



Sara Elizabeth Barker

Sara Elizabeth Barker died on March 10, 2012 in Austin, Texas at the too young age of 62. Born in Salem, Massachusetts on January 22, 1950, she was a native New Englander, and Maine was truly her soul-home. She followed her partner to Texas in 1984 and made a rich life here surrounded by many friends, family and workmates who loved her.

She is survived by her life companion, Kathy Murphy; her beloved dog, Koko; her daughter Carol Duggan, husband Jim, and their children Chrissy and Kevin; her aunt Ruth Lumbra; her sister Janet E. Barker; her sister Pat Noll and husband Lucky, and their daughters Alex and Kate. She was preceded in death by her father and mother, Clarence and Wilma Barker.

After receiving a Bachelor of Arts from Goddard College in Plainfield, Vermont, Sara did graduate work in folklore at Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green. She began her career in publishing at MIT and Harvard University Presses in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and worked in promotional marketing following that. In 1992 she received a Master of Education, Adult Education and Human Resources Development from the University of Texas at Austin, and began a long career in employee relations, organizational development, and facilitation/mediation services for the Texas Department of Transportation where she remained until her retirement.

Among her many passions, Sara was most devoted to the work of Therapy Pet Pals of Texas where she volunteered with Koko for 10 years, earning Volunteer of the Year in 2006. Her love of animals, but particularly dogs, was deep and mutual. Dogs just seemed to know. Her arrival at the Rainbow Bridge was likely a raucous affair.

The family gratefully acknowledges the care shown by the staff at both South Austin Medical Center and Texas Oncology, and particularly the compassion shown by Dr. Laurence K. Tokaz who remained in her corner through the end. To those who knew her well, it comes as no surprise that the framed card she kept on her desk read "For a long time, she flew only when she thought no one else was watching".

A celebration of Sara's life will be held on March 31, 4:00 p.m. at Wildflower Unitarian Universalist Church, at 1314 E. Oltorf Street (space shared by Faith Presbyterian Church).

Memorial contributions may be made in her name to Best Friends Animal Society, 5001 Angel Canyon Road, Kanab, UT 84741 or online at www.bestfriends.org.