us.*

*-- with our love and gratitude, Pam and Mary Pietz*

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**Pam Pietz** - February 20, 2017 at 10:30 AM

CR

“ *Debra will truly be missed, "This too shall pass" is mantra that will be with me forever because of her sage advice and kind words. I am so sorry for your loss.*

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**Craig** - February 17, 2017 at 02:18 PM

 Julie House

“ I truly admired Debra from the moment i met her. She was an extraordinary woman. I envied her passion for life and her nonstop drive! She impacted my life in the most positive way. I was blessed to have had her as a friend! -Julie House

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**Julie House** - February 17, 2017 at 10:44 AM

 GC

Thank you Julie: she did care about you!

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**Giovanni Ciriani** - February 21, 2017 at 08:16 AM

 GC

“ Please, Debra asked not to send flowers. Debra wanted donations to The Nature Conservancy and to the WWF (World Wildlife Fund).

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**Giovanni Ciriani** - February 17, 2017 at 08:52 AM

 MC

“ Debra was a beautiful, vibrant, generous and intelligent woman. She had a warm smile and an encouraging word for everyone. She spread light and joy to all those around her. I have so many wonderful memories of time spent with Debra and Anna when our children were infants and toddlers. She had a joy of life that was precious. My deepest sympathies and prayers for Giovanni, Anna and her family. Our thoughts and prayers are with you.

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**mary carey** - February 17, 2017 at 07:57 AM

DB

“ Debra was our Marriage & Family Therapist and such an amazing one at that !  
She counseled and comforted us all (me & my family members) after we went through my husband's difficult cancer battle and then my two sons' depression and post-traumatic stresses from that, and from other traumas of close people in our lives passing away tragically. Also, my mother-in-law (my husband's mother and my boys' grandmother) had passed away from Breast-Bone-Brain Cancer and my father-in-law (husband's father and my boys' grandfather) passed away from Pancreatic Cancer, so we went through those battles too, and saw them through hospice care. Debra came to me like a Gift from God. I called the Bridge Family Center desperately looking for help and a therapist during a very bad time, and she was the one who called me back on the phone and spoke for a while with me. She was very much wanting to help us. She had shared that she too had also fought cancer and knew personally about those struggles, with and following chemotherapy, radiation and surgery. She also understood the toll it takes on loved ones, and all about everyone's suffering. The more we spoke, the more I knew that SHE was the therapist who I really wanted my family to work with. She did not disappoint one bit. She understood and she validated our pains. She was truly an exceptionally knowledgeable and caring therapist, rather outstanding actually, in so many ways, as she worked with us for several years through some challenging battles. Our deepest warm comforting thoughts go out to her husband Giovanni & to her daughter Anna at this time, & all who knew her, as I know Debra would do this and want this....and for everyone to be at peace and keep a part of her in them. I also knew Debra not only as therapist, but as a person who dearly loved her husband and daughter. She spoke with deep affection about them often during our sessions

*together. Debra was for us a real Angel in LIFE and likely she was this for so many other people too. She very genuinely cared for others and for their pain. She was an amazing therapist to us who brought a very positive light to our situation (s), who helped us greatly and inspired us to open up with each other about our pain and grief, to own it, to be passionate about it, then to move on to enjoy life again. She will be surely missed, but never forgotten.*

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**Deborah Breeding** - February 16, 2017 at 04:46 AM



“ *Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Debra May Dean-Ciriani.*



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February 15, 2017 at 03:26 PM



“ *Deb was a source of caring and guidance for me during some very hard times. Her love and positive energy flowed from her... She was a great friend and source of inspiration for me , and I'll never forget the life lessons she taught me. Thanks Deb. My condolences to her family and friends... She was a special person.*

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**Leonard Duffy** - February 15, 2017 at 12:54 PM



“ *A beautiful friend....love you so much!!*

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**Anne Haubert** - February 15, 2017 at 11:48 AM



“ *Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Debra May Dean-Ciriani.*



February 15, 2017 at 11:44 AM



“ *Words cannot begin to express how saddened we are to hear of her passing. She was an amazing person and is deeply missed. The video tribute was wonderful to watch and we were all smiles to see how full of life she was. Heaven has gained another angel. Rest in Peace Debra and know that you will be forever loved and missed.*

**Keyon Gardner** - February 15, 2017 at 09:42 AM

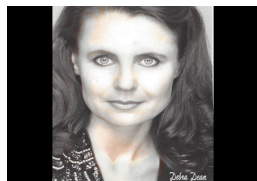


*I met Debra 3 times with my daughter who love her so much still can't understand why God takes the good once so soon. She was a wonderful strong woman who help my family in so many ways. She will be miss by my family and I know by a lot more, Debra we will miss you, keep up the good work beside our father and saver your work is done here your new Journey with the lord being now...*

**Mark Brown** - February 15, 2017 at 01:58 PM



“ *1 file added to the album Debra Videos*



**Giovanni Ciriani** - February 14, 2017 at 02:33 PM

KK

*This is such an amazing and beautiful tribute to Debbie, and the whole Dean/Ciriani family. So much life, so much love, so much happiness! Thank you for sharing this touching, heartfelt journey. Debbie will be greatly missed and always remembered.*

*With much love, and deep sadness, Kate Kalkman*

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**Kate Kalkman** - February 15, 2017 at 02:44 PM

JB

*Debra was one of the nicest people I ever met. I worked with her for two years. Each and every day, Debra came over to my desk to say hello to me and greet me with a hello, a smile and a kind word. From the first time I met her I knew that she was an extremely kind and genuine person. She made everyone around her feel good. Debra was my friend and today my heart hurts. Debra will be sorely missed, but she would want me to keep smiling and live my life to the fullest, just as she did. God Bless you Debra, may you rest in peace. You will be sorely missed. Love your friend, Joe Barbino*

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**Joe Barbino** - February 16, 2017 at 12:47 PM

RT

“ *To the Dean and Ciriani Families,*

*We send to you from Italy our thoughts and prayers and even though we are far away, we are close to you in this moment. Rob and Sheryl Turping*

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**Rob and Sheryl Turping** - February 14, 2017 at 08:31 AM

UG

“ *Caro Giovanni,  
Di Debra e dei 2 anni passati a NY conserverò sempre il ricordo del suo contagioso sorriso e della sua vitalità, che immagino abbia fatto la felicità tua e di molti altri.*

*Un forte abbraccio.....Ugo*

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**ugo** - February 13, 2017 at 09:29 AM

GC

*Grazie Ugo, un abbraccio.*

**Giovanni Ciriani** - February 13, 2017 at 09:37 AM

VC

*The video is precious beyond words. LIFE and LOVE shines through! She was a gift to all. Vicki Campbell*

**Vicki Campbell** - February 13, 2017 at 11:37 PM

GC

“ *Please no flowers. Debra wanted donations to The Nature Conservancy and to the WWF (World Wildlife Fund).*

**Giovanni Ciriani** - February 13, 2017 at 07:01 AM



“ *Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Debra May Dean-Ciriani.*



February 12, 2017 at 09:03 PM



“ *Be My Love Bouquet with Red Roses was purchased for the family of Debra May Dean-Ciriani.*



February 12, 2017 at 08:04 PM

GC

“ A family tree can be found at Ancestry.com, link <http://trees.ancestry.com/tree/40941902/family?cfpid=19555631769&selnode=1> and signing in with user name Giovanni.Ciriani@gmail.com, password 123456, or with your own username.

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**Giovanni Ciriani** - February 12, 2017 at 05:57 PM

GC

“ 1 file added to the album Debra Videos



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**Giovanni Ciriani** - February 12, 2017 at 04:17 PM