



## Barbara Dorothy Recht

August 21, 1931 - January 25, 2024

### Barbara Dorothy Recht

Barbara Recht died January 24, 2024 at the age of 92. Born Barbara Siegel and raised on Milwaukee's West Side, as a child she experienced the joy of a large and growing family in a dynamic, bootstrap-ping Jewish community. Facing family suffering and illness with remarkable innate resilience, she recited to herself: "God forgive me if I whine; I have two hands, the world is mine!"

Apart from college stints in Madison and Los Angeles, she never moved far from family and lifelong friends. At 19, she married Jack Recht, and together they raised their own family in Fox Point, then Bayside, Wisconsin, but this suburban residence belied her cosmopolitan attitude and acts. She was exceptionally well-read, an inquisitive and acute reader: from Garnett's translation of *War and Peace* in her impressionable teens, to Guenther Grass, Ursula K. Le Guin and Edmund White during her impressionable adulthood. She stood for social justice before that was its name, whether as a volunteer for the local Planned Parenthood Defense Task Force, or as a patron of the Grand Avenue Club. She had a sense of style and looked amazing in a pillbox hat. She loved all kinds of music and art. She and Jack were prominent supporters of the Milwaukee Museum of Art and many other local arts institutions. They made their beautiful home an exhibition of hand-picked

paintings and sculpture.

She was an ace tennis player despite, or perhaps because of, her lousy (underhand!) second serve. She was a more-than-competent golfer, and a contract bridge Life Master. She loved to travel and was fun to travel with. She had more than her share of family tragedy and fought through her own depression, eventually becoming, like her mother before her, the solid rock of an extended family. She seemed insufferable to some of her children at certain stages of their lives, and she unfailingly showed up for all of us, every moment that we needed her. In fact everyone was convinced that Barbara loved them more than anyone else (here's a secret: she did). She listened and was a wise advisor. She had a superb sense of humor - subtle, dry, capacious - and may have been the worst joke teller in human history, except for later in life when she told several jokes rather well.

Barbara is survived by her sister Toby; daughter Sydney and son-in-law Bob Appel; son Dan and daughter-in-law Elaine Selsberg; son Tom; son Jim and daughter-in-law Nina Dillon; son Robert and daughter-in-law Melanie Taylor; her 12 grandchildren; 2 darling great-grandchildren; and many loving nieces and nephews. She was predeceased by her husband Jack; brothers Arthur and Marty; niece Elizabeth; nephew Bob; and beloved daughter-in-law Rae Ellen Keller. The family is deeply grateful to Barbara's caregivers, whose thoughtfulness and dedication over the years exceeded all requirements.

Funeral service 12 PM Friday, January 26, 2024 at Congregation Shalom, 7630 N Santa Monica Blvd, Milwaukee, WI 53217. Burial to follow at Anshai Lebowitz Cemetery, 326 South Hawley Road, Milwaukee, WI 53214. In lieu of flowers, the family asks that those who are able consider a donation to any of the following: The National Alliance for the Mentally Ill ([nami.org](http://nami.org)); Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin ([plannedparenthood.org/planned-parenthood-wisconsin](http://plannedparenthood.org/planned-parenthood-wisconsin)); the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine

Refugees ([unrwa.org](http://unrwa.org)).

A meal of consolation following burial at 9097 N Bayside Drive, Bayside on Friday only.

# Cemetery Details

## Anshai Lebowitz Cemetery

326 S. Hawley Rd.  
Milwaukee, WI 53214

# Previous Events

## Service

JAN 26. 12:00 PM (CT)

Congregation Shalom  
7630 N Santa Monica Blvd  
Fox Point, WI 53217

## Shiva

JAN 26 (CT)

Recht Residence  
9097 N Bayside Drive  
Bayside, WI 53217

# Tribute Wall

JP

“ I had the pleasure of playing bridge with Barbara from time to time when I was unemployed. I would always get a kick when I'd ask Barbara why she made a bid that was a little unusual. Her standard answer was "I just had a feeling". I would reply, I'm sorry I didn't realize I goosed you Barbara. She would always laugh at that. I will miss her.

*John Pereles*

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**John Pereles** - January 27, 2024 at 11:22 AM