

Deborah Cowell

Deborah Cowell, loving wife and devoted partner of James Cowell for 27 years, died at home in Vernon on Sunday, July 9, after a long illness. She was 55.

Her courageous and vibrant spirit will be greatly missed by the many people who admired, respected and loved her. Debbie led a life of dedicated service, ardently supporting the community through multiple roles of active leadership in outdoor activities. Born in Amesbury, Mass., in 1961, Deb was a graduate of Nasson College in Springdale, Maine, with a B.S. degree in Environmental Science. She worked for the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection for 25 years.

A member of the National Ski Patrol for 18 years, Debbie was a leader at the local, state and Eastern U.S. level. A valued member of ski patrols at Hidden Valley, now the National Winter Activities Center, High Point Nordic patrol and Mountain Creek, she excelled in many areas. She was the first female Nordic Master in the Nation Ski Patrol's (NSP) Nordic division. She received a national appointment in 2009, the Patroller Cross in 2006, and a Blue Merit Star for assisting in a life-saving rescue in 2000. In addition, Debbie was advisor to Young Adult Patrollers and a respected instructor in many areas of NSP training including first aid, (OEC), Mountain Travel and Rescue (MTR), Toboggan handling, Nordic patrolling and lift evacuation. She was also active in organizational roles, including as N.J. Region delegate to the Eastern Division of NSP. Her long list of honors speaks to her indelible contributions to the patrol, and her presence will live long in the memories of her many friends and associates in NSP.

As a 20-year member of the Professional Ski Instructors Association she was a level II Master Teacher. She was also a member of the local search and rescue organization, SARAT, and a bike patroller.

An active beekeeper along with her husband JC, she won awards for the quality of their honey in Sussex County, was a volunteer beekeeping instructor and mentor and was president of the Sussex County Beekeepers Association. In this role and as an exhibitor at the New Jersey State Fair in Sussex County, she was an alternate director for the fair and on the committee to raise money for the Richards Building.

During the crisis of 9/11, Deb, as an amateur radio operator, volunteered to assist the Office of Emergency Management by facilitating communications for emergency responders at the scene.

Deb was also a private pilot, a member of the Vernon Camera Club and an avid outdoors person, who loved hiking, camping, canoeing, kayaking, fishing, and especially enjoyed great times with friends camping in the Adirondacks. Deb was predeceased by her golden retriever, Mugul.

Debbie is survived by her husband, James Cowell; her mother, Susan Matiejunas; her sister, Susan Link; and nephew Sean Link.

In lieu of flowers, donations should be sent to charitable organizations, either Casting for Recovery at: donate.castingforrecovery.org or to:

Karen Ann Quinlan Hospice
99 Sparta Ave.
Newton, NJ 07860