



Kelly Dee Akers

October 9, 1957 - September 7, 2024

Kelly Dee Akers was born on October 9, 1957, in Beckley, West Virginia to Ray and Carolyn Akers. As a young girl, Kelly was a well-mannered, responsible, and overall happy child. Her father Ray was in the Air Force, so her family moved several times in her early years. After leaving West Virginia, they lived at Fort Bliss in El Paso, Texas; Turner Air Force Base in Albany, Georgia; McCoy Air Force Base in Orlando, Florida; and finally settled at Robins Air Force Base in Warner Robins, Georgia in 1973.

Kelly was one of four children. She had a twin sister, Terry, and two younger siblings, Mark and Jayme. Other than moving several times, the Akers children had a relatively normal childhood. As the eldest sister (by ten minutes), Kelly embraced her role of helping, teaching and guiding her siblings in many ways. She enjoyed all the “girly” things: making cheer and dance routines, practicing makeup on her sisters, painting their nails, and teaching them how to use hot rollers to do their hair.

In high school, Kelly was a good student and friendly with everyone. During the week, she bagged groceries at the base commissary after school, and on the weekends, she enjoyed spending her time (and earnings) going to the high school football games, the movies, bowling, or shopping! In 1975, Kelly began attending Middle Georgia College, where she earned her associate’s degree in business. She continued her education at Georgia Southern University in 1977 and earned a bachelor’s degree in business administration. For a short time after college, Kelly worked at the JC Penny makeup counter,

before taking a typing test and starting a job as a secretary at Robins Air Force Base.

In 1985, while working in the Robins Air Force Base safety office, Kelly met an Air Force pilot named Joe Hollenberg. A little over a year after meeting, Kelly and Joe were married on February 28, 1987. Less than a year later, they welcomed their first daughter, Eva, on December 17, 1987. In the spring of 1988, they were transferred to Andrews Air Force Base, just outside of Washington, D.C. Soon after their arrival, Kelly began working for the Defense Technical Information Center (DTIC) in Cameron Station, Virginia; and on December 2, 1990, they welcomed their second daughter, Erica.

In the years following, Kelly immersed herself in being a mother and working full time as a Program Analyst in the Resource Management Division of the DTIC, a central repository for all Department of Defense technical information. Her work was something she enjoyed doing and did well, but being a mother and raising her daughters was a role she loved more than anything else.

Kelly was a kind, patient, and loving mother. She devoted everything she had to her children and her family. When Eva and Erica were young, they spent many weekends going to Washington, D.C. to visit the museums, the zoo and the beautiful monuments the city had to offer. They also made frequent trips to New York and Georgia to visit their extended family. And every summer they spent one week in Emerald Isle, North Carolina enjoying the beach. As the girls got older, both began following their dreams of playing soccer. Kelly became (what we now call) a "soccer mom." From the multiple practices each week, to games near and far every weekend, the family dove into the soccer world. While it required a lot of time and financial sacrifices, it brought Kelly, Joe, and the girls immense joy. Their soccer teams were an extension of their family, and they made many memories during those years. Both girls eventually continued their careers playing collegiate soccer at Eastern Kentucky University (Eva) and the University of Virginia (Erica). Kelly, once again, dedicated her weekends to traveling to watch them play, and could often be seen on the sidelines with her camera and tripod taking thousands of

pictures. She was a proud mom!

In May of 2011, after working for the Department of Defense for 30 years, Kelly happily accepted an opportunity for early retirement. In the years to follow, she was able to devote all her time to doing what she loved. She got to see both of her daughters get married, enjoyed driving her gold convertible with the top down, spent time with her dogs, Tyson and Ziva, and traveled to many countries. She rode a camel in Morocco, took a dip in the sky lagoon in Iceland, drank fine wine in Italy, enjoyed her favorite authentic Greek salads in Greece, rode in a hot air balloon over Cappadocia, Türkiye, and always made sure to take a picture doing her famous “Miss America Leap” in each place she visited. She loved staying up late watching movies, drinking spicy margaritas, spending hours shopping, and chatting with her friends and family on the phone.

While Kelly managed to enjoy many amazing things in her life, becoming “Kakes,” was perhaps her most beloved role. She adored her four granddaughters, Charlotte, Savannah, Amelia, and Avery, and frequently traveled back and forth from Florida to Colorado to visit them. From mornings at playgrounds, days spent at museums, sleepovers, trips to Disney World, walks through the mountains, searching for seashells on the beach, and everything in between, Kelly made the most of her time with them.

On September 7, 2024, at the age of 66, Kelly Dee Akers passed away peacefully in Jupiter, Florida. She is survived by her husband of 37 years, Joe Hollenberg; daughters Eva Hamlin (Cody) and Erica Morales (Ivan); sisters Terry Fiore (Pete) and Jayme Bethea; brother Mark Akers; and granddaughters Charlotte (11), Savannah (10), Amelia (5), and Avery (4). Kelly was a beloved wife, mother, sister, aunt, cousin, grandmother and friend. She was deeply loved by all who knew her and will be missed tremendously. Friends and family are welcome to join in celebrating a life well lived in the coming months. Details to follow.

Tribute Wall

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“ I worked with Kelly at Robins AFB, GA...at the time we were the best of friends.. never a dull moment with this sweet fun lady.. always positive, loved life and she totally lived her life to the fullest, her beautiful obituary says it all.. lifting prayers for her beautiful family, sending hugs and prayers...God bless you all....

Shelby - September 16, 2024 at 11:19 PM