



## Darlene A. Bonczkowski

August 7, 1967 - March 11, 2023

Darlene Bonczkowski, beloved daughter, mother, sister, aunt, niece, life mate and friend died Saturday, March 11, 2023, in Portland, Oregon. She was 55 years young.

Darlene was born Darlene A Gause in 1967 in Philadelphia, PA, to parents Shelley and Jerry Gause. In 1982 at the age of 15 she moved to St. Louis with her mom Shelley and brother LR.

After graduating high school, Darlene was finding her path forward and future career. As a Cheer Leader for a professional indoor soccer league, The St. Louis Storm in the early 90's, she was afforded great opportunities. Following that she joined TWA as a flight attendant where she was able to travel the world both Domestic and Internationally where Spain was a frequent destination. Other early careers included Veterinary Assistant, Furniture Refinisher, Nail Technician, as well as a hand model for nail brochures.

And then she found her niche and new passion. FITNESS. This began a career that touched so many people and where she experienced body building. During this time she competed professionally and won many awards. In her journey to become master of her craft, she pursued and received professional licensing credentials, and her scope was broad. From 1997 until she moved to Oregon in 2020 she continued to be instrumental in many

aspects of the industry. Through the years Darlene continued to follow her devotion in the field she loved as a Freelance Fitness Instructor, Massage Therapist, Esthetician, Yoga Instructor, Personal Trainer, Health Coach, Nutrition Specialist and Fitness Director. Two of her many accomplishments were “Zumba for The Cure” and working with “Rock Steady Boxing” as a certified coach specializing in individuals with Parkinson’s disease.

During her extraordinary and colorful life, she met and married Paul Bonczkowski. They had 4 beautiful children. Her life was devoted to her children. Divorced in 2015, she began a new chapter. Moving to Oregon in 2020 to be close to her mom as well as join Eric and begin a new journey, she found a new career as well working in the Providence Health System, winning the respect and love of her new work family until her passing.

Darlene loved the great outdoors. Exploring Oregon and all it had to offer was a new passion.

The loss of Darlene is profound, mourned by her mother, Shelley, her 4 children, Jacob (and his family), Mitchell, Samantha and Nicholas, her brother LR, sister Kari and their children, her uncle Mark and his wife, along with Eric, her beloved most significant other.

A Celebration of Life will be hosted on April 14th at 1:00 PM at Hillside Chapel, 1306 7th St, Oregon City, Oregon. Dress code- Not black if possible. This is a celebration. She will be dearly missed by all.

# Previous Events

## Celebration of Life with Reception

APR 14. 1:00 PM (PT)

Hillside Chapel  
1306 7th Street  
Oregon City, OR 97045

# Tribute Wall



“ *Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of Darlene A. Bonczkowski.*



April 09, 2023 at 01:03 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Darlene A. Bonczkowski.*



April 07, 2023 at 10:52 AM



“ *Days of Sunshine Bouquet was purchased for the family of Darlene A. Bonczkowski.*



April 05, 2023 at 08:56 PM



“ *Sending my heartfelt condolences and love to you Shelley and your family! I will always remember Darlene and the wonderful conversations... and the wonderful time we had when she was in Palm Springs. An amazing person. Her memory will always be a blessing! Julian*

**Julian** - March 17, 2023 at 12:20 PM

LB

“ *My first friend...*



LR Gause .. Darlene 's little brother - March 15, 2023 at 10:17 PM



“ *Blue Caribbean Bouquet was purchased for the family of Darlene A. Bonczkowski.*



March 15, 2023 at 07:13 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Darlene A. Bonczkowski.*



March 15, 2023 at 06:48 PM



“ *Fairest of All was purchased for the family of Darlene A. Bonczkowski.*



March 15, 2023 at 06:26 PM

LJ

“ This is a hard one for us. We will never forget what a bright light Darlene was. Her kindness, strength, encouragement, camaraderie and friendship are so cherished. We were lucky to have known her. Our condolences to all her family. John and Laura Janavicius

Laura Janavicius - March 15, 2023 at 05:20 PM

PH

“ Darlene's kindness came through in every interaction. As a co-worker I will miss her zest for life and passion for excellence. My heart is with her family during this painful time. May you find strength to face tomorrow in the love that surrounds you today.

Peg Hutton - March 15, 2023 at 04:53 PM

MH

“ Your Providence family will remember the easy going, funny and graceful spirit. A board was put up at the clinic to share memories. We miss you ❤️🌸



Marja H. - March 15, 2023 at 03:42 PM



“ Your Light Shines was purchased for the family of Darlene A. Bonczkowski.



March 15, 2023 at 03:41 PM

DA

“ *Firecracker - that's the word that leaps to mind when I think of Darlene. So full of joy, laughter and attitude.*

---

**Dawn** - March 15, 2023 at 02:41 PM



“ *Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet was purchased for the family of Darlene A. Bonczkowski.*



---

March 15, 2023 at 02:25 PM

SG

“ I met Darlene in elementary school. Darlene was a light to be followed. She had a way of inspiring people to follow her. We cheered for the neighborhood recreation center (Rhawnhurst Raiders) where we stayed for 4 years cheering on the football team. Darlene and I made up cheers together, practiced routines together, and bonded over common friends. When I found out she was moving to Missouri, I was devastated. We shared a common friend in Michelle Camperson. When Darlene would come to visit PA as an adult, we got to hang out on South Street with our spouses, great memories. She attended my wedding in 2002 and Michelle's years later. We were never far from thought, just far in distance. I looked up to Darlene in all she was able to do in her life. Cheering professionally, something I always wanted to do but never accomplished.. and so much more. I think I speak for all who knew her at some point, my life was better for her being a part of it. She will be greatly missed and always remembered. To her family, my sadness at hearing of her passing can not even begin to compare to the enormous hole you have on your hearts. Sending love and prayers. RIP Darlene, until we meet again..

---

**Sheri Groff** - March 15, 2023 at 01:52 PM

AL

“ A beautiful light to brighten a dull day! Always with a smile and a positive attitude. Her energy, one of a kind! Many blessings to the family!

---

**Andrea Lugar** - March 15, 2023 at 01:42 PM

KG

“ I met Darlene when she came to visit her Mom at work and was immediately struck by her love of life and sense of humor. She lit up a room and you instantaneously knew you that you were in front of a beautiful soul.

--Kathy Grahn

---

**Kathy Grahn** - March 15, 2023 at 12:49 PM