



Barbara L. McFarland

July 22, 1939 - August 16, 2023

Barbara McFarland passed away on August 16, 2023, after a brief fight with pancreatic cancer. She died peacefully, in her own home and surrounded by loved ones. Born on July 22, 1939, to Edwin and Gertrude “Trudy” Pangburn, in Evanston, Illinois, Barbara grew up alternating between Evanston (October to May) and her family’s resort in Manitowish Waters, Wisconsin (May to October). Her father passed along a love of horses, a passion she later shared with her children and grandchildren. Through her mother, Barbara inherited the joy of artistic expression. Barbara’s creative talent emerged early in life, and art ultimately became the primary medium through which she viewed and interpreted the world.

Barbara met her future husband, John McFarland, in second grade. On July 31, 1957, they began a partnership with one another that lasted sixty-six years, until Barbara’s passing. Together, they raised three children, navigated the cranberry-growing industry, started two innovative retail businesses, and pursued artistic endeavors, including as two of the founding members of the Manitowish Waters Art League. Each was the other’s north star and greatest fan. Barbara and John shared a wanderlust which led to a lifetime of travel, adventure and exploration. They loved skiing in Aspen and spent part of each year on Nevis, a beautiful island in the Caribbean, for nearly 30 years.

Barbara loved sharing stories about serendipitous events that happened during their travels, such as when she and John dined with Sidney Poitier and Arnold Schwarzenegger (minor detail: same restaurant, different tables).

Later in life, Barbara expanded her community volunteer activities to serve on the board of the North Lakeland Discovery Center in Manitowish Waters. This work combined her passion for nature and her desire to help steward a valuable community resource.

While Barbara treasured her many adventures, friendships, art, and community service, her greatest and proudest achievement was her children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. She is survived by her husband John McFarland, her children Chris McFarland (Kathleen Kvern), Brent McFarland (Frances Whitfield), and Cestjon McFarland (Tom Goodlin), 13 grandchildren, and 11 great grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her parents and her in-laws, John E. and June McFarland, as well as numerous beloved pets. A Celebration of Life will be held on September 16th at the North Lakeland Discovery Center in Manitowish Waters, Wisconsin from 11:00am to 2:00pm. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in her name to the North Lakeland Discovery Center or the Manito Art League Barbara McFarland Scholarship Fund.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

SEP **16.** 11:00 AM - 2:00 PM (CT)

North Lakeland Discovery Center
14006 Discovery Lane
Manitowish Waters, WI 54545

Tribute Wall



“ *Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Barbara L. McFarland.*



September 11, 2023 at 10:59 PM



“ *I was introduced to Barbara and John by Howard Pain. Barbara was immediately welcoming to a Nevis newcomer. Last March I spent time at the Hermitage while the McFarlands were staying there. We enjoyed breakfasts and dinners together. Barbara was such a lovely presence....kind, gentle, sharing stories of Nevis, her family and her art. What a privilege to have known her if only briefly. The world was a better place with her in it.*

Marggi Vangeli - September 05, 2023 at 12:22 PM

ML

“ *Barbara’s life was itself a work of art filled with sensitive and kind interpretations of people and animals and drawn to bring out the best in every living thing that crossed her path. Her canvas was as large as the world, her paint mixed to reflect her incandescent glow back into the world, and her brushstrokes a loving touch to family and friends.*

I was fortunate enough to be in her circle of friends on Nevis and the magical memories from those days will be with me as long as I can remember things. From dancing the night away at Old Manor, to being gently reminded to “Trust your partner” while playing bridge, to dinners shared under the moonlight with the lights of Charlestown sparkling in the distance, to sitting on the hard benches of our little church in Gingerland singing every verse of every hymn, her grace, generosity and gentleness will be remembered by everyone on that little speck of earth who knew her.

Maureen Labenski

Maureen Labenski - September 04, 2023 at 07:43 PM

SS

“ *WONDERFUL in all she did. As a wife, mother, grandmother, artist and as a friend she was without peer.*

We played bridge on Nevis every Wednesday as part of a group and every Friday 4 of us played as the Smarty Pants Bridge Club (my husbands name for us). That would be Barbara, John, me(Susan) and Ed Labenski (also gone now). A rousing good time was had by all. She will be sorely missed by any who had the good fortune to experience her friendship.

My husband and I called the McFarlands late one night because we had found a terrified puppy and our dog wouldn't allow her on our property. Barbara and John said they would mind her since Jolly was a good dog with others til we found her a home. 15 years later Coconut was still at the McFarlands "looking".

Many of us from and on Nevis are heartbroken.

All the best to John and all of the McFarlands and to Barbara "see you at the great bridge table".

Love you,

Susan Siegel and Roman Bohonowych

Susan Siegel - September 03, 2023 at 07:18 PM

RC

“ *Rick Sippl & Cindy planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Barbara L. McFarland.*

Rick Sippl & Cindy - August 30, 2023 at 09:01 AM

RC

“ *Rick Sippl & Cindy purchased the Sweet Tranquility Basket for the family of Barbara L. McFarland.*



Rick Sippl & Cindy - August 30, 2023 at 09:01 AM



“ *Blue Caribbean Bouquet was purchased for the family of Barbara L. McFarland.*



August 26, 2023 at 11:09 PM



“ *Barb McFarland was one of the most generous, genuine, careing, and loving person we have ever known. She was always concerned about our lives and our health, and willing to assist however she could. We visited their beautiful Nevis estate, 'Farland', numerous times and shared marriage renewals and fun times. Her artistic talent and gift of fun and laughter will forever be missed by us all. We love you Barb and, as you said before, we'll 'see you on the other side'. Lois and Larry Pfister, McFarland,Wi.*

Lois & Larry Pfister - August 26, 2023 at 10:37 PM

DR

“ *Barbara lead a beautiful life with her family and friends around her.*

We are pleased to have know her for the last 45 years as part of her art community and beyond. Her light will be missed. One of our special memories is boating out to Sand Island in the summer of 1987 to Mary Rice's Sand Island home. We spent 4 days there in primitive conditions painting and eating with artists and being entertained by musicians from Big Top Chautauqua.

Other more elaborate locations were art workshops to Bermuda, Cuba Jamaica, and the Caribbean. Of course, she made our Lac du Flambeau workshops fresh with her enthusiasm and even taught one this summer with Kathleen Kavern. A life well lived.

Barb will be missed by many. Our sympathy to John and family.

Her friends at Dillman;s Creative ArtsDenny, Sue, Steph, Todd, Scott and James..

dennis and sue robertson - August 25, 2023 at 04:09 PM



“ *My fond memories with Barb go way back to our teenage years. Memories include working at and living above the “Pantry”, moonlight rides, standing up at their wedding, and many other best friends’ adventures. The world has lost a beautiful, compassionate and creative soul. We are blessed to have known her. My love to the family and friends left behind to grieve.*

Ruthann Peterson

Ruthann Peterson - August 23, 2023 at 03:48 PM