



## Barbara Backman Tolle

July 31, 1948 - December 4, 2019

Barbara Backman Tolle, 71, broke many hearts when she passed away December 4 at home in Murrieta, CA, after an aortic aneurysm. She will be greatly missed by friends and family from Southern California to the suburbs of Chicago.

Barbara was not only an accomplished, organized businesswoman, she was humble, kind and generous, taking countless people and pets under her gentle wing.

In 1984, Barbara helped run water sports in the Olympic Games in Los Angeles. She worked 23 years for Hughes Aircraft, most prominently as a program manager for Spectrolab who supervised employees and negotiated major contracts. When she retired in 2003, she operated a consulting firm for small businesses for seven years, taught business classes at the University of Redlands and substituted for teachers in Temecula public schools. She especially enjoyed teaching high school journalism.

Barbara was born July 31, 1948 in Oak Park, IL to Loretta H. and John W. Backman. She earned academic honors at Oak Park River Forest High School, along with learning violin and ballet and enjoying such sports as ice-skating, gymnastics, tennis and swimming. At Michigan State University, she studied journalism, political science and four languages, intending to become a foreign news correspondent. Daunted by that field's glass ceiling, she shifted gears into business. After earning her MBA from UCLA, she rose into male-dominated positions at Hughes.

At Hughes, Barbara fell in love with another manager, Russell Tolle, whom she married Oct. 17, 1987. They lived in Westchester and Santa Clarita before retiring to Murrieta. Having no children together, they adopted and

tended several dogs, and Barbara wrote stories about the adventures of these precious members of her family. Barbara previously married and divorced Robert Daley.

As a leader among amateur women golfers in Riverside and San Diego counties, Barbara knew countless women -- and their families -- by name. For 15 years, her mentoring strengthened the membership and budget of Temecula Creek Inn Women's Golf Club. With kindness and a positive approach, she emphasized inclusivity, professional accounting and adaption to the digital age.

Barbara's other interests include music, sewing, home decorating, entertaining, balanced news, literature, photography and travel. Every other year since 1975, there were family vacations at the same inn in Estes Park. These were highlights for Barbara and she never missed a single trip.

Barbara's survivors include Russell Tolle, siblings Kenneth (Vickie) of Omaha; Julie (Bruce) Specht, Galena, IL; Steven (Gloria), Forest Park, IL; 2 stepchildren; 2 step-grandchildren; and countless close friends.

A celebration of life will be held in on February 29, 2020 at England Family Mortuary (27135 Madison Ave. Temecula, CA 92590) at 11:00 am.

In lieu of flowers donations can be made to "Animal Friends of the Valleys" 33751 Mission Trail Wildomar, CA 92595  
[animalfriendsofthevalleys.com](http://animalfriendsofthevalleys.com)



# Comments

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“ Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Barbara Backman Tolle.



February 28 at 02:30 AM

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“ I knew Barbara and Russ Tolle when we worked at Hughes Aircraft many years ago. I was delighted to run into them again while golfing in San Diego County. I am so sad that she is gone. She was a pleasure as a friend--a loving, giving friend. In fact, I think I still have a pair of her socks that she loaned me many years ago when I forgot mine. She will be missed by our golfing community.

Ellen Koury - February 22 at 06:22 PM

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“ Cheryl and Jerry Durrant purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Barbara Backman Tolle.



Cheryl and Jerry Durrant - February 20 at 12:13 PM

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“ I am so sad that we lost one of my kindness and dearest friends. I was lucky to be able to see her several times when she was in the hospital. I met her sister, Julie, and was so glad she got to see her before she passed. I know that she is missed by so many and there is no replacement for her. Her spirit will always be with all of us and she would have been proud of all that she accomplished even though I know she would have liked to do more.

Rest in Peace my friend!!

Pattie Woolley



“ I was saddened to hear of Barbara’s sudden passing. I knew Barbara as a teenager and she was always warm and welcoming to me. I am sending tons of love to the entire family. From: Varda Cheskis

Varda Cheskis - December 31, 2019 at 12:29 AM

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“ 1 file added to the album Barbara Tolle



Diane Cole - December 23, 2019 at 10:19 PM

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“ 2 files added to the album Barbara Tolle



Diane Cole - December 23, 2019 at 09:24 PM



“ Barbara was honored by Temecula Creek Golf Club in 2018.

Diane Cole - December 23, 2019 at 10:12 PM

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“ 1 file added to the album Barbara Tolle



Diane Cole - December 23, 2019 at 09:18 PM



“ Barbara's sister Julie at Temecula tribute for popular member of Temecula Creek Women's Golf Club.

**Diane Cole** - December 23, 2019 at 10:14 PM

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“ Barbara and I met my first year living in Temecula and playing golf at Temecula Creek Inn. She was a godsend, giving me a sense of belonging and camaraderie. She encouraged me to take on new challenges later in life. I admire her humility and ability to achieve great things with grace. I considered her an organizational genius and true humanitarian. I will miss her more than my words can express.

**Diane Cole** - December 23, 2019 at 09:04 PM

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“ I'm so sorry to hear of Barbara's passing. I was one of her Customers while she was a Program Manager at Spectrolab. She always told me the truth (even if I did not want to hear it). Those of you who worked with her will know exactly what I mean when I say she was a true professional who made a difference in my life. Her family would not have seen her "work personality" but given how genuine she was, I suspect you would also know what I mean. She did share with me one time (while we were working through an especially difficult situation with some solar panels) that "that meeting with your Program Manager was as bad as my slice is sometimes". She knew how to defuse situations and she helped me keep a perspective. Maybe she is working on that slice now.

**Mike Mitchell** - December 23, 2019 at 11:55 AM

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“ Dear Russ,  
I was so sorry to hear of Barbara's recent sudden passing. She was a wonderful lady in every way and a very talented program manager. My sincere condolences to you and your family. Dave Lillington

**David Lillington** - December 22, 2019 at 03:32 PM

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“ Barbara and I became friends in eighth grade. We were around the block neighbors in Oak Park and she was the first one to befriend me when we moved into our house. We shared sleepovers and good times. She was very accomplished in High School and everyone knew she would go far. Her smile just lit up the room. I was delighted to reconnect with her at our 50th reunion in 2016 in Oak Park. This news is a cruel blow. Much love and heartfelt sympathy to her family, especially her sister Julie who I so enjoyed talking with at the reunion. Linda Rains Allman Phoenix, Maryland, OPRFHS Class of 1966.

