

OBITUARY

Barbara Jean Kernan; Public Advocate and Activist

By Eric Putt

9:00 a.m. August 6, 2009

Barbara Jean Kernan, founder and owner of Thresholds Home and Family-Directed Funerals, passed away last October 27, 2008 at the age of 46, peacefully in her beautiful home in Lakeside carefully attended to by her life partner, boyfriend and fiance, Eric Putt, her son, Jared Radtkey, her daughter, Jessica Radtkey, and loving friends. Barbara passed following a diligent and difficult battle with breast cancer.

Several years ago, Barbara, while working on a PhD in Naturopathy, was asked if she was prepared to die. Her efforts to answer the question led to a personal investigation of the funeral industry in the area. Barbara was horrified by the treatment she received as she tried to view funerary facilities, understand funeral arrangements, and grasp how her survivors would proceed. Barbara was a public advocate and activist such that her mission in life suddenly changed. She simply had to find a way to assure that her family and others would not have to suffer such treatment. Barbara found that coming to terms with death is an important component to living a healthy life. Barbara desired and worked diligently to reclaim the age old traditions that nurture love, community, and healing at the time of death.

Barbara contacted and studied under Jerri Grace Lyons of Final Passages in Sebastopol, CA, and soon began to develop plans to implement in-home and fair-cost funerals and teaching in San Diego County. With the assistance and experience of her boyfriend and fiance', Eric Putt, they embarked on Thresholds. Soon, Thresholds was licensed as a funeral establishment, Barbara as a Funeral Director, and Barbara was ready to change the world! Barbara, Eric, and Thresholds worked with hospitals, hospices, civic groups, and the general public conducting in-service meetings, CE training, and general awareness discussions.

Born in Bethlehem, PA, Ms. Kernan grew up Bethlehem, PA and travelled extensively as a young woman. She earned a bachelor's degree in Nursing from the San Diego State University. She graduated with honors and is a member of Sigma Theta Tau Honor Society.

She worked several years as a Registered Nurse for the San Diego Unified School District with fond memories of Ceasar Chavez Elementary School.

Barbara carefully and successfully developed her faith through the guiding spirits of her love, Eric, and the Reverend Kevin Busey of the devoted spiritual community Universal Spirit Center.

Barbara retired in early 2008 with a desire to move and settle in Arcata, CA. She

loved her beautiful home, gardening, and being in the midst of nature. She cherished the out-of-doors and hiked, camped, and generally explored everywhere she visited. She loved her basset hounds, Randall and Hunter, her shepherd, Kali, and her several cats.

In addition, Barbara is survived by her mother and father, Anne and George Kernan of Bethlehem, PA, and her sister, Mary Anne Wood, of East Berkshire, VT.