



Heather Ford Whatley

October 13, 1976 - September 3, 2024

The family and friends of Heather Ford Whatley are devastated to announce that she passed away on September 3, 2024.

Heather was the first person to greet everyone when the family gathered, with her full embrace and thousand-watt smile welcoming each person and expressing how good it was to be together. She was the most nurturing person in the family, maybe in the world. She loved people deeply.

Heather was always the first to laugh, as if she was continually waiting to find joy in every situation. What would be an annoyance to someone else was a chance to laugh for her. The bigger the inconvenience, the better the story it would be, and she didn't mind enduring a nuisance if it meant a chance to be a part of the action together.

Heather had a beautiful heart out of which flowed immense creative expression. Over the years, she taught herself to sew, to make candles, and to paint quite well. She could cook a full southern meal like she was born to do it, which was one of many traits she mirrored of her beloved grandma. She could talk to anyone and would feed them in a heartbeat, from cooking for her family to making meals for the work crews when she was on job sites. Her easy demeanor when meeting people was ironic considering she was so afraid of public speaking that she once arranged for her sister to deliver an

assigned presentation for her when she was in nursing school. Crowds were not her thing, but people were. It is no coincidence that she chose careers in the hospitality industry, working in nursing homes, hotels, and restaurants over the years.

Together with Jamie Whatley, Heather had three children. Brennan, Jackson, and Maggie were her greatest delight. When the children were young, she was a stay-at-home mom, homeschooling and supporting them in their sports and activities. As her children grew older, she attempted to return to college but realized she'd had enough credits to graduate all along so she signed up to walk in the commencement activities at Jones County Junior College instead. In recent years, she enjoyed seeing new places while traveling with Bear (Kevin Smith). Her newest love was her grandson, Maverick.

Heather was preceded in death by her father, Jim Ford, and her grandparents, Fred and Imogene Bush. She is survived by the father of her children, Jamie Whatley; her children, Brennan, Jackson, and Maggie; one grandchild; her mother, Diane Cook; her siblings: Bo Ford, Ashley Hamm, Hayley Patterson, Dallas Cook, and Daniel Cook; numerous friends and family; and her loving partner, Bear.

Due to complications arising from the fact that she was traveling out of state with Bear when she passed, arrangements took a long time to be finalized. She would find this hilarious. There will be a viewing on Saturday, September 14, 2024 at 2:00 pm at Memory Chapel Funeral Home in Laurel, MS, where her body will be resting in a casket made by her son, Jackson, before she is cremated per her wishes. She herself is already in her heavenly home, and her family and friends look forward to when she finally greets us again, her big hug and beautiful smile welcoming everyone and celebrating that we are together at last.

To sign the online guest book, visit www.memorychapellaurel.com.

Previous Events

Visitation

SEP **14**. 2:00 PM (CT)

Memory Chapel Funeral Home
3100 Audubon Drive
P. O. Box 674
Laurel, MS 39440
(601) 428-5235
memorychapel@comcast.net
<https://www.memorychapel laurel.com/>

Tribute Wall

SD

“ Stephen D. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Heather Ford Whatley.

Stephen D. - September 15, 2024 at 01:33 AM

LM

“ Lila Whatley & Windy Mercer planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Heather Ford Whatley.

Lila Whatley & Windy Mercer - September 14, 2024 at 11:53 AM

MK

“ Mary Keith-Strange planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Heather Ford Whatley.

Mary Keith-Strange - September 13, 2024 at 02:29 PM



“ Large Basket Garden was purchased for the family of Heather Ford Whatley.



September 13, 2024 at 02:29 PM

MF

“ Mary & Chris Strange and family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Heather Ford Whatley.

Mary & Chris Strange and family - September 13, 2024 at 02:20 PM



“ Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Heather Ford Whatley.



September 13, 2024 at 02:20 PM

GH

“ I've known Heather since she was in jr. high. I remember being asked to help her prepare for an algebra exam. I hadn't thought of algebra in 15 years, but she and I hunkered down and she learned the assignment and did great on the test. She was such a sweet person.

Grant Hedgepeth - September 12, 2024 at 01:06 PM

AW

“ So sorry for your loss. Praying for God's comfort and peace during these times.

Amy Busby Williams - September 12, 2024 at 12:35 PM

SB

“ Prayers for the family

Sharon Barham - September 12, 2024 at 12:09 PM

GR

“ Oh, Diane and family! I don't know what to say other than i'm so very sorry for your loss. May you feel the arms of Jesus wrapped around you tightly holding you.

Geri Duckworth Richie - September 12, 2024 at 12:05 PM