

# Babs Suhr Remembrance

By Dave Evans

This special remembrance is dedicated to all spouses, parents, family members, and mentors who have had a positive impact on their working partner.



Barbara A. Suhr, affectionately known as Babs, passed away peacefully at the age of 88 on February 23, 2024. Born on August 30, 1935, in Hays, Kansas, she spent her formative years in Topeka, Kansas. Her pursuit of knowledge led her to the College of St. Mary (Nebraska) where she earned a B.S. degree in Chemistry. Babs's heart found a perfect match in L. Gene Suhr when they married on September 1<sup>st</sup>, 1961. Their love story spanned over 5 decades until Gene's passing in 2013.

The couple moved to Corvallis, Oregon with Babs taking on the roles of raising two children, Stephen (Steve), and Christopher (Chris), caring for her Mother Teresa (Tree) and Gene's father Lenord (Len), and serving as an unpaid staff member while Gene worked as a paid employee for an engineering consulting firm called Cornell, Howland, Hays, and Merryfield (CH2M). Gene's work took them both and sometimes other family members to Seattle, Washington; Reston, Virginia; Los Angeles-Orange County, California; Alexandria, Egypt; Boston, Massachusetts; and finally, to Vancouver Washington where Gene retired. At different times Len and Steve also worked for CH2M or as it was later called CH2M HILL.

As copied from the CH2M HILL Alumni Website, "Much has been said, sometimes with a bit of hyperbole, about the stalwart heroes and heroines who founded and steered CH2HILL to the heights of glory it enjoyed until it was sold to Jacobs Engineering, December 13, 2017. An unintended oversight is the role that these spouses, husbands and wives, played in this arduous journey. They are amongst the true, invisible, unsung heroes and heroines who contributed immensely to the growth of CH2M HILL. Their sacrifices are legendary; their patience and understanding have been unlimited; their strength has been a resource that has been drawn on continuously over the decades by all who worked their hearts out to make CH2M HILL succeed." Babs was such a person.

In the water and wastewater group Bab's was a host to staff and clients, a mentor to other spouses, and person who housed other staff to save the Firm money. Julie Brendis, a friend Babs mentored, said, she is remembered as someone who was smart, kind, compassionate, humility, funny, never gossiped, center of attention without seeking it, role model, a good friend with sincerity, great faith, great steward of relationship, and ability to

entertain. And as Steve mentioned Babs could meet anyone and never met a stranger. She was determined and cared for others.

Finally, as best said by Jerry and Mary Boyle, she was Yin for Gene's Yang, they both will be sorely missed and that they made the world a better place. Google says, Yin [feminine energy] and Yang [masculine energy] are present in everyone, and when balanced, they promote peace and harmony in a romantic relationship. A couple with balanced yin and yang energy listens and supports each other equally, ebbing and flowing from these roles depending upon their needs.

A funeral mass for Babs was celebrated on Monday, April 15, 2024, at the St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church in Vancouver, WA. A livestream of the mass was provided for those who couldn't attend in person. The following timestamps of the speeches are offered.

Father Armando's honoring of Babs and Gene ... [https://youtu.be/gIU\\_JQrlgqg?t=1332](https://youtu.be/gIU_JQrlgqg?t=1332)

Friend Julie Brandeis' and Steve's Remembrance ... [https://youtu.be/gIU\\_JQrlgqg?t=3912](https://youtu.be/gIU_JQrlgqg?t=3912)