



Barbara L. Stricker

August 16, 1961 - February 2, 2020

Barbara L. Stricker, age 58. of Traverse City passed away on February 2, 2020. Barb is now in the place of peace with our mom, who passed away last November.

Barb was born in Traverse City, MI on August 16, 1961 to William (Bing) and Janet Stricker. She grew up with her siblings on Long Lake and attended Traverse City Jr. High and Sr. High schools. She earned her Associates degree from NMC in Traverse City and then a Bachelors in Finance and Accounting from Central Michigan University in Mt. Pleasant.

Barb lived in South Bend, IN right out of college and then in Columbus, OH where she worked as a comptroller, auditing banks in the areas. Then she moved to Grand Rapids, MI working at Old Kent Bank, which later became Fifth/Third Bank and also at FMB Bank that later became Huntington Bank. She worked in compliance, fraud, and was even a vice president for a while.

Barb moved back to Traverse City working at NMCAA (Northwest Michigan Community Action Agency) helping families with their finances and budgeting. Her mom moved in with her and the two took care of each other for their remaining years.

Barb loved to travel. Her first major trip was visiting several European countries with her college friends before starting her career. She rode camels in Australia, taught students English in Spain and Ukraine, saw Big Ben in England, and vacationed in Mexico and Canada. Several U.S. states were destinations as well, including Connecticut to visit our mom's side of the family.

We also want to thank special friends and neighbors, Dick and Sue Bonzelet and Paul and Sharon Martin who took such great care of our mom for many years and then Barb as her health declined. They were there for anything that was needed plus more. Also, a special thank you to our cousins Sally Walter and Penny Stricker for helping whenever needed and giving great moral support during the past year.

Barb is preceded in death by both her parents, Willian (Bing) Stricker and Janet (Storms) Stricker.

She is survived by her three siblings: Donna (Henry) Vietzke of Gladstone, MI; Susan (Eric) Holt of Grand Rapids, MI; and Jim (Brenda) Stricker of Cedar, MI. Many aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces and nephews in both Michigan and Connecticut, and her life-long best friend, Terri Campbell also survive her.

There will not be a funeral service due to Barb's wishes. We will have a private family gathering at a later date.

If you would like to make a donation in Barb's name please consider these charities or agencies: Northwest Michigan Community Action Agency (NMCAA), Father Fred Foundation, or the Long Lake Fire Department. Please make a reference to "Barb Stricker Memorial" on any donations.

Please feel free to share your thoughts and memories with Barb's family at her tribute page at www.reynolds-jonkhoff.com.

The family is being cared for by the Reynolds-Jonkhoff Funeral Home and Cremation Services.

Comments



“ Just like everyone else, I was definitely not prepared to have you leave this earth so soon. Seeing your health fade was one of the toughest things I’ve experienced. I am so glad I was able to spend some chunks of time with you in the last couple months. I was praying for a miracle, but God had other plans. God needed you in heaven, but I have you in my heart.

First of all I want to apologize again for being a bratty sister before I became a Christian. Thank you for forgiving me.

The thing that stands out the most is your generosity. Many times you helped me out financially when times were tough. When the crisis subsided I would let you know that you didn’t need to help anymore but you continued anyway and told me to just say thank you! Thank you, Barb, for all your love and support throughout the years.

Also, thank you for being there for mom. I loved coming up to visit the two of you. Your house was home-base for me for quite a few years. I know my kids and grandkids loved going to Traverse City to see Great Aunt Barb and Great Grandma Stricker. I am so glad you were there for mom and she didn’t ever have to live in a nursing home. I can’t thank you enough for all you did for mom. I know it was a very difficult task these last few months, but you persevered for as long as you could.

I am going to miss those phone calls with Christmas music at the first snowfall, the postcards and magnets from your travels, and your quick wit, humor, and gleaming smile. I was envious of your pearly whites.

I am so thankful that you were able to do all your traveling throughout the years and not wait until you retired. It makes me happy to know you got to enjoy your passion of travel in the company of the people you loved. Oh the memories!

We did our share of mischief together. One time that stands out was when we rode our bikes down to the Dairy Bar. It was just down the road and it didn’t seem like a big deal, but we knew it was forbidden for our safety. Cars usually traveled way too fast on our very curvy road. Mom surely wouldn’t find out. Well...as you probably already guessed, she found out and made us sit on the couch until dad got home. That was the longest afternoon in history. That night we got those dreaded love taps that only dad could give. We didn’t do that again. And your quick wit and humor saved us from a few other possible disciplinary actions. You somehow had a way to say anything to dad and get away with it. A true talent we all appreciated.

When I was in college and on my way home for the weekend, my car broke down in Big Rapids. If you know the geography of our part of Michigan, you know I was not very far into my trip. After a tearful phone call home and a couple hours later, dad arrived with a tow-bar and a passenger. “I came for moral support,” Barb whispered in my ear. Dad could be a little hard on us when things like this happened. Thank you, Barb, for your support again!!! I think I see a pattern here.

(continued)

Susan Holt - February 09 at 04:11 PM



“ continued...

October will never be the same. I was always whisked away for a kid-free, fun-filled, free-lunch afternoon when Barb and Penny came down to celebrate my birthday. As we pulled out of my driveway I could feel the hustle and bustle of being a mom just melt away. I was a kid again ready to do what I wanted; Just another example of your generosity.

Thank you for letting me see your tender side recently. You didn't let that side surface much, but when a hospital staff member said she noticed the great support system you had in your family, you confirmed that with some very heart-felt tears. Thank you for letting us support you like you have generously showered support on us.

Barb, thank you for being my sister and one of the best givers this world has seen. Enjoy this last travel destination and give mom a hug from me.

Susan Holt - February 09 at 04:10 PM



“ My heart is so heavy and mind so overwhelmed trying to process the fact that our time together on this earth is over.

The Valentine's Day card I picked up for you reads: I was going to give you a card with a great big heart . . . but you already have one! How blessed our family has been to be able to say she is our daughter, sister, niece, cousin, aunt, friend, and to experience first- hand the generosity of your heart. In the years to come, as we remember the life experiences we each shared with you, reminisce over photos, share stories and tears, we will continue to carry your love and spirit within our own hearts and lives.

Keep watch for the butterfly kisses full of love that I'll be sending your way Barb. I will miss you so very much until we meet again on that Beautiful Shore.

Sally Walter - February 07 at 11:36 AM



“ To the woman warrior that you are,
You rode through this life as a warrior, an independent & loving person,
Battling for those who needed help with an open heart,
Steady and sure you took life's strides,
I got the chance to ride behind you great warrior and watch you wage war on your
beliefs in life,
I had the honor to ride along side you as your own battle began,
To try helping keep you astride while you wielded all your strength to cut through this
great disease,
Never have I seen the courage you have had to face in your daily trials and inner
battle that raged within,
I am honored to have been beside you & to have called you my sister & friend,
So now my great warrior I am off my trusted steed and am on bended knee & bowed
head to say bless you my beloved warrior sister for all the memories over the years
and thank you for honoring me to be your trusted warrior in this last war we fought.
You are loved so very much, I will miss that quick whit, enormous heart and beautiful
smile. I pray that I have even a fraction of your strength, humbleness & kindness!
God bless & be free again my dear, love you with all my heart,
Brenda

P.S. I sure will miss you giving me directions on my driving adventures too!

Brenda Stricker - February 06 at 10:16 PM



“ Some of Barb's travel memories.



Susan Holt - February 06 at 09:27 PM



“ Where do you begin? Giving, caring, kind and strong willed in the same attribute! Barbie you have been a sister to Dan, and a sweet lady who accepted me for me our entire life. Many Canada trips together with us and Travis and Cody!! Willing to hang out and not have to do a thing!! Christmas buffets for years! Your laughter smiles and just wanting to hang with family. Rice Krispies and chex mix for Travis and Cody (but always sending two bags so Dan and I could have some too) and oatmeal cookies of course for Dan!! Wohldorf salads with and without nuts!!! Hmmm wonder?? So many memories! So many laughs! ALWAYS SEEING THE GOOD IN PEOPLE! You will always be remembered as a special lady who was ready to go any place when asked. Giving to others all the time. Memories of picinics, trips, bon fires and gatherings! Barbie I'm so sorry for the last few months of tougher times. But I am thankful for family and the love you received from the ones who fought for you. The endless trips to U of M with Jim and Brenda and their sacrifice for you, only because YOU DID THE SAME FOR THEM AND SO MANY OTHERS!! You dear Barb loved well. Enjoy being healed and whole now!! Until we meet again in a place of love laughter and wholeness!! We will miss you Barbie but you will live forever in our hearts!!

Tammy Stricker - February 06 at 01:01 PM



“ To the Stricker family (especially Donna and Henry, Susan and Eric, Jim and Brenda, Sally, Penny, and Nancy),

I want to thank you for including me as one of your family! You have always treated me that way and it means so very much! Barb was just like a sister to me, especially when I had 4 brothers and no sisters! I cannot possibly imagine losing a sibling! My heart goes out to all of you! Barb was my life-long best friend for 40 years, a time I will always treasure! In celebration of that time I wrote this tribute to her...

"My Best Friend

I typically don't speak on these occasions or any occasions because, unlike my daughter, I do not like to speak in front of people, especially on occasions such as these that are so VERY hard to speak at. However, Barb has been my best friend for the last 40 years so I felt that I at least owed her the chance for me to try. How do you sum up 40 years of friendship and thousands of miles traveled together, and some of the most special times in your life in just a few short paragraphs? Barb and I knew each other in high school but we didn't really become best friends until we were students at NMC and had a psychology class together. We have been best friends ever since. We shared some of the most special times in our lives together. She was my maid of honor when I married Jenn's dad. And on January 1st, 1994 she and I shared a dream come true for both of us- we went to Las Vegas, Nevada, where we got to see and hear our mutual favorite singer in this entire world, Barbra Streisand, at the MGM Grand Hotel! I had always said that if Barbra Streisand ever sang again, I would sell my car to get tickets! I didn't have to sell my car, but I did have to continuously call for hours to get them! Barb was a good sport- she even let me drag her to a MICHIGAN game and even though at times she cheered for the wrong team because she didn't understand the game of football, I loved her for going with me! We have traveled thousands of miles together- all the way from Florida to Australia and Greece! We took a spring break trip to Daytona Beach, where we drove all night to get there and decided we never wanted to do that again! We got to see her cousin, Joey, there who went to flight school at Embry-Riddle and we even got to fly with him, which was cool! Barb loved Australia and would have lived there if she could have gotten a job she could have stayed at. She had been there many times but she and I just went once. We had such a blast! And to celebrate our 50th Birthdays (we were born only one month apart) we went to Greece! That was probably the most special birthday I have ever had in my life! Who will be my travel partner now? I will miss you my friend! We shared many "movie nights" together with Barb and I and her mom, and sometimes Jenn too! We enjoyed lots of pizza and popcorn, stories, and laughter together! I loved her mom since she was just like a mom to me, especially when my mom died 5 years ago, and I miss her dearly also! At least Barb and her mom will be reunited in Heaven! To close, I just want to say to the best friend there ever was...I love you! Thank you for being such an important part of my life! I will miss you so much, but I will always remember "The Way We Were!" G'day Mate! Happy Trails!"

Terri Campbell



“ Barb...My number one wish is that we could have done more for you to help you through your toughest times, but will always cherish the times spent with you trying to get through them. For this I put together a list of things I will miss about you. I'm sure I won't hit them all, so anybody reading this, please feel free to add your thoughts.

THINGS I WILL MISS ABOUT YOU

Your laugh

Your smile

Your HUGE loving heart

Your STRONG will

Your ability to put someone in their place and both parties are left, still smiling

Your ability to make me mad and still make me cry with love in the same instant

Your caring ways of putting everyone else first even when it should have been about you

Being told directions while still in the driveway. even though we made the trip 100 times before

You saying "You're driving, where ever you go is fine with me"

Your sweet way of saying thank you even when we still felt you deserved more.

Thank you for being there for Mom all those years. I know she really appreciated it and I will be forever grateful for what you were able to do for her and with her.

Thank you for being such a huge part of my life and such a great role model as we were growing up. I will miss you tremendously until we meet again. In the mean time I will always have you in my heart and will hopefully be able to bring you along to parts of the world you never got to go.

Love you and miss you...Jim

Jim Stricker - February 06 at 11:39 AM



“ A few memorable moments with Barb



Susan Holt - February 06 at 09:11 AM



“ My heart is breaking today. We have all lost a beautiful soul, generous heart, a wonderful sense of humor and a free spirit.
I feel so fortunate to have grown up together and shared so many laughs and adventures along the way.
Oh the stories to be told (or not).
I will forever miss my best friend and travel buddy.
My heart goes out to all of you Donna/Henry, Sue/Eric, Jim/Brenda.
RIP

Penny Stricker - February 05 at 12:26 PM



“ So sorry for your loss, Penny. Barb was so helpful to me during the time I worked with NMCAA on affordable housing issues. Gone too soon. My heart is sad today.

Sherry Schmalenberg - February 06 at 10:52 AM



“ Thank you Sherry

Penny Stricker - February 06 at 03:17 PM