



Barbara Jean Eggleston

December 22, 1946 - November 30, 2025

West St. Paul, MN - Barbara Jean Wenzel (married name: Eggleston) has completed her earthly journey. Kindness, a joyful spirit, baking cookies, and wielding an impressive "green thumb" were her superpowers. She was also forever young at heart.

Barb was an incredibly thoughtful mother, and raised a son who is eternally grateful. In fact she had a wonderful way with all kids. She also had a way with green things. Plants flourished under her care almost as if by magic. She befriended people of all stripes. Free of bias and without a judgmental attitude, Barb took people as she found them.

A lifelong resident of Minnesota, she spent her first years in Northeast Minneapolis, which was a bustling working-class area composed heavily of second generation immigrants from Poland, Ukraine, and elsewhere. At a young age her family moved to Fridley, where she grew up and went on to graduate from Fridley High School.

She ventured out into the world, moving on her own to Minneapolis. One of her first full-time jobs was at the Leamington Hotel, a landmark that over the years boasted famous singers and entertainers as well as politicians among its guests. Her co-workers were caring and friendly, and she loved her job.

Life wasn't only joy however. It was after she moved to Minneapolis that Barb experienced tremendous loss, in quick succession losing one of her brothers and then her father. A single mother with a toddler to care for she couldn't pause her life even for that amount of grief and pain, but instead pushed forwards. In similar fashion she also weathered the bias and prejudice held by many people at that time towards single mothers and towards mothers of "mixed" babies.

For her next job, Barb decided to run a daycare out of her apartment. She charged modest fees for her babysitting services, thereby helping other single mothers while at the same time managing to earn enough to pay her bills and provide for herself and her young son Michael.

As for the kids she babysat, they were allowed to have fun to their heart's content as long as they didn't cause harm to themselves or others. It was, in many ways (especially for children from low income families), truly a kids' paradise. There are adults who to this day fondly remember their baking adventures and the gifts and kindness they received as children under Barb's care.

A handful of years later with still only a high school diploma to her name, Barb took advantage of a training program and earned a certificate in accounting. She soon found a job at the headquarters of the Minneapolis Public Schools located in a large brick building known as "807 Broadway," where she handled the payroll for teacher's aides and substitute teachers. She worked for many years at 807 Broadway until retiring.

She never encountered a garage sale or estate sale that she didn't like and, among her many purchases, she built up a collection of dolls of which she was particularly fond. In her later years she enjoyed reading books (such as by Danielle Steele and Nora Roberts), watching movies, watching television

shows (both new and old, and largely comedies), and coloring pictures on her phone which she then shared with family and friends.

Born on a Sunday (December 22nd, 1946), Barb likewise passed on a Sunday (November 30th, 2025) surrounded by family and love. She now sleeps forever beside her brother Jim and right next to parents Herman and Catherine, all of whom she loved so dearly.

If there is a Heaven or Eternal Paradise filled with beauty and joy, it will now flourish with more lovely plants and flowers than ever before and the air will forever be filled with the aroma of baking cookies.