



Barbara Zukauskas

MAY 18, 2018



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Barbara Elaine Zukauskas, a bright and shining spirit passed away at 6:44 PM on Thursday May 17, 2018, at the age of 58. Barbara was the daughter of Dolores and Bill Pollen of Pecatonica, IL. She was preceded in death by her father.

Barbie is survived by her two sons, Nick and Alex, her sister, Lisa, her brothers, Brad and Tom, her partner of 5 years, Frank Joseph and many loving nieces, nephews and friends too numerous to count. Anyone who met Barbie can attest her beauty inside and out. She was an inspiration to everyone.

The joy of her life were her two sons. Nick, an architect, resides in Stanford, CA with his partner, Kim Kinnear. Alex, a management consultant, who lives in Chicago, Ill. Together they shared many wonderful holidays, road trips, and everyday events. Both are graduates of the University of Wisconsin. Barbie was always a big fan, especially anyone who wore number 44, her birthdate and favorite number. She was excited when the Charlotte Hornets drafted Frank the Tank Kaminsky, who graduated with Alex and wore number 44 – their birthdate.

Barbie went to Patricia Stephens modeling and fashion merchandising in Milwaukee. After which she began her long and successful career in sales. She began and ran her company, BEZ Inc. from her home until retiring shortly after her battle with cancer began. During her career, she was instrumental in helping Kohl's Department Store grow from 44 stores in the 1980s to over 1100 currently. She was renowned in her business as someone who was able to get things done, her extremely positive attitude, and her tenacity.

In 2011, Barbie was diagnosed with melanoma and entered a treatment program that involved weekly infusions of Interferon, a chemo drug that was one of the few options available at the time. She self-injected Interferon for a year, which many of her clinicians and oncologists found amazing. After a period of remission, the cancer reappeared in April 2014.



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Many research scientists, oncologists, technicians have made so many significant contributions to melanoma research and treatment. Barbie is one of many patients who have made her mark on the progress of the research. Barbie participated in an innovative Clinical Trial at Duke Cancer Center called ILI –Isolated limb infusion. After 22 trips to Duke, she moved on to another clinical trial at the National Institute of Health (NIH) where she was a participant in a cutting-edge process that harvest the individual’s cancer cells and combines them with harvested white cells for immunology. In order to allow her body to accept the cells, she had to undergo chemotherapy to kill her own immune system. A third clinical trial was attempted at Levine Cancer Center which uses proven treatments for other cancers. Barbie completed 12 days of a 21-day protocol.

With all of these clinical trials, Barbie was a shining light and positive contributor to the research and as she would say “a pretty good lab rat!”

A memorial service will be held at 1: 00 pm Sunday May 20 at James Funeral Home, 10520 Arahova Drive, Huntersville, NC . A celebration of life will be held on Friday May 25, 2018 at a location to be announced. In her honor, a canine melanoma foundation will be created.



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Barbara by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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