



## Barbara Jean Koby

December 15, 1943 - May 6, 2026

Barbara Jean Koby (née Green), 82, passed away peacefully on May 6, 2026, in Charleston, South Carolina, with her daughter, son-in-law, and grandchildren at her side. A lifelong Northwest Indiana resident for more than 80 years, Barbara spent the majority of her life in Merrillville and Crown Point, where she was well known and formed many longtime friendships and connections over the years.

Barbara was born on December 15, 1943, in Gary, IN, to the late William R. Green and Dorothy M. Kurczewski. Growing up in a close-knit community, she would develop an adoration for the people around her, which would shape her whole life.

Barbara, who had a deep love of learning, graduated from Lew Wallace High School before attending Western Michigan University. She later completed her master's degree at Indiana University—a testament to her incredible work ethic and passion for education.

In 1975, Barbara welcomed her daughter, Victoria Jean, into the world. Barbara's adventurous spirit led to countless family road trips and cross-country journeys, which became cherished memories for Victoria. They saw incredible sights, visiting the Grand Canyon, Redwood Forest, and Mount Saint Helens. From her mother, Victoria gained a love of travel and the desire to experience as much of the world as she could.

Across four decades, Barbara dedicated herself to teaching English at Merrillville High School. As she stood in the front of her classroom, Barbara left an imprint on countless students and fellow teachers. Her former students—who have grown up to be doctors, engineers, writers, parents, and teachers themselves—will tell you that something Barbara said in her English class is still with them today. She was often stopped when out and about, whether at Meijer's or dining out with friends, by former students eager to reconnect with their favorite teacher. Her impact extended beyond the school; Barbara's eldest granddaughter, Alyssa, went on to study English and become a Middle School English teacher, carrying her grandmother's love for literature into her own classroom.

Barbara was a leader in her community and found true joy in supporting others, however she could. She served as president of the Lake

County Historical Society for over a decade and volunteered at the museum, always eager to share her town's history. Barbara also led her Kiwanis International chapter for many years. Her granddaughters have vivid memories of tagging along with Barbara to Kiwanis meetings and watching their grandmother lead meetings and advocate for the children in her community. Her granddaughters never knew Barbara to not be taking on a charitable cause. They will never forget sitting at her kitchen table, pulling pop tabs off cans to donate to the Ronald McDonald House. Barbara's devotion to charity was ever-present.

Later in life, Barbara moved to Mount Pleasant, SC, to be closer to family. She quickly formed friendships at Merrill Gardens, where she lived for the past 2.5 years, exploring town with friends and attending local events like Grandparents' Day, where her great-grandson decorated cookies for her. Living nearby, Barbara watched her daughter's real estate career and saw her grandchildren achieve their own goals (Alyssa became a mother and teacher, Ashley a paramedic, Olivia an RN, Evelyn a hairstylist) and her grandson grow into his unique interests.

Barbara was outgoing and quick-witted. Known for her humor, she made people feel comfortable wherever she went. She leaves a

legacy of intelligence, strength, and love for her family and friends as a devoted mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, educator, and friend whose presence will be deeply missed.

She is survived by her daughter, Victoria Waldron (Robert), of Mount Pleasant, SC; her grandchildren, Alyssa Strickland (Sebastian), Ashley Julio (Rigoberto), Olivia Waldron, Evelyn Waldron, and Landon Waldron; and her beloved great-grandson, August Strickland.

She is also survived by her cousin and dear friend, Jan Shield; her brother, William Green (Susan); her nephews, Richard Green (Carlie) and Christopher Green (Mandy); and great-nephews, Nick, Logan, and Gavin. She also leaves behind numerous cousins, dear friends, and many others whose lives she touched throughout the years.

Memorial visitation will be held on Tuesday, May 26, 2026, from 10:00 AM until 12:00 PM, with a memorial service beginning at 12:00 PM at Burns Funeral Home & Crematory, 10101 Broadway Crown Point, IN. Burial will immediately follow at Calumet Park Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Barbara's memory to St. Jude House or the Lake County Historical Society. Please visit Barbara's online obituary and guestbook at [www.burnsfuneral.com](http://www.burnsfuneral.com).

# Cemetery Details

## Calumet Park Cemetery

2305 W. 73rd Ave.  
Merrillville, IN 46410

# Previous Events

## Memorial Visitation

MAY **26.** 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

Burns Funeral Home & Crematory - Crown Point  
10101 Broadway  
Crown Point, IN 46307  
(219) 769-0044  
info@burnsfuneral.com  
<https://www.burnsfuneral.com/>

## Memorial Service

MAY **26.** 12:00 PM (CT)

Burns Funeral Home & Crematory - Crown Point  
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# Tribute Wall

JP

“ I graduated from Merrillville High School in 2001, and I had Mrs. Koby for English my sophomore year. One of the memories I have from being in her class was what she did whenever a student was misbehaving. She would yell at that student and seriously reprimand him or her, and then she would turn to the rest of the class and smile. I always loved it when she did that and it always made me laugh. I would occasionally run into her at Strack and Van Til when she would be there doing something for the Kiwanis Club, and she was always very friendly when I saw her. May she rest in peace.

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**Jimmy Procter** - May 22 at 03:01 PM

MG

“ Michelle Gawrysiak lit a candle in memory of Barbara Jean Koby



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**Michelle gawrysiak** - May 20 at 10:40 PM

MG

“ I graduated from Merrillville in 1988 and had Mrs Koby for a few English classes. I had stopped her many times throughout the years to just share with her some memories I had of her classes and the impact she had on my life. I had learned early to buy the cliff notes for all the books we read and she snagged them from me every time. I had told her years later I had undiagnosed dyslexia and it was easier for me to read those and happily I got A's in her class. We also had lunch in the middle of her class and if you fell asleep she would let you sleep and punish with her look if someone tried to wake that person up. Many people woke up missing lunch or in a different class. She was funny, and made English one of my favorite subjects. RIP Mrs Koby! I always knew you were one special lady.  
~Michelle Gawrysiak~

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Michelle gawrysiak - May 20 at 10:39 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Barbara Jean Koby.



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May 20 at 10:24 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Barbara Jean Koby.

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May 20 at 10:24 PM

BC

“ *Bill, Sue, Chris, Mandy , Rick and Carli purchased the Enchanted Cottage for the family of Barbara Jean Koby.*



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**Bill, Sue, Chris, Mandy , Rick and Carli** - May 19 at 01:52 PM

BC

“ *Bill, Sue, Chris, Mandy , Rick and Carli planted a <a href="/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518">Memorial Tree</a> in honor of Barbara Koby.*

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**Bill, Sue, Chris, Mandy , Rick and Carli** - May 19 at 01:52 PM