



Barbara Jean Golob

JAN 6, 1938 - JUN 26, 2025



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In Loving Memory of Barbara Jean Papale Golob January 6, 1938 – June 26, 2025 Palmetto Bay, Florida

Barbara Jean Papale Golob, beloved mother, grandmother, sister, aunt, cousin, and friend, passed away peacefully on June 26, 2025, at the age of 87.

She is survived by her daughter, Laurene Topping (Andy), her son, Marc Golob (Janine), and her stepdaughters, Kathy Stately (Karl Stalnaker) and Teri Sipe (Pete). She was a proud and loving grandmother to AJ Topping, Alex Topping, and Jacob Golob. Barbara also leaves behind her cherished twin sister, Betty Jane Papale Fitzgerald, as well as many adored nieces, nephews, cousins, and lifelong friends. She was preceded in death by her beloved husband of 35 years, Martin Thomas Golob.

Barbara was born on January 6, 1938, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to Mary Viscidy Papale and Dominic Papale. From an early age, Barbara displayed a natural athleticism and a zest for life. She played field hockey and basketball throughout her youth and college years and graduated in 1959 from West Chester State Teachers College (now West Chester University) with a degree in Physical Education. While at West Chester, she joined the Valkyrie sorority—an affiliation that would bring her some of her most enduring friendships and joyful memories. The Valkyries gathered for beach week reunions for decades, celebrating their sisterhood along the shores of Virginia, Delaware, and New Jersey.

Always up for adventure, during college, she spent a summer term at the University of Hawaii, an experience that sparked a longstanding love of travel. In her twenties, she moved to Denver, Colorado, to be closer to the mountains she loved to ski. It was there that she met and married Martin, a Minnesota native. The couple later moved to Minneapolis, where they ran a small independent bookshop together before finally settling in Miami, Florida. In Miami, Barbara



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implemented an open-door policy for visiting family and friends who wanted to enjoy the beautiful weather, especially in the winter.

Barbara devoted most of her professional life to education, teaching, coaching, and administration. She spent nearly 25 years at Westminster Christian School in Miami, where she left a lasting impression on generations of students, parents, and colleagues through her warmth and dedication to a job well done. A lifelong Presbyterian, Barbara was a committed and faithful member of Galloway Orthodox Presbyterian Church and later Immanuel Presbyterian Church.

Outside of her career, Barbara's talents and interests were abundant. She was an award-winning gardener and orchid enthusiast, often earning ribbons for her exquisite blooms. She loved cooking, entertaining, and spending time with loved ones around a good meal. A lover of language and a fierce grammarian, she never missed a crossword puzzle and even co-authored a cookbook, *Après-Ski: Recipes for the Good Life*, a reflection of her culinary passion and her love for ski culture and camaraderie. Friends and family had to watch their wallets when playing pinochle with her. She regularly took their money with a wink and a smile. A pottery and ceramics connoisseur, in her retirement, she spent several years operating "Eclectibles," a small antiques and collectibles business within an antique mall. Barbara's home was never without a beloved pet until her final years, when she turned her affections to several "grand dogs". More recent photos of her than not, include a pup on her lap or by her side.

Though she often described herself as a shy child, Barbara grew into someone known for her radiant spirit, quick wit, and boundless warmth. She had an uncanny ability to connect with others, frequently striking up conversations with strangers that turned into lasting friendships. Her optimism, humor, and generosity touched the lives of many, and she will be deeply missed by all who knew and loved her.

Services will be held privately. In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requests that donations be made in Barbara's honor to Fairchild Tropical Botanical Garden in Miami—a place she held dear and a fitting tribute to her love of beauty, nature, and community



Memories only last if you share them

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



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