



Beth Andrea Bagley-Stanton

July 14, 1957 - November 17, 2023

Beth Bagley-Stanton, 66, died at home on Nov. 17, 2023, the end of a life that brought joy to so many others. Missing her already are her husband of 40 years, Tom; their sons, Zack (Molly), William and Taylor (Sophie); her brother Rick (Peg) Bagley; a handful of nieces and nephews; and many official and de facto godchildren.

A lifelong resident of New Baltimore, Beth was a beloved presence in her community. Her story hours were exuberant and song-filled, a mainstay of childhood for generations of kids in the Anchor Bay area. Many grew up to bring their own little ones to Storytime with Mrs. Beth, singing along to distantly familiar melodies they hadn't heard since they themselves sat cross-legged on the floor. The opening lines of one of those songs — “love is something if you give it away, you end up having more” — captured her approach to life.

Her affection for books and music started early as a way to experience the world beyond the shores of Lake St. Clair. The only surviving daughter of Richard Bagley, a Canadian-born tool and die maker, and Marj Egge, a kindergarten teacher, Beth graduated from Anchor Bay High School in 1975. She earned a bachelor's degree in early childhood education from Central Michigan and a master's in library science from Wayne State. While director of New Baltimore Public Library, she opened it up as a community space. Her

decision to welcome teens who wanted a place to play “Dungeons and Dragons” led an area pastor to campaign for her firing. (He was unsuccessful.) She later worked as a reference librarian, children’s librarian and school librarian in Macomb County.

At the New Baltimore library, she met her future husband, then a young, self-styled hotshot reporter, when he came in to ask who owned the car outside with a John Anderson for President bumper sticker. (She did.) Tom was drawn to her dancing blue eyes (which lasted until the end), and she to his luxuriant brown hair (which did not).

In 1983, the same year they married, they founded the Bay Voice newspaper with Dorothy and Joe Stabile. The paper expanded into a chain of weeklies as their family grew — to three in 1985, when Zachary was born, to five newspapers by 1988, when William and Taylor arrived. (“We stopped having kids when they started coming in pairs,” Beth often said.)

Her children were the center of her life. She nourished their creativity with dress-up parties, talent shows and imaginative bedtime stories. She chauffeured them to extracurriculars and never missed a ball game or band concert, attending because she cared deeply when something mattered to those she loved.

She developed a superhuman ability to see the good in everyone. She was a mentor to dozens, a mother figure of sorts to dozens more. (“She will always be my Mary Poppins,” one told Beth’s family shortly before she passed.) Beth was involved in New Baltimore Historical Society, Anchor Bay Community Foundation and Anchor Bay Community Band, and was New Baltimore’s citizen of the year in 2008.

She loved music and playing guitar, and could often be heard singing

harmonies to Joni Mitchell, The Beatles, Arlo Guthrie or CSN. Her sweet tooth (strawberry rhubarb pie, key lime pie, anything baked by Gerri Mack) lasted until the end, even as early-onset Alzheimer's stripped her world to studs.

In the closing weeks of her life, surrounded by her husband and children, her words were sometimes unintelligible. But the affection behind them was apparent. Her love was something: She gave it away; she ended up having more.

Memorial visitation will be 2-8 p.m. Friday, Nov. 24, with a service at 1 p.m. Saturday at Wasik Funeral Home in New Baltimore, located at 35259 Twenty-Three Mile Road 48047.

Memorials may be made to the Anchor Bay Community Foundation.

Previous Events

Memorial Visitation

NOV **24**. 2:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Wasik Funeral Home - Gendernalik Chapel
35259 23 Mile Road
New Baltimore, MI 48047

Memorial Visitation

NOV **25**. 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM (ET)

Wasik Funeral Home - Gendernalik Chapel
35259 23 Mile Road
New Baltimore, MI 48047

Memorial Service

NOV **25**. 1:00 PM (ET)

Wasik Funeral Home - Gendernalik Chapel
35259 23 Mile Road
New Baltimore, MI 48047

Tribute Wall



“ Beth was such a great person in the Rorah's life as well. She was a good friend to my sister Kim who past why to soon as well. Beths mom was a prime example of what Beth turned into. Prayers for the family. We send our prayers.

Scott Rorah - November 30, 2023 at 06:19 PM

MC

“ When Beth, Rick, Uncle Rich, and Aunt Marj would come home to Sheffield, New Brunswick, us Canadian cousins got to spend time with our "Rich American Cousin." Beth was one of the older cousins and always had a gathering of us little ones around her. My fondest memory was of her playing her guitar and singing Puff the Magic Dragon, and Octopus's Garden under the Butternut tree on the front lawn at Grammy's place along the river. Once, when she came home, she had new contact lenses. All her little cousins were amazed, we had only heard about these things. During lunch, one lens had come loose and while trying to put it back in place, it fell into Beth's soup. In my little mind, having Beth coming to visit was like having a movie star in the family. My condolences to all of you. Beth was certainly a treasure and a beauty.

Marjorie Chase - November 27, 2023 at 03:56 PM

SS

“ Just returning from Beth's pitch perfect funeral. Tom in the midst of grief you and your sons put together an on point service for your Beth. Rarely have I seen it's equal. You see stories everywhere because you are a storyteller. That's why you write. You and the boys did her proud. Condolences.



Sharon Marsh Steffey - November 25, 2023 at 03:59 PM



“ *Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of Beth Andrea Bagley-Stanton.*



November 22, 2023 at 11:58 AM



“ *The first time I met Beth was at the New Baltimore library as a child. She was kind and friendly and was one of the first to welcome my sister and I to this new community. She was intentional about knowing and loving people and quickly learned my love of all things living in the ocean. She encouraged in me a love of learning, reading and books. She set aside a packet w a personal note on it and gave it to me- all items w Jaques Cousteau including Calypso logs❤️. I will never forget her larger than life personality that made us feel at ease and her own creativity that encouraged me to follow my own dreams. Celebrating her life and the blessing that Her and Tom are to my family.*
Cary Martens

Cary Martens - November 21, 2023 at 07:21 AM



“ *Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Beth Andrea Bagley-Stanton.*



November 20, 2023 at 06:23 PM

BB

“ It is hard to condense a lifelong friendship that had so much influence on the lives of so many. Although not very much older than us Beth was our favorite Babysitter. She started out teaching us Bible stories and songs at First Congregational Church New Baltimore as a young teen. Can you imagine our good fortune when our parents secured her as our Babysitter? I am pretty sure we were the training ground for Beth’s later career. She even accompanied they family on camping trips/weddings. She would teach us to dance at the wedding then take us back camp and tuck us in for the night while my parents stayed at the wedding. On her regular babysitting gigs, we got a full dose of story time and music appreciation. I remember a few musical highlights among the many. One time Beth brought over her new Don McLean “American Pie” album. We got to listen to the album a few times maybe, even a little past our bedtime? For my brother Tim and I hands down our favorite artist was Beth! Probably, our favorite performance was Beth singing the Beatles “Rocky Raccoon.” She would never let on that she was tired of singing it, even after 200 encores. To be fair we were a pretty exuberant audience. I wish we would have had YouTube to capture the moment. I am not doing the memory justice, but it is forever etched in our minds (even 50+ years later). I can only express how we loved by this little anecdote. Beth must have had another commitment on a certain occasion when my parents needed a sitter? My parents made the mistake of hiring another neighborhood girl for the job. My parents went on their outing. My brother and I were not having it. This girl was obviously not Beth. We invented a new game of “runaway away from the sitter.” She would corral one of us and the other one would go out the other door and run around until corralled, then repeat. Somewhere during these shenanigans my parents showed back up. They had doubled back on us after forgetting something. We gladly suffered the consequences of our actions. Because, my parents made sure Beth was our sitter ever after. Love and miss you, Beth! ~ Bill Bade

Bill Bade - November 20, 2023 at 02:12 PM

TS

That's beautiful, Bill. Thank you. Tom

Tom Stanton - November 20, 2023 at 03:44 PM

KS

“ *Our children loved participating in Storytime and the Summer Reading Program at the library. Beth fostered a love of reading, music and even acting with these programs. Her presence in the community will be sorely missed and it was a blessing to have known her. We are praying for Tom and their wonderful family.*

Kit and Greg Scheessele - November 20, 2023 at 12:23 PM

JL

“ *Our community has lost such a treasure...Beth was so knowledgeable and involved in all aspects of New Baltimore...The Library, Anchor Bay Marching Band, and so many others. Her life was cut short and we lost a truly wonderful person. My prayers go out to Tom and her family. Know that she made a difference in the lives of so many people...*

Janet Larson - November 19, 2023 at 12:31 PM

MK

“ *Such a sad time for not just Beth's family and friends, but for the entire Anchor Bay Community that had the privilege of knowing someone with such a big heart and love of children. I met Beth many years ago when taking my children to story time at the New Baltimore Library. She brought books to life to children at a very young age. I believe that this helped to instill the continued love of reading in my four children. May she rest in peace!*

Mary Kaiser - November 19, 2023 at 11:12 AM



“ A grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Beth Andrea Bagley-Stanton.

November 19, 2023 at 08:41 AM



“ The Skrzyniarz Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Beth Andrea Bagley-Stanton.

The Skrzyniarz Family - November 18, 2023 at 05:38 PM



“ Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Beth Andrea Bagley-Stanton.



November 18, 2023 at 05:38 PM