



## Joan Bitz

May 1, 1949 - December 23, 2009

Our beloved wife, mom, grandma, daughter, sister, and friend Joan Mae (Regner) Bitz, age 60, has passed from this life to be with her Eternal Father. Joan died Wednesday, December 23, 2009 surrounded by loved ones at her home after a courageous and valiant battle against pancreatic cancer.

Throughout her fight against this disease, she continuously amazed her doctors with her strength, courage, and sense of humor.

Joan was born to Arnold "Hap" and Leona (Becker) Regner on May 1, 1949 at their home near Burnstad, North Dakota. She was raised on her family farm near Burnstad and attended schools in Burnstad and Napoleon, North Dakota. She graduated in 1967 from Napoleon High School. As a child, she loved playing with the family dogs and running with them up the hills and through the pastures. This is where her love of nature blossomed. Joan graduated from Wahpeton State School of Science with a degree in medical records in 1968. She began work at Fargo Clinic (Merit Care) and later at the Professional Building in Fargo.

In 1969, Joan married Alex Bitz at St. Clare's church in Burnstad, North Dakota. They had their first son, Brian, in 1970. In 1975, they moved to Valley City, North Dakota. She gave birth to twins Donna and David in the spring of 1976. In Valley City, Joan worked for many years at the Parks & Recreation Department and for Bitz Tire & Service.

Joan had a passion for life. She loved laughing, dancing, and having fun anywhere with her friends and family. Joan loved being out in nature. One of

her hobbies was gardening, as she was continuously digging up new spots in the yard for flower gardens. She especially loved picking crocuses in the spring and delivering surprise bouquets to family and friends. Joan was a very generous person. She put others in front of herself and always her family first. Joan loved watching her son David play and coach basketball. She enjoyed following his games and continued up until her last days. Joan was also proud of her little monkey shines; her four precious grandchildren, Gabby and Andie Sandman and Adam and Grace Bitz. She was the fun grandma who fed the kids ice-cream for breakfast and taught them to catch frogs and explore nature. Joan never ran out of creative ideas to entertain her grandchildren. They will forever be filled with loving memories of their Grandma Joan and Grandma Bitzy.

Joan is survived by her husband Alex; mother Leona Regner of Valley City, son Brian (Melissa) Bitz of Valley City, daughter Donna (Kurt) Sandman of Moorhead, MN, and son David (Stacy) Bitz of Devils Lake, ND; four grandchildren, Gabby and Andie Sandman of Moorhead; and Adam and Grace Bitz of Valley City; a sister Jane (Don) Lemnus of Valley City, brothers Jerry (Alice) Regner of Burnstad, ND, Dale (Susan) Regner of Ypsilanti, Michigan, Bill Regner of Napoleon, ND, Tom (Linda) Regner of Wishek, ND. She was preceded in death by her father Arnold Regner, brother Arnold Regner Jr., sister-in-law Shirley Regner and infant sister Susan Marie Regner.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

DEC 28. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

St. Catherine Catholic Church  
540 3rd Ave. NE  
Valley City, ND

## Service

DEC 29. 9:30 AM (CT)

St. Catherine Catholic Church  
540 3rd Ave. NE  
Valley City, ND

## Service

DEC 29. 3:00 PM (CT)

North Dakota Veterans Cemetery  
1825 46th St.  
Mandan, ND

# Tribute Wall



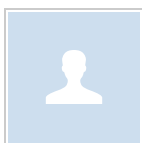
“ Alex and family,

*I just recently heard about the loss of Joan. I will never forget the good memories of Joan, how she sometimes gave us that "motherly" advice we so needed in college. We had some great times! She was a great person. We will keep your family in our thoughts and prayers.*

*Donna Stubbe##imported-begin##Ken and Donna Stubbe##imported-end##*

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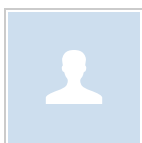
January 31, 2010 at 04:32 PM



“ Alex and family. Diane and I were so sorry to read the news about Joan's passing. Your obituary says it all and captured the great things about her. Keep these memories of her in your hearts and hopefully a smile will cross your lips when you think back upon her life. You are in our prayers##imported-begin##John and Diane Mitzel##imported-end##

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January 10, 2010 at 01:51 PM



“ The Family of Joan Bitz:  
*Very sorry about the loss of your Loved One. Try and remember all the great Memories you have created and shared, keep them close to your hearts.  
We were neighbors for a few years/had some great times together. We will miss Joan !! Keep the Faith...and God will do the rest.##imported-begin##Emmy & Lowell Spitzer##imported-end##*

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January 04, 2010 at 04:02 PM



“ My deepest sympathy to you - remember Joan as a student in my classes - great gal!##imported-begin##Marlys Nickisch##imported-end##

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January 02, 2010 at 12:19 AM



“ Alex and family, You are in our thoughts and prayers at this time and in the months to come. Hold on to your memories and know that she is at peace with family and friends.##imported-begin##Rick and Cheryl Weller##imported-end##

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December 31, 2009 at 02:07 PM



“ Alex and family: Sorry to hear of your loss of Joan. She was a great friend in school and always fun to be around. Our deepest sympathy. Our thoughts and prayers are with you.  
Tom & Sandy Schauer.##imported-begin##Tom & Sandy Schauer##imported-end##

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December 30, 2009 at 07:00 PM



“ Alex and family: I am so very sorry to hear of Joan's passing. She was truly a wonderful person! I will always remember her as a fun-loving classmate with her "big genuine smile"! We had not seen each other for years -- but were able to reconnect at one of Class Reunions --- we had such a great time remembering our school days!  
My thoughts and prayers to you all.  
Marianne Barta##imported-begin##Marianne (Piatz) Barta##imported-end##

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December 30, 2009 at 03:25 PM



“ *May you find peace during this time of loss. You're in our thoughts and prayers!##imported-begin##Jerry and Mary (Bitz) Winkler##imported-end##*

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December 29, 2009 at 12:45 PM



“ *Memories of Joan: A hard worker, very principled, strong faith, loved the out doors, her family her grandchildren. Joan's laugh was contagious, she had a vest for living.*

*I first met Joan when I stood in line with the other mothers waiting to register my children for their summer rec programs. She made no exceptions for early registration and treated everyone equally. In recent years, I got to know her better as my neighbor and my friend. She generously shared her perennials with me in the fall. When she started her housecleaning job, I hired her and have never had a cleaner house than when Joan had been by the house for a few hours. We often spent an hour or so after she cleaned just visiting. I would also chat with her at the shop when I'd bring my car in for an oil change.*

*Above all, what I'll remember about Joan was her kind and generous heart, her love for her family and her strong faith in God. I am privileged to have known Joan for she truly lived her life by example and in so doing, enriched the lives of those around her. I will miss you my friend.*

*Meryem##imported-begin##Meryem (Berge) Bentz##imported-end##*

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December 29, 2009 at 12:29 AM



“ Alex and Family

*My thoughts an prayers are with you and your family. Put your faith in the Lord to help you through this.*

*Bernie (Bitz) Mayfield###imported-begin## Bernadette (Bitz) Mayfield  
###imported-end##*

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December 28, 2009 at 08:29 PM



“ Alex, Brian, David, Donna, Jane & Don and families,

*Our deepest sympathy to all of you! It has been so long since we've seen you, but Joanie and all of you have always had a special place in our hearts. Jay was fortunate to have Joanie as his baby sitter while we were in Valley City. Joan had so much energy and such contagious laughter that we will always remember. She certainly touched everyone that knew her. May God bless all of you and give you strength until you one day meet again,*

*Sandy and Dave###imported-begin##Dave & Sandy  
Kocka###imported-end##*

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December 28, 2009 at 08:02 PM



“ Our thoughts and prayers are with everyone who was touched by Joan during her life. We we honored to have had her be a part of our lives and to be able to call her family. She was an amazing person, a wonderful aunt and will be greatly missed.###imported-begin##Lori and Bill Walker ###imported-end##

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December 28, 2009 at 03:05 PM



“ Alex and Family:

*I just wanted to let you know that I am thinking about you and your family at this difficult time. I met Joan when I was attending VCSU. She was always fun to talk with and gave me good advise as a college student.##imported-begin##Barb Binde (Bauer)##imported-end##*

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December 28, 2009 at 01:44 PM



“ Alex .. Your family is in our thoughts and prayers. Rick & Denice Osborne##imported-begin##Rick Osborne##imported-end##

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December 28, 2009 at 10:42 AM



“ Brian and Melissa, you are loved by God and by your church family. As you mourn the loss of your mother we will walk with you. Psalm 23 says: "Walk through the valley of the shadow of death". Walk through, but not by yourself. Interesting that God said it was a shadow of death. Lots to ponder and reflect on. Your mom sounds amazing. You were blessed to have her. She leaves a hole that no one can fill. Hold on to one another and God. She was very important and worth all your tears.  
love ya, Katie##imported-begin##Katie Meyer##imported-end##

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December 28, 2009 at 10:17 AM



“*Joan touched many lives with her pleasant personality. Whenever we would meet, her eyes would light up, she always had that beautiful smile, and she had hugs for everyone. She will be missed. We are blessed to have known her. Our sympathy to her family. Frankie & Roger##imported-begin##Frankie and Roger Kaiser##imported-end##*

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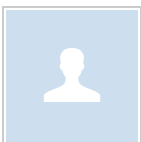
December 28, 2009 at 08:44 AM



“*Joan was fun and happy. Probably too simple a statement, but I say it with the most earnest and heartfelt of feelings, because I truly believe these are the signs that a person has learned how to make the most of his/her life. Maybe, that's why Joan was taken much too early (according to us). Perhaps, she already achieved what was possible in this life. As Oz said to the Tin Man, "A heart is not judged by how much you love; but by how much you are loved by others." No doubt Joan had a complete and full heart. God bless her, her family, and her friends.##imported-begin##Len Thorson##imported-end##*

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December 28, 2009 at 01:41 AM



“*My thoughts and prayers go out to the family of Joan. Having known Joan for nearly 30 years I have seen the compassion she had, I remember taking care of the dog during winter, Joan said now make sure she has her paw shoes on when she goes outside. Joan was such a special and good hearted lady she will be missed by so many. The solace that can be had is that I know that heaven has a new member in Joan.##imported-begin##Ron Moser##imported-end##*

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December 28, 2009 at 12:05 AM



“ Alex and Family~ You are all in our thoughts and prayers during this difficult time. Joan was a wonderful women.  
Love, Bill and Jen###imported-begin###Bill and Jen Schmitt###imported-end##

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December 27, 2009 at 05:50 PM



“ You are in our thoughts and prayers. God bless your family.###imported-begin###Mike and Janice Sheldon###imported-end##

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December 27, 2009 at 05:17 PM



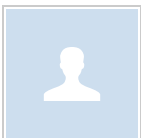
“ My working in City Hall and the Parks & Rec in the past was enlightened many a time by Joan, and she was a ray of sunshine in the good works of the recreation dept. of the city of VC. I did not get to know her well, but I always felt like I did!!

What a shame she had to be taken away by the awful cancer disease. My sincere sympathy to her dear family.

Mary Heath###imported-begin###Mary Heath###imported-end##

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December 27, 2009 at 03:28 PM



“ Sorry about the passing of Joan. Remember all the good memories and she will live in your hearts forever. Take care and God bless.###imported-begin###John & Pam Glatt###imported-end##

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December 27, 2009 at 10:22 AM



“ Alex and family;  
Our hearts go out to you and yours during this time. I think Stacey's poem about being with Jesus for Christmas was such a great way to remember God's promise to us.  
Joan will be missed by all who knew her.  
Peace to you.##imported-begin##Bernie & Calvin Johnson##imported-end##

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December 27, 2009 at 09:08 AM



“ Joan,  
You were always such a good friend to me. I appreciated the way you always treated me so special. I always loved our time together in Napoleon with your family.  
I will always miss you and your friendship . It meant the world to me.  
My prayers are with you and your family.  
Love, Gloria Kary##imported-begin##Gloria Kary##imported-end##

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December 27, 2009 at 12:26 AM



“ Dear Family of Joan Bitz,  
Joan has been on our prayer list the past few years with great confidence that she would get well. We are so sorry to hear of her death. We will be thinking of you all the next few days.  
  
Dale and Millie Sauer##imported-begin##Dale P. and Millie Sauer##imported-end##

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December 26, 2009 at 11:46 PM



“ Our thoughts and prayers are with Joan's family at this time. May she rest in peace.##imported-begin##Gary/Elaine Taszarek##imported-end##

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December 26, 2009 at 10:00 PM



“ Dear Alex and family  
Very sorry about your loss. You have our deepest sympathy. May God be with you at this difficult time  
Prayers to you  
Tony & Rita Wangler##imported-begin##Rita and Tony Wangler##imported-end##

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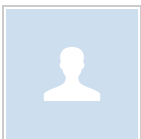
December 26, 2009 at 08:41 PM



“ I love you Aunt Joan. I will always have good memories of us in your garden. I'm sorry I never got to see you again before you left us. In my heart there will always be a touch of regret I didn't get to spend that much time with you. We all think about you everyday and we miss you so much. I can't wait to see you in Heaven.  
Love,  
Alli##imported-begin##Alli Thorson##imported-end##

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December 26, 2009 at 07:36 PM



“ Aunt Joan, your smiles and laughter will be missed. I will look forward to hear and see your smiles when the Lord take me to join you and many other family members in Heaven. Rest at peace. Love you always. Our thoughts and prayers are with you, Uncle Alex, Brian, Donna, and David.##imported-begin##Detta & Richard Thompson, John Nichols, Sadie Solum##imported-end##

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December 26, 2009 at 07:26 PM



“ Dear Alex and family, we will miss Joan.  
Our love and prayers are with you.##imported-begin##Frank and  
Linnea Anderson##imported-end##

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December 26, 2009 at 06:37 PM



“ Joan is very much loved sister-in-law. She was and still is a blessing  
to us. What a wonderful life to have known. I'm so glad my brother  
was smart enough to find her.##imported-begin##Dave and Marian  
Gates##imported-end##

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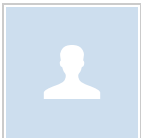
December 26, 2009 at 06:24 PM



“ Joan will forever be in our hearts and our memories. I am so  
blessed to have been a part of her life. She taught us so much we  
will always hold dear. What a blessing to have spent such precious  
time with her and all her family these last few weeks. I will always  
treasure those moments as precious pearls in my life. I love you  
guys!!##imported-begin##Susan Regner##imported-end##

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December 26, 2009 at 05:19 PM



“ We loved Joan's enthusiasm for life and laughter, she will be missed  
by many.

*In Sympathy-*  
*Deborah & Ryley##imported-begin##Deborah & Ryley  
Regner##imported-end##*

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December 26, 2009 at 01:55 AM



“ Thanks Alex and family for the beautiful obituary.##imported-begin##Fr. Al Bitz##imported-end##

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December 25, 2009 at 10:01 PM



“ Dear Brian and Family,

*I am sorry to hear about your mom. Hold on tight to your memories, they will help you in the days and months ahead. Thinking of you and your family during this difficult time!*

*Nancy##imported-begin##Nancy Maresh Melo##imported-end##*

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December 25, 2009 at 10:00 PM



“ You are all in our prayers at this very difficult time, and in the weeks and months to come. May the peace that only God can give surround you and carry you through. We are out of state and wish we would be back to give our hugs and support on Tuesday. We will see you later in the week. Take care and God's Blessings to you all.##imported-begin##The Olsons - Karla, Doug, Emma & John##imported-end##

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December 25, 2009 at 01:16 PM



“ To the Bitz family My God bless you all. I know she will be missed alot. Sorry we cant make it to the funeral. Our thoughts and prayers are with you.##imported-begin##Tom & Lorraine Hilzendeger##imported-end##

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December 25, 2009 at 12:48 PM



“ To The family,  
I remember working with your mom at the rec center many years ago, that is when i first got to know her and i really enjoyed working with her. We never really spend a lot of time together but we had a few lunches together and she helped me create a flower garden with her extra plants, which i loved and have pictures of. Her kids and Debir were friends and Debir spend many days with the family and just about always visited them when she was home. The last time i saw Joan was on Crazy Days with Donna and her two girls. Joan looked so good that day and happy, that i wanted to keep that image in my mind to remember her by. She fought a courageous battle with cancer and i know you will miss her greatly. She was a fun and loving lady. Shirley###imported-begin###Shirley Bjornson###imported-end###

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December 24, 2009 at 11:22 AM



“ We are so sorry about the loss of Joan.  
In time your family will heal and remember the wonderful times you had with her.  
She was a great neighbor for many years.###imported-begin###The Starks - Steve, Pam, Chad, Erica###imported-end###

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December 24, 2009 at 10:26 AM



“ To Joan's family, I can't make the funeral but wanted you all to know you are in my thoughts. She was a truly amazing person but you already know that. I so enjoyed visiting with her. Wonderful smile and sense of humor. So loved her family. Just a wonderful person that has left us way too early. My heart goes out to you all. Hopefully she's in peace now.###imported-begin###Amy Nelson###imported-end###

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December 24, 2009 at 08:47 AM



“ *Dear Bitz Family,  
You all are in my thoughts and prayers in Joan's death. May she  
have eternal  
peace and joy with our loving God.##imported-begin##Fr. Tim  
Bushy##imported-end##*

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December 24, 2009 at 07:16 AM