



Teresa Yolanda Baca

July 21, 1956 - September 6, 2026

Flagstaff, Arizona

Teresa Yolanda Baca died in Flagstaff on September 6, 2026. She was seventy. She was born there on July 21, 1956, in a house that smelled of pine pitch and coffee, and she learned the highway to the canyon as a weekday neighbor long before it became a postcard. Her mother cleaned rooms at a motor court. Teresa learned that a clean sink is a kind of welcome that does not require a speech.

She spent nineteen years at a small motel off Milton, first making beds, later keeping the night desk for people who arrived late from the desert with a child asleep in the back seat. She kept extra blankets without putting a note on the counter about generosity. When a storm closed the pass she made coffee until the urn complained. Later she sold sandwiches at a park concession and treated a long line of tourists as weather you could live with if you kept moving.

She married Ruben Baca in 1978. They raised a daughter in a bungalow that needed a new roof more often than the budget admitted. Ruben worked the railroad. Teresa packed lunches that could survive a climb in altitude. After he died in 2016 she kept his chair for a year and then gave it to a nephew who needed a place to do homework.

Neighbors remember a woman who would jump a battery in the motel lot at dusk, who knew which intern needed a second explanation of the register, and who could hear a rice pot without looking. She loved the first snow on the peaks, a green-chile burrito on a Saturday, and the particular quiet after the last key was returned. She died in Flagstaff, in thin air she had always preferred to a heavy heat. The desk is someone else's now. The patience she practiced there is harder to replace than a vacancy sign.

Services

A rosary and a simple service in Flagstaff. The family welcomes a favorite hymn and a gift to a hospitality-workers' fund.

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