



# Jeanne Marie Baker

APR 20, 1932 - AUG 31, 2020



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## **Jeanne Marie Baker**

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**L**et me tell you about Jeanne M Baker. Jeanne Marie was born in South Bend Indiana on the 20th of April 1932. Her farther, Alexander Nemeth, was a master pressman, he printed high quality color photographs for the publishing industry. Her mother, Anne Nemeth, was a librarian. It's no wonder Jeanne loved books and reading, it was in her genes.

She grew up in South Bend with her younger sister Marilyn and two younger brothers, Tom and Mike. She went to school there and completed her education with a bachelor's degree in Math from St. Mary's. Her future husband, Jon Baker, earned a bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering and a commission in the US Navy at Notre Dame, the boy's school just across the street from St Mary's. After graduation they were married and moved to San Diego California where Jon did his active duty in the Navy while Jeanne worked at the Naval Weapons Research Lab.

One day while Jeanne was working at the Naval Weapons Research Lab an early model IBM Computer was installed. Jeanne was fascinated with this new 1950's technology. She read all the manuals and taught herself to program it, which was not anything like programming today's computers. Back then you programmed a computer by plugging wires into boards and installed the boards into the computer. She didn't know it at the time but she was a woman pioneer in the computer industry.

They had four children together, Pat, Jerry, Morgan and Mark. After Jon completed his active duty in the Navy, they moved to Orange County California where Jeanne worked for Rockwell International as a computer programmer and Jon earned a Law degree then started a firm specializing real estate law. By now Jeanne was an old hand at getting a computer to do useful things; Rockwell would provide her many challenging projects and she quickly earned a reputation as a major problem solver. Although Jeanne was never on active duty in the military (some folks claim that being a military wife should count as active duty) she served her country in a much greater capacity working on many Department of Defense projects for Rockwell. She did her part in making this country one of the strongest countries in the world.



## Obituary

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There were sad times in Jeanne's life, over the years she lost her younger brother Mike, her father and mother, Tom's wife Sandy. She lost Jon. She lost two exceptional friends and colleagues from Rockwell, Dorsey Smith and John Duffy. And finally, she lost her youngest son, Mark.

There were also good times, she had five grandkids, three boys and two girls; two and a half great grandkids, two boys and a girl due in October.

Her work at Rockwell was very rewarding. While most of her work involved classified projects, there were some very interesting unclassified projects that she could discuss. For instance, she contributed to the Apollo project and she helped develop one of the first computer fingerprint identification systems. I think the Florida Department of Law Enforcement still has one. Jeanne enabled technical advances in several fields that have quietly impacted the lives of millions.

In the late 1970s she was loaned out to Rockwell Automotive in Troy, Michigan, they wanted to develop one of the first automotive computers for heavy trucks. My name is Marc Matthews, I also worked on the project and that is where I met Jeanne. We worked together for almost a year. When she returned to Rockwell in Anaheim, I went with her. We developed a long relationship based on trust, respect, love and the occasional chocolate chip cookie.

In 1989 Jeanne found herself in a big fight with cancer. She fought that cancer hard until she whooped it. And she whooped it so bad it never came back. After that Jeanne decided to retire and travel around the county with me as I worked on different computer projects. She bought a sewing machine; of course, it had a computer in it. While I was working, she would enjoy sewing. Sometimes I would need some help on a project and she would work with me, some customers were glad she was there as good help was hard to find.

Jeanne liked to travel and we took advantage of every opportunity to go somewhere. We loved the mountains, the forests, the coast, the prairies and the desert. If a place was wild and beautiful, we tried to go there. We camped, hiked, wondered and enjoyed special places all over the United States. We have been in all 50 states and lots of places in Canada. We traveled overseas also but we always had an affinity for the good old USA. Some places we visited many times but others we could only visit once, we enjoyed them all. We didn't get to all the places we wanted to visit, there are just too many, but we tried and we had great memories of our travels.

On Wednesday, the 19th of August 2020, Jeanne was admitted to the Emergency Department at Tallahassee's Capital Regional Medical Center, she was in a coma. The doctors determined that



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she had a major stroke and that there was no medical intervention that would help her, she was dying. Her children were allowed to visit with her and say their goodbyes. On Monday, the 24th of August 2020, Big Bend Hospice made arrangements so that Jeanne could be brought home and she was discharged from the hospital. On Monday the 31st of August 2020 she slipped away quietly and peacefully. She had a soft landing and was never in pain.

We knew that someday our lives together would be over and we each planned for that time. Plan A involved both of us getting runover at the same time by a beer truck. Plan B was more realistic, we planned that one of us would survive the other. We did estate planning to make it easier for the survivor.

We discussed flowers as part of our preparation, Jeanne loved flowers and her children provided many flower arrangements while she was alive. But Jeanne didn't want flowers after she was gone, she wanted folks to take the money that they would have spent on flowers and have some memorable experience with their loved ones.

Someday Jeanne and I will be reunited again. After I'm gone, we want our ashes to be mixed together and part of our ashes buried next to my family where we would have a traditional marker just like normal folks. Then we want our remaining ashes to be spread all over the county, a little here and a little there, in some of the many special places that we enjoyed so much during our lives. And who knows, some day you may be traveling and come to a place that you seem to really enjoy. If while you are there you happen to get a hankering for a chocolate chip cookie, well that just might be Jeanne and I letting you know that we had also enjoyed that place.

Jeanne did not want a memorial service, the folks that were fortunate to know her will celebrate her in their hearts forever. Jeanne was a beautiful woman and I am a very lucky guy to have Jeanne as my soul mate and to be able to share my life and our adventures with her for over 41 years. Thanks for letting me share Jeanne's story with you, she was really something.



# Tribute Wall

**Jeanne Marie Baker**

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**Jim Hightower** lit a candle in honor of Jeanne.

September 15 at 3:42 PM



**Charlie Pults** lit a candle in honor of Jeanne.

September 14 at 4:40 PM



**Jay Boggs** lit a candle in honor of Jeanne.

September 14 at 3:06 PM



**JB Jay Boggs** September 14 at 3:08 PM  
We're happy we could share some of those good times and interesting places.



**Larry Crowe** lit a candle in honor of Jeanne.

September 14 at 10:49 AM



**Scott Sutor** shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.

Marc had asked me if I would like to visit with Jeanne after Hospice had brought her home. He told me she was unresponsive. I respectfully declined telling Marc that my memory of Jeanne is her walking on the grass airstrip and yelling good morning to her. She would wave and reply the same. To the family, you were very lucky to have such a remarkable lady in your life. Scott Sutor



September 5 at 1:26 PM



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**Estelle Crisafulli** posted:

To Marc & Jeanne's children, Morgan, Jerry & Tom as well as the extended family - you're in our thoughts & prayers. We loved Jeanne & will always cherish the fun times we had together. Our sympathies, Estelle & Kevin

September 5 at 1:02 PM



## Media

**Jeanne Marie Baker**

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**Scott Sutor** shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.

September 5 at 1:26 PM



Jeanne's morning walk



## **Memories only last if you share them**

Join us in honoring Jeanne by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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