Bernadette Marie Steele (Vadeboncoeur)

Beloved mother of Danica and loving wife of Nicholas, Bernie passed away surrounded by family on Friday, February 21, 2025, in Victoria, BC.

Bernie lived a life of courage, resilience, gratitude, and love. We would all be better people if we followed her example.

Bernie made the news when she was born, along with her sister Colette and brother Jim, on August 18, 1967 in Powell River, BC. Powell River was not accustomed to the birth of triplets, and the three new babies were celebrated with special gifts and pictures in the paper during Canada's centennial year. Their parents, Andy and Sheila (née Lenihan) Vadeboncoeur were soon able to take the "little ones" home to their five siblings: Gerry, Anna, Alex, Kevin, and Chris.

Bernie spent some of her early life in Port Alberni before the family moved to Courtenay, where she completed elementary and high school. An influential part of Bernie's early life was the Cystic Fibrosis Camps that she and Colette attended, where they made many lasting friendships and met their best friend of 30 years, Becky.

Following high school, Bernie attended nursing school in Vancouver. She went on to nurse at Vancouver General Hospital and Kelowna General Hospital.

The pinnacle of Bernie's life was being mom to Danica. She was fiercely proud of all of Danica's accomplishments and enjoyed every moment spent with her, including a special trip to Paris in 2019. Danica has inherited her mom's deep ability to love.
One of Bernie's best decisions was marrying Nicholas. Together, they built a happy and comfortable life of love,

laughter, and support.
A relationship that Bernie particularly valued was with her sisters, especially Colette. Holidays were spent together, daily texts and calls exchanged, and Bernie always knew what was happening with Colette, and vice versa. When Bernie and Colette were joined by Anna and Chris on their annual “Sisters Trip”, they travelled to a new place, drank wine, and caught up on each other’s lives. It was time that all four sisters cherished.

Bernie’s easy-going nature and generosity of spirit attracted people to her. She had a wide, loyal circle of friends from all stages of her life. Important friends included those from Summer Camp 1977-1985; High School best friends since 1984; members of VGH nursing school class of 1990; Happy Valley Elementary school PAC since 2006; Jacqui’s Moms’ Group since 2004; Lisa & Dave, Marta & Craig, Barb & Kevin, Darcy, Jacqui & Glen, Kris, Carrie, Tracey, Jenn, Joy, Brenda & Dean, Val, Marlo, and many more.

Although Bernie never let her Cystic Fibrosis diagnosis define her, it did play a large role in her life. Following her lung transplant in April 2008, Bernie became more involved in advocacy through fundraising, education about new treatments, supporting others with CF, and holding a seat as president of the Victoria CF chapter. She also organized the CF Great Strides Walk and had her own team, Bernie’s Buddies. Bernie was the recipient of the Dawn Green Award and the Colleen Kohse Award. A gift that Bernie and her friend, Barbara Todd, left for us is a podcast telling the story of Bernie’s journey with Cystic Fibrosis and her lung transplant, Air of Optimism.

Bernie was predeceased by her parents, Andy and Sheila Vadeboncoeur, a nephew, Joshua, her best friend Becky Marshall, and PAC friend Judy Szirmay.

To mourn her loss and celebrate her life, Bernie leaves her beloved daughter, Danica and loving husband Nicholas; siblings

Gerry (Lorrie), Anna (Doug), Alex (Kelly), Kevin, Chris (Rob), Colette, and Jim (Terelyne); and numerous nieces and nephews.

Bernie met challenges head-on and never gave up, was thankful for every moment granted to her, and loved deeply. In her memory, we will strive to better live her values in our lives.

Bernie's family would like to thank the nurses and doctors at Royal Jubilee Hospital ICU and Dr. Antonsen, for their compassion and tremendous efforts to care for her.

Bernie will be greatly missed by all who loved her.

At Bernie's request, there will be no funeral service.

Condolences may be offered to the family below.

McCall Gardens
www.mccallgardens.com