



Barbara Jean Bednarz

November 5, 1952 - October 24, 2010

After a 5 ♦ year battle with breast cancer, Barbara passed away at her home with her family by her side on Sunday, October 24, 2010. Born on November 5, 1952 in Gary, Indiana to Zbigniew (deceased) and Yvonne Sliwa, she was the first child in her family to be born here in the United States after her parents ♦ immigration from Poland. Her younger brother, Tom, was also born here in the United States while her older brother, Mickey, was born in Germany. She grew up in both Gary and Merrillville, Indiana and graduated in 1970 from Merrillville High School. After graduation, she traveled to the Chicago Loop, working for the next 3 years in the insurance industry as a commercial lines rater for both Travelers and Royal Globe. While working at Royal, Barbara met her husband-to-be, Jan Bednarz, and they were married in Gary on June 2, 1973. Earlier in the year, Jan had been transferred to Indianapolis and Barbara joined him there after the wedding. Barbara started working for MJ Insurance in 1973 as a commercial account manager and became the department manager a few years later. In 1980 her first daughter, Jessica, was born, and in 1985 her second daughter, Sandra, was born. Two years later, she became a stay-at-home mom and got involved with her daughters ♦ many activities. Some of these include Brownies, where Barbara served as Brownie Troop Leader, gymnastics, where Barbara was an active member of the Booster Club, and cheerleading, where Barbara was a very active and enthusiastic cheer mom. In the late 1990 ♦s, she went back to work at MJ in the accounting department and continued working there until

2006. As a gymnastics mom, she saw both of her daughters perform flips on the beam that would make any parent close their eyes for fear that their child would get hurt. As a cheer mom, she saw both daughters compete on the Hamilton Southeastern Varsity Cheerleading Squad for three years each. The squad competed in various competitions including the Indiana State Championship where in six years they collected two State titles and two State Runner-Up titles. They also competed at the UCA National Championships, placing in the Top Ten five out of six years. Her daughters cheered at many cold, windy, rainy, and some snowy football games and she was there for every moment, watching with joy. Barbara advised Jan before they got married that she wanted to travel and see the places she had read about in books and magazines. Over the years she took the family on many cruises to exotic locations such as the Caribbean, Mexico's West Coast, Alaska, the Greek Islands, and Istanbul Turkey. As a family, they visited Venice, Florence, Rome, and Barcelona. She and Jessica visited Sandi in Paris and then, altogether, they traveled to Dublin for St Patrick's Day. In later years, Barb saw Switzerland, Egypt, London, Paris and Normandy with Jan. Barb was very creative when it came to both interior decorating and crafts. Recently, she remodeled the family's entire Indianapolis home and was in the process of remodeling the family's recently purchased home away from home in Celebration, Florida. Barb loved to make children's crafts, so much so that she started her own business, Lollypops and Dreams. Throughout the past couple of years, Barb has sold her crafts at fairs in Orlando, Fishers, and Carmel as well as at her personal craft fair started at her Indianapolis home in November 2009. Barb was preparing for her second annual home craft fair at the time of her passing. Her family plans to continue the craft fair at their Indianapolis home on November 7th, 2010 in Barb's honor and will be donating all proceeds from the fair to the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation. While Barb enjoyed all of the above, her biggest joy was spending time with her daughters, her husband, her mom, her brothers and her nieces and nephews and their children. She is survived by her husband

Jan, her daughters Jessica and Sandi, her mother Yvonne, her brother Mickey, wife Sue Sliwa and their five children, niece Jennifer Sliwa Makalusky, her husband Mike and their daughters Riley and Maya, niece Carrie Sliwa, niece Kim Sliwa Miller and her husband Chad, nephew Keith Sliwa and nephew Kevin Sliwa, his wife Elizabeth and their daughters Libby, Merritt and Maggie, Barbara's brother Tom SliwaMD and his children Katie and Philip and Jan's sisters Charlene, her husband Rick, and their children Catherine and Ron, wife Dylana and their children Tyla and Mason, and Jan's sister Yvonne. The family will be having a Celebration of Life Gathering at the Indianapolis Yacht Club at Geist, 12900 Fall Creek Road, McCordsville, IN 46055 (across from the Geist Marina on the east end of the bridge) on Thursday, October 28th from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. The family requests that attendees wear colorful attire. No black please. There will be a service on Friday, October 29th at Our Lady of Peace Cemetery, 9001 Haverstick Road, Indianapolis 46240 at 11:00 a.