

Linda Collins Blehm
2017 Deaf Mother of the Year



Linda Collins Blehm has been selected as VAD's Deaf Mother of the year for 2017. Since she passed away unexpectedly last March 10, she will be posthumously honored.

Linda devoted her time to the community in Staunton, Virginia. She was President of the Skyline Chapter of VAD for 10 years including this current term, Treasurer of the Greater Shenandoah Valley Club of the Deaf, and members of the Robert Lee Chapter of Gallaudet University Alumni Association and Virginia School for the Deaf Alumni Association. She was one of the co-chairs of Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind's 175th anniversary in 2014. In addition, Linda was involved for many years in the annual America Birthday Celebration which was held at the Gypsy Hill Park in Staunton during the Fourth of July.

Linda graduated from Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind in 1971 and Gallaudet University in 1975. She went back to her alma mater VSDB and became a teacher for 40 years and was to retire this May.

The most important aspect of her life was being the wife, mother, and grandmother. She was married to Steve Blehm and had three lovely daughters who sign fluently. The oldest daughter, Vera, is married and has a daughter, Karolina. Vera is a pediatric nurse at St. Mary Hospital in Richmond, VA. The second daughter, Maggie is presently living in New Zealand with her husband who is studying for a doctorate degree. Maggie and her husband have a 2 year old girl, Dorothy, and a 6

month old son, Linden. Maggie works as a teacher aide at the Baby Care facility for age 0-5 children. Third daughter, Sarah lives in Richmond and operates a business as a massage therapist. She has several clients who are Deaf.



Family of Linda Blehm displaying the award.

VAD's Deaf Mother/Father of the Year Committee:
Donna K. Graff-Viall, Chair
MaryRose Gonzalez
Byron Heath