

Barbara Bowman Prairie

August 4, 2024

Colleague AA In Memoriam Report
Publication: Spring Grove Obituaries
09/13/24
May 4, 1939 - August 4, 2024

It is with profound sadness that we announce the passing of Barbara Bowman Prairie, who died on August 4, 2024 at the age of 85 in Cincinnati, OH. She passed away peacefully, surrounded by her daughters, Adrienne and Karen, after a lengthy battle with Alzheimer's disease.

Barbara Prairie was born on May 4, 1939 in Memphis, TN to Eugene C. Bowman and Mary Irene Wilke Lowe Bowman. Barbara was an active Girl Scout throughout her youth and attended Mount Holyoke College in South Hadley, MA where she majored in Chemistry. While in NYC she met and married Rick Prairie then moved to Champaign, IL where their children were born. They settled in Cincinnati, OH, divorcing in 1973. During her time in OH, Barbara was active at St. John's Unitarian church, worked as a counselor at the Margaret Sanger Center, and raised her daughters as a single mom with very limited resources.

In 1982, Barbara and Karen moved to the Washington, DC area where she worked at All Souls Unitarian Church and then onto Boston in 1985. Barbara served as the General Assembly Administrator for the Unitarian Universalist Association for the next 17 years until her retirement.

She and husband, Michael Boardman, retired in Berea, KY on a whim and thrived in this small arts and crafts college town. Her door always open, Barbara hosted international students and others in her fully furnished basement apartment. She hosted the annual neighborhood Labor Day party, garden tours, fundraisers, committee meetings and more.

Barbara was an insatiable tourist. She loved traveling and seeking out random and off the beaten track attractions. If you ever mentioned that your door was open for a visit, she would absolutely show up as an enthusiastic guest. An excellent correspondent and engaged friend, she kept in touch with everyone no matter where she was, sending

postcards from every location, as well as her annual Groundhog Day letter.

Valuing experiences over material gifts, family members were frequently treated to trips with Barbara all across the US. Indeed, each grandchild chose their own destination with her for their 10th birthday celebration!

Barbara fostered her creative side throughout her life. She enjoyed sewing, pottery, macrame, woodworking, knitting, quilting, dancing, gardening, and dabbling in innumerable other media as well.

Barbara is survived by her brother, Gene Bowman, daughters Adrienne Cruise, Karen Prairie, stepdaughters Katherine Boardman and Sheila Boardman; grandchildren Ian, Ellie, Liam, Megan, Hannah and Becca, who miss her terribly but love all the wonderful memories of her. She was preceded in death by her husband, Michael Boardman (2005), and partner, David Oldham (2023).

A Celebration of Life will be held on Saturday, September 28, 2024 beginning at 11 a.m. at St. John's Unitarian Church, 320 Resor Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45220. All friends and acquaintances are invited to pay their respects and share their memories of Barbara. In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requests donations be made to the Berea Arts Council in Barbara's honor.

0164416 Ms. Barbara Bowman Prairie
Birth Name: Barbara J Bowman
Deceased Date: 08/04/24 Reunion Class(es): 1961

Last Address of Deceased: (Preferred Address)
3301 Melodymanor Dr
Cincinnati, OH 45239-5446
859-985-0301
4349730760
Address Chapters:
5231-CINCINNATI (OH)

Relations...:
Boardman, Sheila - Stepdaughter

- Source: RLA
 Cruise, Adrienne - Daughter
 - Source: RLA
 Edwards, Katherine - Stepdaughter
 - Source: RLA
 Prairie, Karen D.(Prairie); Reunion Class: (1989) - Daughter
 - Source: ALM
 Boardman, Michael E. - Late Husband **Deceased
 - Source: RLA

Employment

Employer	Start Date	End Date	Position
Unitarian Univ Association	04/01/85	12/31/85	General Assembly Adminis
All Souls Unitarian Church	01/01/82	06/30/85	Administrative Director
Unitarian Universalist Associa Margaret Sanger Center	01/01/85	12/31/85	Meeting Planner Counselor

Volunteer

Organization	Start Date	End Date	Role
Class of 1961	07/01/05	06/30/06	Reunion Co-Chair
Class of 1961	07/01/05	06/30/06	Reunion Booklet Chair
Class of 1961	07/01/05	06/30/06	Misc Reunion Chair
Class of 1961	07/01/00	06/30/01	Misc Reunion Chair
Class of 1961	07/01/06	02/06/11	Reunion Chair
Class of 1961	07/01/00	06/30/01	Reunion Gift Caller
Class of 1961	07/01/99	06/30/00	Class Agent
Class of 1961	07/01/90	06/30/92	Class Library Chair

Education

Institution	Degree	Date Rcvd
Mount Holyoke College	AB	06/01/61