



Barbara Jean Gruendemann Rutherford

March 22, 1936 - July 7, 2022

Dr. Barbara J. Gruendemann Rutherford, PhD, RN, CNOR, FAAN, passed away in McKinney, TX on July 7, 2022 after a decade-long battle with Alzheimer's disease.

Barbara was born in La Crosse, WI in 1936, spent her formative years in Coon Valley, Westby and Madison, WI, and graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Madison with a BS, Nursing and MS, Educational Psychology, as well as a MS, Nursing from University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), and a PhD, Nursing Science from Texas Woman's University, Denton, TX.

Gruendemann made her career in nursing leadership and education, mentoring, writing and teaching, becoming America's super-operating room nurse, the Norman Borlaug of global infection prevention and surgical patient care, saving millions of lives around the globe.

Raised on a Wisconsin dairy and tobacco farm where she credits developing a strong work ethic, Barbara's vast experience included Staff Nurse, Clinical Nurse Specialist, Director of O.R. Education, Assistant Professor of Nursing (Mount St. Mary's College, Los Angeles), Founder/Associate Director of one of the first ambulatory surgery centers in the US (Mountain States Surgery Center - Boise, ID), consultant, author, professional speaker, but primarily as an educator. For eight years, she was Director of Worldwide Professional Education for Johnson & Johnson Medical, Inc., establishing one of the first educational departments within a major medical products company and providing high-value professional instructional programs, manuals and direct

mentoring of nurses, physicians and other health care professionals in more than 22 countries and the United States.

Gruendemann's innovations and advocacy for compassionate patient care, infection prevention, aseptic principles and practices, wound care, hygiene and general operating room protocols helped shape today's industry Quality Assurance Protocols and forever changed O.R.s everywhere. She has authored 10 books and over 40 journal articles, including co-authoring three editions of Alexander's Care of the Patient in Surgery as well as Comprehensive Perioperative Nursing, Vols. I and II (all considered 'bibles' of O.R. nursing); Infection Prevention in Surgical Settings (the first of its kind to explore infection control guidelines that directly relate to surgical environments); and, most recently, Distance Learning and Perioperative Nursing. While at TWU for her PhD, she received the prestigious Virginia Chandler Dykes Scholarship Award, given for her academic achievements. Barbara is a Past National President of the Association of periOperative Registered Nurses (AORN), the first recipient of the AORN Award for Excellence in Perioperative Nursing and holds a CNOR as a Certified Perioperative Nurse. She served on several elected AORN Board positions as well as numerous national committees and international task forces for AORN, APIC (Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology) and JCAH (The Joint Commission for the Accreditation of Hospitals - now known simply as The Joint Commission). Barbara was also one of the first perioperative nurses to be elected a Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing (FAAN). She is the recipient of a Distinguished Alumni Achievement Award from the Nurses' Alumni Organization at University of Wisconsin-Madison for her contributions to nursing. Her personal healthcare consulting practice was G4 Productions in Dallas, TX.

Gruendemann was a lifelong musician as a pianist, organist, carillonneur, and chorister. She served as organist/pianist at several Los Angeles churches, including St. Andrew's Lutheran (for 12 years) in Santa Monica, CA and Emmanuel Lutheran in North Hollywood, CA. As a member of Highland Park

United Methodist Church in Dallas, Barbara served as a guest organist and carillonneur, member of the chancel choir and member of the organ search committee. She also accompanied and arranged for the Southern Californian 1970s pop/devotional band, California Sunshine, playing family venues like Knotts Berry Farm. "Music is my therapy," Barbara would declare. "Even though I did not pursue music in college, music has always been a large part of my life. Beautiful music gives special meaning and joy to everyday life." Barbara also loved to travel, explore and learn. In particular, she was passionate about the mountains and deserts, flowers and autumn colors. Her great pleasure was sharing these with friends, family and her beloved second husband of 25 years, Warren Loyd Rutherford, who passed away in 2018. They are travelling together now.

Barbara is survived by her loving and devoted son, Eric Gruendemann and wife Patricia (PJ) Manney, and adored grandchildren Nate Gruendemann, who shared Barbara's passion for football and spiritual exploration, and Hannah Gruendemann, who inherited Barbara's love of travel and dedication to music and choral singing. She is also survived by her sister, Tekla Knutson, her nieces Linda Knutson and Brenda Dolan and the extended Dolan family, as well as Warren's host of family, including Jeanie & Ron Peterson and Kathy & Marco Segura. Barbara was preceded in death by her brother Wallace Moilien, her first husband Paul Gruendemann, her brother-in-law Paul Knutson, and her parents, Theresa and Jens Moilien.

There will be a small family gravesite service at Lakewood Cemetery in Minneapolis, MN on Thursday, July 28 at 10:00 am. The family is arranging a livestream and website link to view the service remotely. Contributions in her name may be made to Highland Park United Methodist Church, Dallas, TX for the Music Ministries Program or any branch of the Alzheimer's Association.

Washburn-McReavy.com

Davies Chapel 612-377-2203

Tribute Wall



“ Washburn-McReavy Funeral Chapels created a Graveside Service for Barbara Jean Gruendemann Rutherford in memory of Barbara Jean Gruendemann Rutherford



Washburn-McReavy - July 17, 2022 at 08:44 PM

LA

Eric and family....your mothers service was AMAZING...told the story of the life of Ms. Barbara in a way that once again brought to life the amazing woman she was. Thank you for sharing her with us. Many blessings.

Lilly Adrian - July 29, 2022 at 10:05 PM

BL

“ Barbara and Warren were our friends from HPUMC's Chancel Choir. It was a pleasure to share our love of music with them including a choir trip in France. Eric, you, your family, Barbara's friend, the minister and the Washburn-McReavy funeral home in Minnesota have given a wonderful remembrance and tribute to Barbara with your words, photos, music, and the scene of her resting place with Warren and other loved ones. We are grateful for all the Excellence and Adventures Barbara experienced and encouraged during her lifetime and beyond. And we thank you for sharing your memories with us. Barbara and Frank Lloyd

Barbara Alexander Lloyd - July 31, 2022 at 06:26 PM

ND

“ Barbara was a dear friend for many years I miss her very much. Her contributions to nursing will go unmatched.

Nancy Davis - July 28, 2022 at 05:47 PM

SY

“ A lovely tribute for a lovely, remarkable woman. Thank you for sharing her life.

Susan Yeazel - July 28, 2022 at 12:47 PM

RO

“ Thank you for sharing your most excellent memories of Barbara with us. What a loving, delightful tribute to a devoted light bearing angel.

Renee O'Connor-Sura

Renee O'Connor - July 28, 2022 at 12:09 PM

GD

“ Barbara and Warren were an outstanding couple and I am so thankful that they are once again together. It was an honor to know them both in good health and to have been able to care for Barbara for the last part of her journey. Finally, as a healthcare professional, it can not be understated the incredible impact that she had. She made the world a better place and is missed already! Eric - you were a great son and honored your mom beautifully. Thank you for sharing her with us! Godwin Dixon and the entire Teresa's House team.

Godwin Galen Dixon - July 28, 2022 at 12:01 PM

JB

Barbara and Warren were such special members of our choir. I have missed them, but I'll cherish the memories I have of them. And I'm grateful that God brought them into my life. Barbara was such a dear and phenomenal person. She and Warren were a precious couple, and I'm so thankful they're now together, resting in peace. Blessings to their family. - Janie Bryan Loveless, Highland Park United Methodist Church Chancel Choir, Dallas

janie bryanloveless - July 28, 2022 at 12:25 PM

LS

“ *The University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Nursing and the nursing profession has lost an amazing leader, advocate, and friend. As a Badger nurse, Barbara truly changed the lives of others. She will be greatly missed. Our sympathies to her family and friends.*

Dr. Linda Scott, Dean

Linda D Scott - July 28, 2022 at 11:28 AM

LF

“ *It was a blessing to work with Miss Barber for 15 months I loved her I knew she loved me she was an amazing beautiful intelligent woman I miss her every single day she's gone but never forgotten*

LaTonya Foster - July 28, 2022 at 11:13 AM

JO

“ *Barbara was a genuinely wonderful personality and did so much for perioperative nursing. We will all miss her desperately. Rest in peace my sweet friend.*

Joanne Oliver

Joanne D Oliver-Coleman - July 28, 2022 at 11:03 AM

BB

“ *I'm honored and blessed to have known Barbara.
I will always remember the beautiful smile on her face and her warm embrace.
She truly was an angel among us.
Now she is an angel above us.
My heartfelt sympathy to the family.
Betty Brown*

Betty Brown - July 26, 2022 at 03:24 PM



“ *Sweet Sincerity was purchased for the family of
Barbara Jean Gruendemann Rutherford.*



July 26, 2022 at 06:52 AM

RS

“ *Barbara's Dedication to Excellence, passion
and purpose exemplified nursing leadership
at the highest level. She was admired and
respected by countless nurses and inspired
others to excel. She was a lovely lady and will
be missed.*



Ruth Plotkin Shumaker

Ruth Shumaker - July 25, 2022 at 11:07 PM