



Barbara Palau Lipford

August 6, 1965 - June 26, 2025

Barbara Palau Lipford—Barb to just about everyone—died peacefully at home on Virginia’s Eastern Shore on June 26, 2025, due to complications from heart disease and diabetes. She was just weeks short of her 60th birthday and had lived a life full of fire, love, and purpose.

Born in Washington, D.C., Barb lived simply and loved hard. She spent her last years in the place that gave her the most peace—the quiet beauty of the Eastern Shore. She found joy in the beach, comfort in the sound of the waves, and freedom in that open stretch of sky and sea.

If you knew Barb, you knew a woman who didn’t back down. She was bold, sharp, and deeply loyal. She stood up for the people and causes she believed in—loudly and without apology. She was the one you called when you were in trouble, the one who’d show up ready to fight for you, no matter the cost. Barb didn’t just care. She acted.

She is survived by her son Richard Palau, grandson Jeremiah, her husband Gary Lipford, her brother and sisters, and a wide circle of nieces, nephews, cousins, and chosen family. Once Barb made you part of her world, you were in it for good.

Barb didn’t have degrees on her wall, but she had the wisdom of someone

who lived through the hard parts of life and kept showing up anyway. She could out-research any expert and knew how to navigate complicated systems—medical, legal, or emotional. She used that knowledge to fight for others: survivors of trauma, people in recovery, anyone who was hurting or overlooked. She understood those roads because she'd walked them herself.

Barb loved music that made you feel—from simple country songs to classic rock and unfiltered rap. If it was real, she loved it. She also loved to cook, especially for people she cared about. Feeding someone was her way of saying, You matter. You're safe here.

She had a special bond with animals, from her beloved dogs to the duck that once lived in her apartment and the goat and chickens that roamed just outside her back door. Her home was often chaotic, but always full of love.

Barb was fiercely proud of her family, and she carried her parents' memory with her every day. Now, she's joined them—and the pets and friends who were her family, too. We know she's somewhere barefoot in the sand, finally at peace, surrounded by love and family.

A celebration of Barb's life is being planned. If you'd like to be kept in the loop, please call or text Heather Kyle 540-878-7057. Contributions to help with final expenses can be made here: <https://gofund.me/8673a46f>

To everyone who loved Barb—thank you. She gave everything she had to this world. Despite the struggles she faced, her compassion burned bright. She was a protector, a fighter, a soft heart in a hard world. And she will be missed more than words can say.