



## Jan Otterson

December 29, 1958 - February 15, 2015

Jan Marie Otterson was born on December 29, 1958 in Fargo, ND to Arne and Joy (Lepird) Otterson. In 1964, she moved with her family to Mesa, AZ and in 1967 to Scottsdale, AZ. Jan graduated from Chaparral High School and went on to attend Arizona State University. During her youth, she was involved with her family showing horses at Gymkhana event and beef cattle in 4H. She worked as an administrative assistant in a variety of businesses. Jan raised her son with his father (Dean Milke). She was active with youth soccer and baseball, coaching and cheering for her son's teams.

After the passing of her parents in 2006, she moved to Litchville, ND. In 2007 Jan met Dale Rienstra, they were married in 2012. She enjoyed her career as a corrections officer at the North Dakota State Department of Corrections in Jamestown, ND. Jan developed a special interest in refurbishing a couple-of turn-of-the-century homes and spent a great deal of time outdoors: gardening, mowing and tending to perennial gardens.

She raised and showed Chinese Shar-pei dogs for 25 years. During those years she was able to travel to many places around the United States. Dale and Jan enjoyed RV travel to dog shows and going on family camping trips. Jan passed away at her home on February 15, 2015, while being cared for by her family with the help of Hospice of the Red River Valley. She fought a courageous battle, against the odds, with pancreatic cancer.

Jan is survived by her husband, Dale Rienstra of Litchville, ND; her son Derek Milke of Phoenix, AZ; a sister, Jessica (Kevin) Owens of Glendale, AZ; a

brother, Scott Otterson of Litchville; nieces and nephews, Jennifer Owen, Shauna Stotts, Marissa Owens, Wyatt Owens, and Mellisa Gardoni; her step-children, Chad Rienstra of Bismarck, ND, Jackie (Kent) Vlieger of Huron, ND, and Ryan (Erin) Rienstra of Miles City, MT; step-grandchildren, Callie, Seth, Ada, Cora, Owen, Joise, Tess, and Luke; her in-laws, Elaine and Jack Daily, Jeff Rienstra, and Michelle Rienstra; as well as an extended family of aunts, uncles and cousins. She also leaves her beloved pets, Polaris, Marty, and Calico.

She was preceded in death by her parents.

A memorial service for Jan will be 1 pm Friday, February 20, at First Reformed Church, Litchville, ND, with Pastor Paul Peterson officiating. Visitation will be 6 pm Thursday with a prayer service at 7 pm at the Oliver-Nathan Funeral Chapel, Valley City.

Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to the Oliver-Nathan Funeral Chapel. An online guestbook for Jan is available at [www.oliver-nathanchapel.com](http://www.oliver-nathanchapel.com)

# Cemetery Details

## Litchville Cemetery

Litchville, ND

# Previous Events

## Memorial Service

FEB 20. 1:00 PM (CT)

First Reformed Church  
210 8th Ave.  
Litchville, ND

# Tribute Wall

NW

“ Jan brought two beautiful Shar Peis into our lives. In 2004, she gave us our puppy Coltraine (who now lives in Israel, still with us) and in 2006, his sister Zimra (who died in 2012.) Both of these dogs brought us so much joy. When we get compliments on how beautiful Coltraine is, we always said a Thank You in our hearts to Jan. She was a special, generous woman, and she will always be close to us because of our pets.

*Surprisingly, I looked Jan up online about two weeks ago, just wanting to send her an email, and noticed that her website was not up-to-date. I wish I had been able to connect to her and tell her how much she was appreciated.*

*May Jan's memory always be a blessing to those who had the honor of knowing her.*

*Michael and Nanci Wilharber*

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**Nanci Wilharber** - February 22, 2015 at 07:14 AM

PE

“ Jan was my distant cousin...distant because i had only met her a handful of times...distant in geography & my second cousin. But we all knew Jan--- she was the beautiful model-like cousin with the long blond hair, the tan, the smile from Arizona. Larger than life:) And then she did something unusual. ..she moved from AZ to ND. The exact opposite of most! Suddenly this beautiful on the inside & out cousin was gracing us with her presence at family gatherings, get togethers & visits. Jan brought her energy, kindness and pure sunshine into every room she entered & every person she met! Just two weeks ago we were visiting at her beautiful home (full of color, family heirlooms & whimsy!) and even thru her own discomfort she continued to be concerned about everyone else..."Paula--are you hungry, thirsty, how were roads, can you bring this to your Grandma..?" Jan was kind, brave, fun, had a sense of adventure second to none! She always seemed to see the good in everyone & everything, her glass was always half full. Words cannot express how much she was loved or how much she will be missed. Rest in Peace my dear cousin & friend Jan. Deepest condolences to Dale, Derek, her family & loved ones.  
Paula Ekman & family

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Paula Ekman - February 20, 2015 at 11:15 AM

AL

“ I got to meet Jan working at the prison, I enjoyed working with her. She was an upbeat person and I was glad to have worked with her. My thoughts and prayers to the family. She will be missed



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Amanda Lawrence - February 20, 2015 at 10:33 AM

DD

“ I met Jan in college. She was always upbeat and radiated such grace and elegance in every situation. When my girls were about 4 and 7 year old, she visited us with several of her dogs and the girls had such fun frolicking with them. Then she took the girls inside her camper and they pretended to have a tea party at the table. Jan loved playing with them and giving them pointers about good manners; they still remember that. I never took Jan's kindness for granted.

*Darla Dakin*

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**Darla Dakin** - February 19, 2015 at 10:12 PM

KF

“ Kathy Fudge(Melvard) lit a candle in memory of Jan Otterson



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**Kathy Fudge(Melvard)** - February 19, 2015 at 07:31 AM

KF

“ My deepest sympathy and prayers for you and your family at this time of loss. May God bless you.

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**Kathy Fudge(Melvard)** - February 19, 2015 at 07:30 AM

LB

“ I am so very sorry for your loss. I knew Jan through the love of our breed and have such nice memories of her from various National Specialties. She was a great friend to the Shar Pei breed, and also Shar Pei rescue, always willing to help out when she could. She will be missed by many.

*Lois Brown*

Lois Brown - February 18, 2015 at 05:46 PM

 Pat  
Evetts

“ I didn't know Jan all that well, but always enjoyed our conversations when we would get together at the Shar-Pei Nationals. My most sincere condolences to her family. She will definitely be missed



Pat Evetts - February 18, 2015 at 12:38 PM



“ Jan you were a fantastic lady and will be so missed!  
*Kris Henning*  
*Destiny Shar-Pei*

Kris Jensen Henning - February 18, 2015 at 12:07 PM

KN

“ Kim & Galen Flanagan and Lee & Nancy Nicholson purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Jan Otterson.



Kim & Galen Flanagan and Lee & Nancy Nicholson -  
February 18, 2015 at 08:31 AM

DT

“ I met Jan at one of our Shar Pei Nationals. She greeted me like an old friend and was kind and gracious. Such a beautiful woman, and that hair- wow!!! She popped in from time to time on Facebook, again with kind supportive words even when she was facing her own illness. I will never forget Jan and her beautiful smile. Gone much too soon, RIP Jan. you will be missed.  
Debbie



Debbie Theodore - February 18, 2015 at 03:11 AM

KK

“ My most sincere sympathies to the family of Jan. She was a lovely lady and will be missed by many.  
Kate Kester  
ROKA Shar-Pei




Kate Kester - February 17, 2015 at 10:56 PM

 Sue Anderson

“ Sue Anderson lit a candle in memory of Jan Otterson



Sue Anderson - February 17, 2015 at 10:07 PM

 Sue Anderso

May you now RIP Jan.

Sue Anderson - February 17, 2015 at 10:08 PM

JM

rES

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**Judy Meitin** - February 18, 2015 at 12:55 PM



*She was always kind and smiling... Our thoughts and prayers are with her family...*

*Heather & Stewart Mundy*

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**Heather Mundy** - February 18, 2015 at 01:04 PM

MD

“ *I can't tell you how much I miss seeing Jan at the dog shows here in the Southwest. She was always one of the most elegant and gracious ladies I ever met. My heart is sad that we lost her so young, but I know that she is rejoicing with her Savior in Heaven. God bless the members of her family and may God give you the strength and courage to go through these troubling times. My thoughts and prayers are with you,*

*Mara Snyder Davis  
Prunehill Kennels  
Valley Center, CA*

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**mara diane snyder davis** - February 17, 2015 at 05:11 PM

YF

“ *Your church family purchased the Heartwarming Thoughts Boston Fern for the family of Jan Otterson.*



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**Your church family** - February 17, 2015 at 02:04 PM

MK

“ *Mark Klivers purchased the Secret Garden Basket for the family of Jan Otterson.*



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**Mark Klivers** - February 17, 2015 at 01:57 PM