

Darla Kay Baack

1958 – 2021

Darla Baack was born in Marengo, Iowa to Shirley and Marvin Baack. She was the youngest of three children and grew up on a number of farms in Iowa County, Iowa. Her father was also the local sexton, so she spent numerous hours helping to groom local cemeteries. From a young age, she had an interest in comics, art, writing, and science fiction. After high school, she attended the Hawkeye Institute of Technology in Waterloo, Iowa where she earned an Associate's degree in Commercial Art.

She moved to Austin, Texas in 1979 looking for work. There, she met and married James Hilton – then an Astronomy graduate student at the University of Texas. They were quite happily married for over forty years.

Darla and James moved to the Washington, DC area in 1986, where she took a job at a hobby shop that included stained glass among its offerings. She took an introductory course in it so that she could speak knowledgeably to the customers. She was hooked because she loved the challenge of working in cold glass along with its emphases on lines and color. After several years at the hobby shop and a local stained glass supply store, she opened a successful studio, Fishbaack Art Glass Studio, with her friend and collaborator, Linda Fishman.

Darla and James decided to relocate to Jacksonville in 2002 after an extensive search for a place to live that has a strong sense of community and an appreciation of the arts. Here she continued her stained glass studio. She particularly enjoyed teaching students in her medium of choice. She became an early active member of the AMBUS art group, which ran a gallery in the Orth Building in the mid-2000s. They continue to show in various galleries around Oregon. Darla also loved to volunteer at the Rogue Gallery and Art Center in Medford. She particularly loved to help out with their annual art auction and dinner. With all this going on, she found time to work a couple days a week at Pico's, a fair trade store in Jacksonville.

Darla was diagnosed with acute lymphoma in April 2020. She underwent chemotherapy and had a short remission. She succumbed to the resurgent lymphoma after a three-month fight in the hospital. She is survived by her husband, James, her sister and brother-in-law, Donna and David Krebs of Webster, Iowa, her nephew Eric Krebs of North Liberty, Iowa, and her niece, Jenny Hahn, and family of Sigourney, Iowa.