



Darlene Mary Bonaquist

August 15, 1950 - March 3, 2026

Darlene McKee Bonaquist, 75, of Clinton Township, Michigan, left this earth peacefully on March 3rd, 2026 following an unexpected, brief illness. She passed away in the loving company of James, her cherished husband of 55 years; Jason, her only child and devoted son; Lisa DeBonis (of Sharon, PA), her youngest sister and lifelong confidant and companion; and Tracy Kennedy (of Farrell, PA), her treasured niece.

Darlene was born on August 15th, 1950, in Sharon, Pennsylvania, to John and Louise McKee (Ague). The fourth child of seven (six daughters and one son), she was welcomed into a bustling household; humble, but filled with an abundance of love, light, and laughter. Through the years, she and her siblings forged unshakable bonds of mind and heart that enabled them to endure and overcome life's many hardships, including the shocking decease of father John due to a malignant brain tumor.

Darlene was educated at Youngstown State University, where she earned summa cum laude Bachelor's honors in sociology (major) and anthropology (minor). Shortly after marrying James Bonaquist, the couple followed James' financial career path to Michigan and began to build a new life in St. Clair Shores, moving to Clinton Township a few years later.

After giving birth to Jason and devoting many years of her boundless love and energy to motherhood, she returned to college and graduated from the

Physical Therapy Assistant program at Macomb Community College. She worked in the therapy field for several years after graduation, and during the course of her labors brought hope, healing and inspiration to many.

Darlene was a lifelong fitness enthusiast: an 'aerobics queen' in the 80s heyday of the movement, she maintained a regular workout routine despite a busy schedule and even taught regular classes at local community centers. Later in life, she stayed active by enrolling in Pilates and Zumba classes, which she attended until her untimely passing.

Darlene was also a lover of theater and music, particularly classic R&B and soul, imbuing her son Jason's musical tastes and career path with a deep and lasting influence. She loved to dance whenever the opportunity presented itself, and would fiercely 'cut a rug' at every family celebration. She regularly attended local performances of musical productions and other live theater presentations at various venues around the area.

Darlene is survived by her beloved husband James, her only son Jason, her adored sisters Janice DeJulia (Matthew) of Hermitage, PA; Gail Kennedy (Tedford) of Sharon, PA; Sheila Wareham (James) of Lynchburg, VA; and Lisa DeBonis (Emil) of Sharon, PA, along with a large extended family that she loved dearly. She was preceded in death by her father, John McKee; mother, Louise Ague McKee; stepfather Leonard Zimmer; sister Betsy Barner; and brother John 'Jack' McKee.

Memorial Visitation Saturday March 21st, 9:30am until the time of the 11:30am Funeral Service at Wujek-Calcaterra & Sons, Inc. 36900 Schoenherr at Metro Parkway (16 Mile). Please share memories with the family at their "On-Line Guestbook" at WujekCalcaterra.com

Previous Events

Memorial Visitation

MAR 21. 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM (ET)

Wujek - Calcaterra & Sons Inc - Sterling
36900 SCHOENHERR RD
Sterling Heights, MI 48312

Memorial Service

MAR 21. 11:30 AM (ET)

Wujek - Calcaterra & Sons Inc - Sterling
36900 SCHOENHERR RD
Sterling Heights, MI 48312

Tribute Wall



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Darlene Mary Bonaquist.

March 21 at 09:58 AM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Darlene Mary Bonaquist.



March 12 at 09:47 PM



“ I was so very sad to hear of Darlene's passing. She was such a special lady. I want to send my sincere condolences to Jim, Jason and all of Darlene's family. She will be truly missed. Rest in peace my dear friend.
Cathy Klimek

Cathy Klimek - March 07 at 03:49 PM



“ I'm sad to hear of your loss.y memory goes back to high school. I remember Darlene as such a kind gentle spirit It was nice to have known her

Janice (Herriott) Sweeney - March 06 at 10:24 AM

SO

“ A few years ago, I was struggling with the reality of becoming a 33-year-old matriarch after my mom died. A single phone call from Mrs. Bonaquist became lunch, and lunch turned into lunches - with a woman who seamlessly went from being “my friend’s mom” to a friend.

Surprisingly, Darlene Bonaquist became the person I didn’t know I needed until she showed up. Conversations about music, motherhood, and the messy middle created a space for me to breathe, re-orient, and rebuild. She was... remarkable. Truly. Compassionate, witty, and unexpectedly hip. I am deeply grateful to have shared time and space with her.

My heart is with you, Mr. Bonaquist, Jason, and your family. - Sorilbran

Sorilbran - March 05 at 10:25 PM