



Barbara Lynn Reuschel

December 8, 1947 - March 25, 2025

Visitation, to celebrate Barbara's life with us and her new life in heaven, will be Saturday, April 19th, 2025, from 6:00-8:00pm at Yntema Funeral Home, 251 S. State Street, Zeeland, MI 49464. There will be no service, as Barbara chose to be cremated. This is a time to stop in, talk, tell stories, laugh, and smile. The louder and more cheerful, the better. Children are welcome. If you would like, we welcome you to wear something yellow (earrings, a necklace, shirt, etc.) to celebrate the day as Barbara's favorite color was yellow.

Barbara Lynn Diekema was born December 8, 1947. She already had an older sister, Sharon, an older brother, Jim, and soon, a younger brother, Larry, followed. A busy family of six and they were just beginning their lives together, but the family was dealt a hard blow when her dad died when she was just three years old. Barbara held the few photos she had of her dad close her entire life. She felt his loss even to the end and told us many times she wished she could have known him. Her mom was left to raise four young children on her own in an era where men worked and women stayed home. Jobs for women were difficult to find and paid very little, but her mom found work in an upholstery factory and the four children became tight-knit as they looked after each other while she worked. Money was short and many times the little family struggled. But they always stayed together.

After graduating from Holland High School, Barbara found work as a secretary and had a good friend she went to the Holland State Park beach with one warm, sunny day. The two young women were walking along, laughing and

talking, and their legs (so we were told) caught the eye of two young men. One was Don Reuschel and he pulled up alongside them in the roadster, a convertible car his dad had built, and their relationship began. They soon married and had four young children of their own, Chad, Lisa, Amber, and Tiffany.

They bought land in Hamilton and built their home. And Barbara got to give her children the life she wanted them to have. She stayed home with them and Don worked. Their children grew up riding minibikes, sledding down the hill trying to dodge the trees while not running into the swamp, exploring the valley behind the house, riding horses, riding bikes, seeing how far they could go down the hill and the road on the toboggan after ice storms, going camping, fishing, playing with their cousins, close to their grandparents... Barbara gave her children a childhood of memories. Her house was clean, the family ate home-cooked meals together every night, and she welcomed her children's friends into her home as family. Her children's friends were her children as well.

Soon, Barbara found herself with time on her hands with the children all in school and, never being one to sit idle, she began doing daycare in her home. The house was soon filled with children again, although now a mix of her own and little ones she cared for. She continued to do daycare for forty years, going to graduations of children she had cared for when they were babies. And she loved all those kids. She took pictures of them, she bragged about them, she loved on them. Even when we, her own children, were grown and having families of our own, she would tell us stories of what her daycare children were doing, what development they had hit, a funny thing they did, who was sick, etc.

Barbara was extremely smart, she almost always won family games of Scrabble and did the Holland Sentinel crossword for fun, always completing it while her kids groaned because we could never beat her. We knew not to challenge any word she put down in Scrabble because she was always right. She told us many times she wished she could have gone to college if her

family had been able to afford it and she would have annoyed every college classmate because she definitely would have set the curve for every test. She loved being busy as an adult and she taught Sunday school, dutch-danced, taught Slimnastics, played recreational volleyball, pitched hundreds of games of women's recreational softball, and more.

Barbara had grown up with very little and maybe because of that, one of her love languages was gift-giving. She was generous beyond generous. The grandchildren learned quickly that if they had a "big gift wish," that grandma was the one to ask and, come their birthday or Christmas, that wish would come true. So many birthdays and Christmases, there were shouts and happy shrieks from her children or grandchildren as they opened a gift, they really wanted but thought was too expensive. She crocheted a stocking for every child, every daughter and son in law, every grandchild and filled them to the brim, year after year, with candy, gum, treats, and special surprises before she started passing out the big gifts.

Many people know her from daycare, from church, from her community, from her children's lives, but also from her grandchildren's lives. She was a fixture at their events, bundled up on cold bleachers, watching from the stands in gyms, sitting in a camp chair on sidelines, tucked into seating in a theater... She would drive three hours to be at the start of an event at 9am when it started, stay all day, then drive three hours home by herself in the dark just to be there. And she'd always let the grandchild pick the restaurant after the meet/game/play, whether it was Taco Bell or a steakhouse and slip the other grandchildren a few dollars for the concession stand. For her grandchildren that are still little, still having meets and dances and games and plays, her not being in the stands or in the seats will feel wrong for a long time.

When she finally stopped doing daycare, she had a little house built in a retirement community that she had quickly fallen in love with. She had such fun decorating her new home, her kids put bright red geraniums on the porch to complement the dark blue of the house, and she bought herself a bright red

golf cart that she and Tiffany decorated like Minnie Mouse with a special seat for Gabe, her golden retriever, on the back. She zipped around her community like a social butterfly, sometimes leaving her kids to text each other, "Have you heard from Mom? I texted her hours ago," only to find out she had lost track of time talking with a neighbor.

When she was diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer, she was devastated. She wanted nothing more to be there to see all her grandkids grow up and to see some great-grandbabies. She fought hard, tried whatever chemo her doctors gave her, and she traveled to the weddings of the first and second grandchildren that got married last summer, she let the younger grandchildren drive her golf cart even though they weren't really supposed to, she bought an electric fireplace she was so proud of for the winter. She laid in a bed in one room of a nursing home/short term rehab center for over two months to let a broken hip heal so she could be here. She was so excited to finally go home and, the day she moved back in, she sat on her couch with a smile on her face as her youngest grandchildren played with the toys in the den and her kids talked in the living room. And just a week later, she was back in the hospital with pneumonia, and she began to realize that this was the end. She said she didn't want to disappoint anyone by dying. She said she wanted to see the youngest grandchildren, Steven and Addison, grow up, with tears in her eyes. She fought some more and then she said, "I'm ready to go home. I'm ready to see Jesus." Back in the nursing home, she slept a lot and grew steadily weaker. She didn't always make sense when she talked. And everyone knew her time on earth was coming to an end.

Then Saturday night, she was surrounded by many of her kids, grandkids, and her sister, and all had stood up to whisper goodbye to her to leave for the evening when she suddenly opened her eyes, smiled so big, and said in a strong voice, "He said yes! God said yes! Do you hear the bells? There's going to be a party!" She looked at all of us and her face was so bright with happiness. We smiled at her and said, "Well, we don't want to miss the party!" She smiled even more brightly and said happily, "Well, then you'd better sit

back down, because there's going to be a party!" We smiled back at her and sat back down, because, well, there was going to be a party! We watched her as she smiled and closed her eyes. After a few minutes of silence, she popped her eyes back open and said cheerfully, "It's bedtime!" We laughed, kissed her goodbye, and said, "Boy, is she going to be mad if she wakes up still here tomorrow morning!" And she did wake up that next morning, but her next days were steadily worse and she passed away just before midnight on Wednesday, March 26, 2025, with her daughter, Tiffany, holding one of her hands and her sister, Sharon, holding the other.

We know that God talked to her that Saturday night when she still had enough energy to tell us about it so we would know that He was expecting her and He had something special planned. Mom had already told us that the first person she wanted to see after Jesus was her daddy. Heaven was going to heal more than her body, it was going to heal a piece of her heart that had always been a little broken. She is fully whole in heaven, and even though we all miss her, we are so happy for her.

She is survived by her children: Chad (Barbie) Reuschel, Lisa (Brian) Bremer, Amber (Brian) Vanderzalm, Tiffany (Jon) Price; 17 grandchildren, sister Sharon (Tom) Lawson, brother Larry Diekema, and extended family members.

Memorial contributions may be made to St. Jude Children's Hospital.

Previous Events

Visitation Celebration

APR **19**. 6:00 AM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Yntema Funeral Home
251 South State Street
Zeeland, MI 49464

Tribute Wall



“ *Langeland-Sterenberg Yntema Funeral Homes created a Tribute Video in memory of Barbara Lynn Reuschel*



Langeland-Sterenberg Yntema Funeral Homes - April 18, 2025 at 01:24 PM



“ *Beautiful Dreams was purchased for the family of Barbara Lynn Reuschel.*



April 18, 2025 at 12:15 AM



“ *My condolences to her entire family. May she rest easy now!!!
Love Cathi Rykse*

Catherine L Rykse - April 16, 2025 at 09:32 PM



“ *Love, Mary Beth and Monica Fritsch purchased the Beautiful Heart Bouquet for the family of Barbara Lynn Reuschel.*



Love, Mary Beth and Monica Fritsch - April 15, 2025 at 08:27 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue* was purchased for the family of Barbara Lynn Reuschel.



April 15, 2025 at 07:46 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Barbara Lynn Reuschel.

April 15, 2025 at 07:45 AM



“ *Basket Full of Wishes* was purchased for the family of Barbara Lynn Reuschel.



April 15, 2025 at 07:45 AM



“ Regina C. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Barbara Lynn Reuschel.

Regina C. - April 01, 2025 at 09:12 PM

JH

“ This grandmother was one everyone recognized at every gymnastics meet or soccer game I can remember. She loved her family. No one could deny that. The one time John and I took a 1 week trip without kids, barb hosted our girl and in our absence, taught her to swim! God bless this beautiful family and all the amazing memories. 🙏🙏

Jackie Hampton Hampton - April 01, 2025 at 08:56 PM

RC

We loved your mom and are so sorry for your loss. We will cherish the days and nights we spent with her and the rest of the Bryan Bunch, cheering for Bob and Mike, laughing at silly stories, and just enjoying our time together. It's so comforting to imagine her enjoying getting to know her dad, hugging those who went before her, and being in the presence of Jesus. Maybe she's even met my mom who went to heaven on January 31. Peace and comfort to you all and know you are in our prayers as you navigate this difficult time. Amber and Tiffany, we love you both. Love, Regina and Dave.

Regina Cook-Pfeiffer - April 01, 2025 at 09:21 PM