



## **Barbara J. (Cross) Mezzanini, Ret. UFD**

May 29, 1955 - December 12, 2021

MARCY – Barbara J. (Cross) Mezzanini, Ret. UFD, age 66, went home to the Lord on Sunday, December 12, 2021, with those she loved most in her heart. Barbara was born in Melrose, MA on May 29, 1955 to the late Harold N. Jr. and Gloria May (Leason) Cross. There she was raised and attended local Melrose schools, which was then followed by her choice to relocate to Utica. Sometime later, her family moved there as well.

At one time, Barbara had been married to Joseph Mezzanini, with whom she remained good friends for the duration of their lives. Barbara felt this goodwill was a true blessing.

Barbara's career stands out with the particular accomplishment of being one of the first women professional firefighters and paramedics stationed in the city of Utica at Engine 2, Engine 7, and Rescue One. She was so proud of all her accomplishments – especially that they played a pivotal role in paving the way for other women in her field. Barbara retired after numerous years of service, having left behind a sizable legacy. To many, Barbara had become an icon.

She was a behind-the-scenes person; she did not act to gain recognition. Instead, Barbara sought to love well, and was known for her humility and generosity in caring for family or anyone in need. She shared what she had and is remembered for offering guidance and kindness to her siblings, who will always remember her selflessness. Barbara, the big sister who often took on a best friend and mother figure role, taught memorable life lessons, imparted

respect, and gave the best “heart hugs.” She was truly amazing.

Barbara harbored a special place in her heart for the great outdoors; she loved and appreciated nature. When she could get away, Barbara soothed her soul with many trips to the Adirondacks and even periodically crossed the border into Canada to see moose, which she loved so much that images of the noble creatures adorned her home. While in the Adirondacks, Barbara prioritized kayaking at any Adirondack Lake she could. The calm waters and the softly-crying loons made for such beautiful moments to her. She Loved her beloved animals, that she was blessed with. They all really meant so much to her. Additionally, Barbara would take the time to savor the sunrise and the sunset. She often took her siblings, nieces, and nephews to these great places, teaching them the quiet ways to invest in themselves.

Another legacy Barbara leaves with those who loved her are her many artistic endeavors and achievements. Barbara was a self-taught artist who gifted her works to others. Her pieces were so detailed and memorable. She even painted the “Joe Mezzanini ‘ice cream truck’” that many would remember in Utica. Moreover, Barbara had a wood workshop in her cellar, which gave her the outlet to be creative and inventive – thinking outside the box – in a whole new medium.

Barbara was a holistic and spiritual woman with a true relationship with Jesus. She was also known for carrying blessed prayer stones around, which she would give away whenever there was a need for encouragement. Her gift was sure to lift up the recipient’s spirits. Barbara practiced her faith at CenterPoint Christian Fellowship Church and Ministries. There, she dug deeper in her relationship with Jesus, and met the congregation at one of their Music Fests. She also delighted in the fellowship found there – her heart really belonged to those relationships.

She was truly a blessing to her family and all those fortunate to have known her.

Barbara is survived by her beloved siblings and their loves: Sharon Kehr, Christine Bridgeford, Robert J. Cross, Red Buccheri, Orra F. Cross and

Carolina Realey, and Rose and Angel Gonzalez. She cherished the memory of her brother Harold N. Cross, III who passed on April 11, 2002. Barbara will be fondly remembered by her nieces and nephews, the many whom she loved dearly and individually; as well as by her great-nieces and great-nephews, whom she came to know and love; although Barbara had no children of her own, these were her children, and she had many precious times with them. Barbara would often say that love and worry go together in harmony. She was blessed with the Mezzaninis; there were many good times and mutual concern was shared. Throughout her life, Barbara had many wonderful friends, whom she also leaves behind. She was predeceased by her paternal grandparents, Harold N., Sr. and Helen (Humphrey) Cross, as well as her maternal grandparents, Charles Sr. and Ida (Clark) Leason.

The family would like to extend a special thank you to the staff at MVHS at St. Luke's campus who were outstanding, as well as to the palliative care staff – all went above and beyond. The family also is grateful to Pastor Wayne and his wife Barb Clemens, who prayed and visited with her, nourishing Barbara on her final journey home. A special Thank you to K-Love radio station 107.3 as Barbara listened to and supported.

Memorial contributions may be made in Barbara's honor to CenterPoint Community Garden online at <https://app.easytithe.com/app/giving/cpcf> once here select other and, in note please put Community Garden-Barb Mezz. Relatives and friends are respectfully invited to attend Barbara's Celebration of Life, which will be held at CenterPoint Christian Fellowship Church and Ministries, 8021 NY-12, Barneveld, on Tuesday December 28th, 2021, at 5pm. Regardless of vaccination status, face masks are required, to remain in compliance with the state and county mask order.

# Previous Events

## Celebration of Life

DEC 28. 5:00 PM (ET)

CenterPoint Christian Fellowship Church and Ministries  
8021 NY-12  
Barneveld, NY

# Tribute Wall

PM

“ I met B in a chat room on AOL many years ago. We had mutual interests and I knew of her from a friend from UFD. We met one year when we were going to Utica for Christmas, we didn't have a ride from Syracuse to Utica, of course B graciously offered to do the job and we had a new family member. We have had many adventures since then including the Grand Canyon and Sedona one year. We stayed with her when we visited and I had a wonderful girls weekend in a cabin at her favorite place. We went kayaking on the lake, most peaceful place. B, you will be forever missed! Heart hugs my sister in Christ!

Patti Mangano - December 17, 2021 at 01:51 PM

EZ

Barb was a good soul. She was a very capable EMT on Uticas Rescue1. Gone too soon.

eli zogby - December 20, 2021 at 08:29 AM



“ [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was purchased for the family of Barbara J. (Cross) Mezzanini, Ret. UFD.

December 17, 2021 at 12:09 PM

PM

“ I met Barb about 17 years ago & we became friends since then. She had the best Halloween parties ever. I hope she is at peace now. We will all miss her. <3



Pete Maneen - December 17, 2021 at 11:43 AM

JG

*Barb was a caring person. She cared for everyone in need. She was thoughtful kind and respectful to anyone she meet. She will always be remembered that way by those who knew hee. Rest in peace my frined.*

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**James Guarascio** - December 17, 2021 at 06:44 PM

LS

*“ Barb always had a way of making a person feel better if they felt down or depressed. She would get you to talk things over and let you cry if you felt the need. I still have a prayer stone that she gave me and I will cherish it and memories of her forever. Many times she took me out for lunch also. She was so thoughtful and kind and I will miss her very much. My condolences to her family. Lynne Shanley*

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**Lynne Shanley** - December 16, 2021 at 11:00 PM