



## Mary Elaine Cleveland

September 1, 1952 - September 25, 2019

Mary (Cowdrey) Cleveland, 67, of Altamonte Springs, Florida, passed away peacefully in the early morning hours of September 25th, after a long fight with Lupus. She was born in Topeka, Kansas on September 1, 1952 to Robert Cowdrey and Olga (Harris) Cowdrey, surrounded by large family of seven brothers and sisters. After a brief stint in Mobile, Alabama, the family settled in the Apopka suburb of Orlando in the '60's and many of those siblings still live in the Central Florida area today raising beautiful families with Mary's many nieces and nephews.

Mary is survived by her two children – daughter Kelly Cleveland and son Brian Cleveland, his wife Holly, and her grandchildren Kennedy, Jasmine, Kelsey and Cameron. The Cowdrey family including sisters Lois Tuckel, Nancy Sanders, and she joins her younger sister Debbie in heaven. Her brothers Rob, Jim and Joe, and all her many cousins, nieces, and nephews around Florida, Kansas and parts in between. She is also survived by her boyfriend Dale Lee, who has been a loving part of her life and our family for 34 years.

We want you to know a little bit about Mary, and she is affectionately known by many names. Laney by her longtime friends and family, Mom by her kids, Mama Cleve by Brian's friends, and Gram or Grammy by her loving grandchildren. Mary was a strong, passionate, loving, supportive, solid rock in the family and always made sure to stay close to her family. She was always

devoted to her immediate family, especially her grandchildren, and took great joy and pleasure watching them grow and excel in life. She had a big heart and would do anything for you, and a strong will and conviction about doing what is right and the causes she believed in. She also had a great sense of humor and our times together always seemed to involve lots of laughter and many funny stories.

She worked hard to raise two children in Altamonte Springs with her former husband Edwin Cleveland, always making sure that we were happy, positive and had what we needed, while probably making many sacrifices for herself. But she also lived life to the fullest! She loved music, travel, and being with family. She especially loved live music, attending hundreds of concerts through the years. She was known to take her kids along to concerts and festivals like Madonna or Rush at a young age and we continue that tradition today at one of her favorite destinations – Jazz Fest in New Orleans! We grew up the only kids probably listening to Earth, Wind and Fire, James Taylor, Stevie Wonder and more, and to that great local Jazz station in Orlando – WLOQ (please bring it back!). We thought that all kids listened to jazz on the way to school. She carried on these passions of music and travel in her many great years of love and living life with Dale.

She also loved the beach, especially New Smyrna Beach. We have many fond memories through the years of the great times we had together there. She was also a great cook, and no one could compare to her signature dishes like a healthy dose of Sausage Biscuits and Gravy or her delicious Banana Pudding. And no Thanksgiving gathering was complete without her Corn Casserole and Broccoli Casserole (and Kelly's deviled eggs!). And finally, she had a special grace and respect for everyone she encountered. This is reflected by her daily encounters with folks at Publix or at her favorite spot for breakfast – First Watch. They all knew her because she was kind and took interest in the lives of others, like she always has with everyone that she has

encountered in life. That's the tremendous person that Mary was and the many ways she'll live on forever in the hearts and minds of those she impacted in her life.

Her memorial service and celebration of a wonderful life will take place on Sunday, October 6th. Details can be found below. In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to the family fund for any unforeseen expenses because of her passing. We will also be donating in her honor to the Lupus Foundation of America to hopefully help others fight this terrible disease.

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/in-memory-of-mary-cleveland>

About this fundraiser

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View fundraiser

What is GoFundMe?

GoFundMe is the world's largest free social fundraising platform and has helped millions raise over \$5 billion for the people and causes they care about.

# Previous Events

## Greeting of Family and Friends

OCT 6. 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM (ET)

DeGusipe Funeral Home & Crematory Maitland Chapel

9001 N. Orlando Ave

Maitland, FL 32751

(407) 695-2273

todd@degusipe.com

<https://www.degusipefuneralhome.com>

# Tribute Wall

DL

“ *Mary,  
I will Love You forever!  
Our love for each other was like the universe,  
There was no end to it!  
Forever Yours,  
Dale*



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**Dale Lee** - October 07, 2019 at 03:42 PM

JD

“ *Mary was a beautiful vibrant special person and I cannot believe she's gone! I always hoped we could get together but time passes so quickly. I always send her a Christmas card every year so she would know she was in my thoughts. She will be missed so much!*

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**Joani Dann** - October 06, 2019 at 08:23 AM

DR

“ *1 file added to the album Mary Cleveland*



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**David Reed** - October 03, 2019 at 08:03 PM



“ *Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Mary Elaine Cleveland.*



October 02, 2019 at 05:35 PM



“ *Dearest Dale...I have no words...so very sad for your loss...I know from what you've told me that Mary was a loving and very special woman...G-D Bless all who are her close ones who are traveling this path now...Peace be with you Mary. SLK*



**SLK** - October 01, 2019 at 02:16 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Mary Elaine Cleveland.*



October 01, 2019 at 01:16 PM



“ *NCR Silver Small Business Team- Atlanta GA purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Mary Elaine Cleveland.*



**NCR Silver Small Business Team- Atlanta GA** - September 30, 2019 at 04:13 PM

RG

“ Mary was a wonderful friend during the years I knew her and will be greatly missed. May she rest in peace now.  
Ray G.

Ray Gribbin - September 30, 2019 at 11:29 AM

SM

“ I met Mary when we were in. The 7th grade..we became sister friends long before that was a trendy phrase...My life's memories are full of Mary & her family...A very strong positive lady who never met a stranger.. I loved her dearly and will truly miss my best friend..

Sheila Maggard - September 29, 2019 at 10:08 PM

SF

“ Sharon Cowdrey Freels sent a virtual gift in memory of Mary Elaine Cleveland



Sharon Cowdrey Freels - September 29, 2019 at 09:51 PM

SF

“ Mary was a former sister-in-law of mine. She always had a smile on her face and had the most beautiful smile. Rest now Mary.  
Sharon

Sharon Cowdrey Freels - September 29, 2019 at 09:46 PM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Mary Elaine Cleveland.*



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September 28, 2019 at 03:18 PM



“ *Mary, her family and my family go so far back it's hard to recall the year. I remember hanging with them when Brain and Kelly were just little bits, at their home in Altamonte Springs. Eddie was in the band and music, food and good times were the norm. Mary was a true friend from the beginning to the end. Always so warm, welcoming and that smile, always easy to smile her pretty smile and her laugh even when she spoke she would kind of giggle. Beverly, myself and the Garza family send heartfelt condolences to Dale, Brian, Kelly, their families and all of the Cowdrey clan, they have been a part of our lives for longer than I can remember. Mary will be missed by many. May she rest in Gods care now. We love you guys.*

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**Victor Garza** - September 28, 2019 at 10:47 AM



“ *I have known Mary since I befriended her son Brian back in high school. I remember how thoughtful and easy going she was. Everyone was welcome to her home. She accepted everyone without reservation and made them feel at home. I will miss her smiles. - Jose Barreto*

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**Jose Barreto** - September 28, 2019 at 08:53 AM

CL

“ Mary was a sweet soul and had a heart of gold. It saddens us that you have left so soon. My brother's heart broken and sick over losing you. He loved you dearly. Rest in peace sweetie and know how much you are loved. Condolences to the family. Dale Lee's sisters.

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**CJ Lee** - September 28, 2019 at 08:22 AM

MD

“ Sending my sympathy to the Cleveland family, Mama Cleve you are now pain free and in God's hand ! Sending you blessings. 🙏

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**Mama Dup** - September 28, 2019 at 06:26 AM

NL

“ First I would like to say, I'm sorry it's been a while since I last saw you Mama Cleve. You have reminded how precious life is and how instant things can change, so we cannot take time for granted. Mama Cleve saw Kelly and I through so many things as teenagers and into adulthood. My favorite memories are from when we were younger and would do something we weren't supposed to, I can literally hear her saying, “Dammit Kelly and Nataly”, followed by whatever we had done. Then as we grew into moms her support, how much she loved being a grandma, how much she poured into her Grandkids how she lit up when she talked about them. Thank you Mama Cleve, I hope you are enjoying some good music and a glass of wine in peace.

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**Nataly Larenas** - September 28, 2019 at 03:41 AM

BE

“ I'll always remember that beautiful smile. So loved and will be so missed.

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**Becci** - September 28, 2019 at 02:19 AM

MA

“ For the short time I knew her I found her to be a warm and friendly person. I wish I had known her longer. I know her family meant the world to her. May she Rest In Peace and may her light shine bright always. My sympathy to the family . 🙏



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**Michaeleen Achong** - September 27, 2019 at 10:01 PM

LY

“ I met Mary when her granddaughter Jasmine & my daughter Annalee were in the same kindergarten class. At that time we also learned we lived in the same condominium complex.

Over the years our girls joined Brownies, Bowling League & Crew. Mary always had a big smile, a kind word & loved spending time watching her grandchildren's activities.

I was very saddened to learn of her passing even though I knew she was ill. I'll miss running into her at Publix & Lyman events.

Rest In Peace Mary. My family will miss you 🥺



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**Lynn** - September 27, 2019 at 09:38 PM

BC

“ 1 file added to the album Mary Cleveland



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**Brian Cleveland** - September 27, 2019 at 08:12 PM