



Deborah Kay Scates

June 28, 1956 - May 12, 2025

In Loving Memory of Deborah Scates (Hamman)

Deborah “Debbie” Scates (Hamman), of Trumbull, Connecticut, passed away peacefully, surrounded by her loving family, after a courageous battle with cancer.

Debbie was born on June 28, 1956, in Cortez, Colorado, and raised with her two sisters by their loving father, Louis Hamman. In 1964, the family moved to Fort Collins, CO. The following year, Lou married Helen M. Knaus, who brought five sons into their home, forming a spirited and tightly knit blended family.

In 1975, Debbie moved east and married the love of her life, James Scates. Together, they shared a remarkable 50-year journey. Debbie began her career as a construction-site manager, overseeing the building of major department stores, blazing a trail in a field rarely led by women at the time. She later found a calling for a profession that would forever change her life. Debbie began her career at the Hartford Police Academy with aspirations of joining the mounted unit. When the unit was later disbanded, she adapted with resilience and determination, going on to serve as a Detective in the Vice Narcotics Division. There, for over a decade, she worked undercover, bravely protecting women caught in the grips of trafficking and exploitation. Deeply committed, she also advocated for bringing horses back to Hartford to promote community connections and engagement with the horses. Eventually, Debbie returned to her true passion when the Hartford Mounted Police Unit

was reinstated, serving there until her retirement in 2016. Debbie continued her advocacy in retirement by educating university students about human trafficking, contributing meaningful discourse and mentoring future professionals in law, public service, and beyond. Debbie's warmth, wisdom, and strength left a mark on everyone she met. Loyal, nurturing, generous, and deeply intuitive, she had a gift for knowing exactly what was needed, always showing up for others. Whether it was stable duties, mentoring others, or snuggling her grandkids while sharing videos and photos of her beloved horse Krym, Debbie gave her whole heart. She was a pillar of love and strength in the lives of her family. Her greatest joys were her children and grandchildren, whom she adored.

Debbie is survived by her beloved husband of 50 years, James E. Scates; her daughter Jaimee Fitzpatrick (Drew), and Grandchildren Tiernan and Raegan of Jenkintown, PA; her son Bryan Scates of San Francisco, CA; her sisters Sharon Hamman (Terry) and Janet Gablehouse (Darrel); and her brothers Stephen Knaus, Timothy Knaus (Johnette), Gregory Knaus (Anne), and Theodore Knaus. She is also remembered with love by her many nieces, nephews, great-nieces and great-nephews, and a circle of family, friends, and horse community members whose lives she deeply touched.

A celebration of Debbie's life will be shared at a later date. In lieu of flowers, donations in Debbie's memory may be made to the Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence, an organization that reflects her lifelong dedication to protecting and empowering others.

Debbie's legacy lives on through every life she touched—with strength, heart, and grace.

Cemetery Details

Private

Events

Details are pending.

Tribute Wall



“ I am so very sad to hear about Deb. I knew her as a partner to my brother Thomas Toohey with the Hartford Police Department. We communicated a lot over Toohey the horse named after my Fallen Hero brother and her horse. I am very sad to hear this but my prayers and thoughts to every family member there.

Kathleen Andersen (Toohey) - June 27, 2025 at 06:03 PM



I met Debbie and Bushnell Park when she was on Cody and I was walking Scarlet the dog. A couple weeks later I saw Deb again on Trinity Street. I had Scarlet and Lucey Deb got a picture of Cody and Scarlet. It's the cutest picture ever of Scarlett giving Cody a kiss. Deb was an awesome Hartford police officer. And was very dedicated to her job. Pictures of the dogs with the horses pop up in my history. Now that Deb is gone, they mean a lot more to me than ever before. I'm sending my deepest condolences to her family and all of her friends. Kate Molloy.

Kate Molloy - June 27, 2025 at 06:40 PM