

Celebration of Life

1:00 PM
Saturday, October 25, 2025
Ray & Marthas Funeral Home
Hobart, Oklahoma

Officiant

Rev. Kelly Smith

Eulogy

John Brown

Gathering of Remembrance

Following the Celebration of Life the family would like to invite everyone to the Stanley Building in Hobart, Oklahoma



Remembering the Life of



Terrri Jo Hopson

May 21, 1957 ~ September 22, 2025

Under the direction of Ray & Martha's Funeral Home, Hobart, Oklahoma

Terri Jo Hopson, 68, was born on May 21, 1957, to Nina (Hunn) Hopson and Pete Hopson in Hobart, Oklahoma. She graduated from Hobart High School, and she discovered her lifelong love of music as a proud member of the Hobart High School Band. That passion continued at the University of Oklahoma, where she played in the Oklahoma University Marching Band and through this she was able to form many long-lasting friendships.

After college, Terri began a long and rewarding career in theater arts, working at various venues in Oklahoma City. She worked at the Lincoln Plaza Playhouse before moving west to pursue new opportunities within performing arts career. Her journey took her to Reno, Nevada, and eventually to San Luis Obispo, California, where she worked at the Cal Poly Performing Arts Center until her retirement. Following retirement, Terri returned briefly to Tulsa, Oklahoma, but her deep love for the Central Coast of California drew her back in 2020. She lived and worked in Nipomo, California, where she continued to embrace life, friendship, and creativity until her passing. She was known for her warmth, quick wit, adventurous spirit, and her love for her three fur babies Buttons, Asia, and Pippin. She loved Broadway shows in New York City, toes in the sand on beaches in Mexico, and she had a lifelong love for all animals especially dogs. Her smile and laughter could light up a room and bring joy to those who surrounded her. Terri's life was a celebration of art, friendship, and courage — a testament to following one's heart and living authentically. She will be remembered for her talent, her kindness, and the joy she brought to others.

Left to honor the memory of Terri is her very special friend, John Brown, along with many dear friends and family who loved her deeply. Her Oklahoma friends, Cloretta Sutton, Maria Edwards, Molly Nagel, and Paula Hanner Wilson. Her Central Coast friends, Maria Chavez, Merilou Chavez (her goddaughter), and Merikay Guhring and the Guhring family. Her New York City friends, Sunny Patel and Giovanni Bana. Family members, Rick and Diane Hopson of Hobart, Amy and James Rudkins of Hobart, Beau and Tracy Hopson of Edmond, Jade and Jarrod Molloy of Agra, Todd and Jessi Burrows of Hobart, and numerous great nieces and great nephews.

She was greeted at heaven's gates by her parents, Nina and Pete Hopson; sister-in-law, Joyce Hopson; and beloved fur baby, Buttons.

Tributes to Terri

John, NY, NY

Terri was an amazing person who brought so much joy and laughter to her friends in New York. She had a knack for making deep connections with people, especially through shared interests like dogs, theater, and college football. Her warmth and humor made everyone feel special and loved.

Terri's kindness and thoughtfulness were legendary. She was always there to support her friends, and many considered her family. Her generosity and ability to make others feel understood left a lasting impact on everyone she met.

Even though her friends are heartbroken by her passing, they find comfort in knowing she's at peace now. Terri's memory will always be cherished, and her positive influence will be remembered fondly by all who knew her. Her friends will forever treasure the moments they shared with her and the profound impact she had on their lives.

Judy, NY, NY

Terri was my newest "old friend," introduced to me through John.

Within the first ten minutes, it was clear we shared a special connection — bonded by our love of dogs and the gift of gab. She will be deeply missed.

Greg, NY, NY

Although I only knew Terri for four years, we quickly discovered our common ground in college football and our love of dogs. During her last visit to New York, she delighted in teasing John about his new "BFF," Fran Drescher from The Nanny. Later, she texted me a photo of the two of them together, urging me to keep the joke going. That was Terri — full of laughter, warmth, and playfulness.

I will always remember her happy spirit, her infectious laughter, and the way she made others feel special. Rest in peace, sweet Terri. You're with your baby Buttons now.

Sunny, NY, NY

I first met Tia Terri in 2020 when she was visiting John in New York, and from that very first meeting, she felt like family. Over the years, we became theater buddies and spent countless hours talking about the stage, our beloved fur babies, politics, and life.

Our phone calls — often lasting one to two hours — became a cherished weekly ritual that I will miss more than words can say. Tia was one of the kindest, funniest, and most thoughtful people I have ever known. She had a rare gift for making others feel loved and understood, and she will always be family to me.

My world won't be the same without her, and my theater experiences will never feel complete without her by my side.

Giovanni, NY, NY

Terri will be deeply missed for her contagious happiness and positivity. She was a joyful soul, always loving, supportive, and generous with her friendship. Her radiant smile and kind spirit were a true gift to all of us who had the privilege of knowing her.

Isonna, NY, NY

Thinking of Terri in utter disbelief. It was not her time. But Terri has no more worries or pain — because of where she is now. Rest in peace, sweet Terri. Wishing comfort and strength to all who loved her. With love.

The Summer of '75: Beginnings in Walker Tower

It was the summer of 1975 when fate—and a pot-luck roommate assignment—brought Terri into my life at the University of Oklahoma. Both of us had just graduated from small-town high schools and were bravely venturing into summer school, eager to adjust to the rhythm and energy of a large university campus.

Terri had already staked her claim in our shared room in Walker Tower when my parents and I arrived. There she sat, confidently perched atop the built-in drawers, sipping a cold Pabst Blue Ribbon. With a casual flourish, she downed the last of her beer, let out a burp that could have rattled the windows, crushed the can one-handed, and launched it into the trash with effortless style. My mother was utterly speechless—but that unconventional introduction was the spark that ignited a friendship lasting fifty years.

A Friendship for the Ages

From that very first moment, my mom and Terri formed a bond that only grew stronger over the years. United by a shared love of musicals, their laughter filled countless rooms and theaters. Even as my mom reached the age of 95, she embraced the modern world of emojis, all because Terri insisted it made texting more fun. Their intergenerational connection was a testament to Terri's infectious enthusiasm and warmth.

Terri is one of those rare friends whose presence enriches every chapter of your life. She was there through every milestone: celebrating my marriages, lifting me up during the greatest triumphs, and grounding me when life felt uncertain. Her loyalty was unwavering, her support unconditional. Once Terri let you into her heart, she held on tight—her love never faltered.

California Dreams and Hometown Roots

Terri's spirit was adventurous, her love for California boundless. Whether soaking up the sun at the beach, doting on her beloved dogs, immersing herself in theater, or embarking on a new adventure, she found joy in every experience. Yet, wherever she roamed, Hobart remained close to her heart. Family, lifelong friends, and the legendary Bigga Burger were her anchors—reminders of the place and people she cherished most.

The Gift of Terri's Love

To have known Terri was a blessing; to have been loved by her was an extraordinary privilege. Her loyalty, humor, and kindness touched everyone around her. Terri's legacy is not only found in the stories we share, but in the enduring bonds she created across generations and geographies.

As we celebrate Terri's life and friendship, we carry her memory forward—cherishing her laughter, her wisdom, and the unique joy she brought into our lives. We are all lucky to have known her, and even luckier to have been loved by her.

Written by Maria Edwards Wilkinson

Struggling with Loss

It's difficult to come to terms with Terri's passing. The grief lingers, and I find myself wishing that I had taken the time to express how much I admired her—her talent, her unwavering dedication to the arts, and her ability to inspire everyone around her. The words I never said weigh heavily, reminding me of the importance of sharing appreciation while we have the chance.

Courage to Follow Her Passion

Terri was fearless in how she pursued her love of music and the creative world. She built a life around doing what she loved most, showing a rare kind of courage and heart. I often reflect on how brave she was to venture out on her own, to carve out her own path, and to stay true to herself. That strength and independence made her a role model to me and many others. I wish I had told her just how much I admired those qualities.

A Thank You Left Unsaid

Looking back, I wish I had taken a private moment to thank Terri for all the help she gave me in band. She was a guiding light—everyone recognized her musical prowess and depended on her for encouragement and advice. Her generosity and willingness to support her friends never went unnoticed, even if those acknowledgments were left unsaid.

Memories at the Piano

I can still vividly picture Terri sitting at the piano in the old high school auditorium, effortlessly playing during lunch breaks. Lost in the music, she seemed at peace and completely herself. Whenever I hear Elton John's "Bennie and the Jets," those memories come flooding back—the way her fingers danced across the keys, the joy she radiated, and the admiration I felt. That song will forever be intertwined with my memories of Terri.

Holding on to the Good Times

Grief may soften with time, but the memories remain. I know that whenever I think of Terri, I will smile at the recollection of all the silly and wonderful moments we shared. The laughter, the music, and the joy she brought into our lives continue to be a source of comfort and inspiration.

Let us cherish those good times and remember Terri for the vibrant spirit she was—for the happiness, creativity, and encouragement she offered to everyone around her. Her legacy lives on through the joy and music she shared, and she will always hold a special place in our hearts.

Written by Chloretta Sutton

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Written by Chloretta Sutton

Terri's Light

*Terri was laughter, Terri was light,
A spark in the day, a star in the night.
Rebellious in spirit, yet gentle in soul,
She gave of herself—her heart made us whole.
Resilient and steady, courageous and strong,
She lifted our lives like a radiant song.
Playful and giving, generous, true,
She brightened the world for me and for you.
Her smile was sunshine, her laughter a flame,
She carried us forward, she called us by name.
Protective, supportive, dependable, kind,
She lifted our hearts, she opened our minds.
Effervescent, radiant, extroverted, free,
She showed us the way love's meant to be.
Though we feel loss and heavy with tears,
Her joy will echo through all of our years.
For Terri was love, and Terri was grace,
Her spirit lives on in each warm embrace.
We'll carry her laughter, her courage, her song—
A gift in our hearts that will last ever long.*

Author: John Brown

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