

Barbara Jayne Richards

March 16, 1943 ~ December 10, 2023

After a long full life, BARBARA JAYNE RICHARDS passed away peacefully at her home surrounded by loved ones on Sunday, December 10, 2023. She was born on March 16, 1943, in Sacramento, CA, the second of six daughters of Lucile Cannon Richards and Wayne Felt Richards. Barb's life's mission was to contribute to the happiness of others and progress in living the gospel of Jesus Christ fully. She certainly accomplished both throughout her life.

Barb became paraplegic at 20 years of age in 1963. She then returned to BYU in the summer of 1965 and earned a Bachelor's Degree in Health and PE Education and a Master's Degree in Education from BYU. Barb began her teaching career at Westlake Jr. High in Granite District that fall and continued there 17 years. During a year's sabbatical, she earned her Doctor of Education from the University of Utah in 1989. She taught at the U of U from 1986 until retiring in 2004—quite an influencer of hundreds of students in those 35 years.

Barb received many accolades during her career. She was given numerous 'Outstanding Teacher', 'Service', and 'Teacher of the Year' awards. She was inducted into East High School's Hall of Fame as an 'Exemplary Educator and Coach' in 1987. Barb was a life member of Eta Sigma Gamma in Health Sciences, on the boards of several health and education organizations, and received the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation 'Golden Key for Outstanding Citizen of the Year'. Her faculty in the Health Promotion and Education Department at the university voted her as 'Top Professor' four different years.

Barb loved her Savior and accepted many church responsibilities. She was a Stake Relief Society Board Member, Stake Sports Committee Director, and Ward R.S. Education Counselor. She taught Primary, Young Women, Gospel Doctrine and Relief Society—which was her favorite. She motivated hundreds of missionaries over the years speaking at the MTC in Provo and many sacrament meetings or R.S. celebrations sharing her testimony and story of Discovering Joy in a Wheelchair. She published a book of the same title in 2003 and in 2019 she finished journaling her life for her family.

She loved doing anything with her hands. She tried building miniature ships, enjoyed puzzles, made ceramics, painted with oil and watercolor, sewed clothing, and cross-stitched items for her family. She was a wonderful cook and designed and decorated numerous birthday and wedding cakes. She also enjoyed sports and often played tennis, racquetball, and ping pong from her chair. She was always ready for any game—card, memory, or board—and spent many hours laughing hysterically with family and friends.

She enjoyed traveling and was especially grateful when the ADA Civil Rights Law was passed in 1990. She had traveled before that time but was excited when stops on trips were not determined by accessible facilities. Barb has cruised the Hawaiian Islands, the Caribbean several times, Alaska, the Mediterranean, Panama Canal, and

Europe. She especially looked forward to trips with her sisters in Park City, San Francisco, Yellowstone, Branson, Mt. Rushmore, Nauvoo, other church history sites, and various CA beach houses. Yearly Capistrano Beach trips, annual turns at the family cabin, and most recent visits to many states in her totally accessible RV (named ManeRVa) filled her life. She completed her first bucket list when she turned 70 but continued planning trips as long as any of her sisters could go.

Barb wanted to marry and be a mother so instead focused her love on her roommates—Sue Baker Smith (27 years) and Nadine Bunnell (31 years), her nieces and nephews and their children. If there was a baby near, she would always want to hold and hug them as long as she could. Barb maintained strong friendships with many high school and Jacob Lake friends throughout the years. They've shared lunches and trips together when several were in town. She loved deeply and extended her sincere affection to neighbors, ward members, and friends.

Barbara was preceded in death by her mother and father, three brothers-in-laws (Bryan Parry, Gerald Clark, and Paul Jones), and her former roommate (Sue Baker Smith). She is survived by her five sisters Judy Jones, Wendy Gardner (Ronald), Alyson Parry, Jill Anderson (Gavin), and Cherie Clark, her roommate (Nadine Bunnell), 42 nephews and nieces, many Richards' and Cannon cousins and hundreds of friends.

A viewing will be held from 6:00 to 8:00 pm on Thursday evening, December 14 at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints building at 1750 East Spring Lane (5195 S), Holladay, UT 84117. Funeral Services will on Friday, December 15 at 12 pm (noon) with a viewing prior to the services at the church at 10:30 am.