



Susan Nadine Herndon

April 12, 1980 - February 16, 2026

With heavy hearts, we announce the passing of Susan Herndon, 45, on February 16, 2026. A caring and compassionate soul, Susan touched the lives of many through her kindness, her generosity, and her deep love for both people and animals.

A graduate of Apex High School, Susan continued her education at North Carolina State University, earning a Bachelor of Arts in Communications, and later earned her nursing degree from Cape Fear Community College.

Susan found peace outdoors, drawn equally to the mountains and the sea. After college, her adventurous spirit led her to Breckenridge, Colorado, where she spent several seasons working and snowboarding. Later, she made her home in Wilmington, North Carolina, embracing life near the beach. In the last few years, Susan relocated back to the Triangle area, spending time in Apex and Chapel Hill, reconnecting with family and local friends.

Susan worked many years in the food service industry. She was part of the teams at Brasserie du Soleil and Manna restaurants in Wilmington, as well as Fearington House Restaurant in Pittsboro, NC, and other restaurants around the Triangle.

Susan had a profound love for animals, especially horses and Great Danes, and found joy in their companionship throughout her life. She was generous in sharing this love with others, including her time working at Horses for Hope, where she helped support therapeutic riding programs and witnessed firsthand the healing connection between horses and people.

Susan also had a deep passion for music. She gave her time volunteering at local radio stations and helping coordinate music festivals, bringing people together through shared sound and celebration. Her love of music reflected her vibrant spirit and her gift for creating connection.

Susan is survived by her parents, James and Nancy of Apex, NC; her sister Sarah (and husband John Barkenbus) of Charlotte, NC, her brother, Jim (and wife Emily) of Apex, NC; and her three nieces and nephew: Maddie, Lilly, Caroline, and Nicholas. She is also survived by her beloved Great Dane, Boone, who was a constant source of comfort and joy.

Susan will be remembered for her warm heart, her adventurous spirit, and the compassion she showed to everyone she met. Though her time was far too short, her legacy of love and kindness will endure in the countless lives she touched.

A graveside memorial service celebrating Susan's life will be held on Saturday, February 21, 2026, at 2pm at the Apex Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, please consider making a donation in Susan's honor to Horses for Hope (<http://horsesforhope.org/>) or the SPCA of Wake County (<https://spcawake.org/>), organizations that reflect her lifelong devotion to animals.

Cemetery Details

Apex Cemetery

100 Upchurch St
Apex, NC 27502

Previous Events

Graveside Memorial Service

FEB 21. 2:00 PM (ET)

Apex Cemetery
100 Upchurch St
Apex, NC 27502

Tribute Wall

CN

“ Susan was one of those wandering spirits who was capable of seeing the unspoken depth in the world around her. Whether it was meeting people around the town or venturing to a calm brook and sitting in a nearby daisy patch, she brought with her the spirit of all of the beautiful things in the world. I think she seemed the most excited when everyone around her was having a good time. She loved everything about music including the people that played it. If everyone could be as open as she was, I think there would be less fear in the world. She was a bright soul and she will be joyfully remembered.

Charles Newell - March 06 at 08:21 AM

NH

“ Susan thank you for being you all the time. Everyone that met you instantly loved you. Never changing and always leading. Rest in peace SNH. 😞💔😇❤️🙏

Nicole Hillman - February 23 at 10:27 PM

NH

“ Susan you are one of my first friends I met when moving from lake Norman CLT to Apex. Between dirt buggy racing literally in your back yard and Cocky, your horse, I knew you'd always be a friend of mine. Not only an animal enthusiast, you also always loved humans too. You would bring the best out of us all. You will be forever missed. Rip SNH. ❤️😇



Nicole Hillman - February 23 at 10:11 PM

WF

“ Wayne Faber lit a candle in memory of Susan Nadine Herndon



Wayne Faber - February 20 at 03:03 PM

BP

“ I first met Susan at 2002 at the Telluride Bluegrass Festival. So much fun, amazing music, and connection that weekend. We then planed a five day rafting trip on the Middle fork of the Salmon river. 80 miles our group did from Corn Creek to Riggins Idaho. They call it the river of no return was invigorating at times relaxing and so much fun. There where hotspings along the river as well that we camped out at. Susan and our group didn't know what we where getting into with some pretty serious rapids. We persevered, and came out of it with life long memories!! Please reach out if you would like some pictures from our trip 220-225-8395. I saw alot of perseverance in Susan's life what ever she got into she made it enjoyable and was able to make people connect with her. Although I have not talked to her in years, the memories we made seem like just yesterday. What a great soul she will be profoundly missed!!!



Brad Potochnik - February 20 at 01:49 PM

RH

“ I’ve been blessed with some amazing people in my life, who have helped me on days when I felt sad, lonely, and uncertain. My niece, Susan, was one of them.

Although, we will no longer have an opportunity to share our thoughts and opinions about life, I will most miss the stories She and I exchanged about the antics of our four-legged, canine companions. Those shared verbal experiences would inevitably generate a smile, a laugh or be a sure-fire remedy to pull us through a rough time.

Because of her big heart and kind spirit, Susan was a blessing, to me. A shared message that she and I used to remind one another of, is that “there is joy and goodness in every day”. The key is to recognize it. I am SO grateful to have had the opportunity to be her Aunt, and her Friend.



Rita Hallock - February 19 at 04:11 PM

CM

“ Susan loved music and her Great Danes! She lives in our hearts pleasant and memories.

Chris Marthinson - February 19 at 07:53 AM