



## Kristen Bielema

May 22, 1954 - April 5, 2017

The visitation open house for Kristen Bielema of New York Mills, will be held from 3:00 until 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, April 8, at the Johnson-Schuller Chapel in Wadena. After bravely facing a lengthy bout of cancer, Kristen passed away with family at her side on Wednesday, April 5, 2017, at her home in New York Mills, MN.

Kristen Ruth Bielema was born to Garland Verdell and Marjorie Ann (Christopherson) Vongroven on May 22, 1954 in Winona, MN. After completing high school Kristen met Alan Corneil Bielema at the College of St. Theresa in Winona, and they were united in marriage on July 27, 1974 at St. Paul's Episcopal Church. Alan completed his education at Southern Illinois University, in Carbondale, to become a funeral director while Kristen worked towards her Masters of Art. They moved to Wadena, Minnesota where they purchased the Folkestad Funeral Home in 1985. Kristen started as a substitute teacher at Bertha-Hewitt High School in 1985 and became a full-time teacher in 1986 at Menahga Public Schools. In 1987 she returned to Bertha and was employed as a Speech and Language Pathologist until her retirement in 2014. Alan and Kristen sold the funeral home in 2007 when they moved to their lake home near New York Mills. She will also be remembered for her congeniality as an employee at Time Jewelry in Wadena.

In years past, Kristen enjoyed bowling, sewing toys and household

necessities, and cooking and baking for her family and friends. Most recently she used her hours in reading, and watching Grey's Anatomy and Friends on television. Kristen had been a member of the Wadena Women of Today and the VFW Auxiliary.

Kristen was preceded in death by her parents Garland and Marjorie, and brother Steven Vongroven.

She will be greatly missed by her husband, Alan of New York Mills; son Brian Bielema of Brainerd and daughter Abbey (Josh) Tauring of Brainerd; brother Scott (Pam) Vongroven of Canton, SD; sisters Laurie (Willis) Bale of Eyota, Lynn (Charles) Harstad of Chatfield and Kari (Jeff) Vongroven Durham of Rochester; aunt Karen Haedtke of Winona; sister-in-law Lynn Vongroven of Sturgeon Lake; along with a host of friends, fellow teachers and former students.

Burial will be held at a later date in Pleasant Valley Cemetery in Winona, MN.

# Cemetery Details

## Pleasant Valley Cemetery

Winona, MN

# Previous Events

## Visitation

APR 8. 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM (CT)

Johnson-Schuller Chapel  
205 4th Street Southwest  
Wadena, MN 56482  
(218) 631-3632

# Tribute Wall



“ *Schuller Family Funeral Homes created a Tribute Video in memory of Kristen Bielema*



**Schuller Family Funeral Homes** - April 07, 2017 at 05:28 PM

KV

*What a lovely memory video!*

**Kathie Vongroven** - April 07, 2017 at 08:29 PM

GW

*The greatest smile! She will be missed!*

**Gwen** - April 08, 2017 at 09:00 PM

MS

*I am so saddened at the loss of Kristen. As a substitute teacher at B-H Kristen and I had some students in common who were receiving services for speech pathology and special education. Kristen was a kind and straightforward person who was generous with her time and resources. My condolences to her family and friends. I do not have the words. Peace.*

**Myron Swanberg** - April 17, 2017 at 02:34 PM

TC

“ I knew Kristen the year I worked in Bertha. She always struck me as someone who was smart, together, and one notch beyond the rest of the staff. Kristen inspired and encouraged me to become an SLP which I did in time. My career spanned nursing homes, hospitals, clinics, schools, and even Japan. If I did any professional good along the way, it would lead directly back to Kristen. Thank you.  
*Tom Cobb, retired SLP*

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**Tom Cobb** - June 22, 2018 at 12:12 PM

SM

“ Oh, Kristen, I'm going to miss you! We rarely saw one another but I knew you were out there some place! You will always be one of my best memories of Pleasant Valley School and our rambling up and down the valley! Please tell Steve and your mom and dad "Hi" for me. Lucky Angels!

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**Susan Mansfield** - April 17, 2017 at 12:43 PM

LS

“ Al  
My deepest sympathy on the loss of your wife.  
*Len Siegler, Verndale*



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**LEN j SIEGLER** - April 12, 2017 at 08:41 AM

CH

“ I was shocked and saddened to hear of Kristen's passing. She was my only classmate in 5th and 6th grade and she was the smart one. The times we all spent in the one room school house are treasured memories. My brother and sisters and I send our deepest sympathies to the whole family during this difficult time.  
Chip, Lee, David and DeDe Hinds

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**Chip Hinds** - April 11, 2017 at 01:32 PM

JP

“ So sad to hear of such a loss to our world. She is at peace with our Savior and we will all be together again. Keep the wonderful memories, her awesome smile and eagerness to help others. Truly she will be missed. Heaven has another angel to watch over all of us. Please know we send deepest sympathy's at your loss. May God grant you peace and comfort in the times to come. Sympathy's! Jackie and Jay and families.



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**Jackie Perius** - April 11, 2017 at 11:39 AM

GZ

“ Gary& Patti Ziebell lit a candle in memory of Kristen Bielema



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**Gary& Patti Ziebell** - April 09, 2017 at 09:52 AM



“ *Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Kristen Bielema.*



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April 07, 2017 at 07:43 PM



“ *1 file added to the album Life Tributes*



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**Katie Gaskins** - April 07, 2017 at 06:01 PM



“ *Katie Gaskins lit a candle in memory of Kristen Bielema*



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**Katie Gaskins** - April 07, 2017 at 05:56 PM



“ *Kristen touched my life, soul, and heart in so many ways. My favorite story was when she had decided Al could have \$5 a week for spending money, but Kris got \$10!*

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**Katie Gaskins** - April 07, 2017 at 05:54 PM

KG

“ 1 file added to the album *New Album Name*



Katie Gaskins - April 07, 2017 at 05:41 PM



“ 46 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



Schuller Family Funeral Homes - April 07, 2017 at 05:15 PM

BH

“ *Bob & Donna Haman lit a candle in memory of Kristen Bielema*



Bob & Donna Haman - April 07, 2017 at 01:50 PM

HA

“ So sorry to hear about Kristen, She was such a friendly person and always willing to do what she could to help you.



Helen Allee - April 07, 2017 at 12:12 PM

KZ

“ Karen Ziemkowski lit a candle in memory of Kristen Bielema



Karen Ziemkowski - April 07, 2017 at 12:07 PM

TK

“ Tammie Klawitter sent a virtual gift in memory of Kristen Bielema



Tammie Klawitter - April 07, 2017 at 11:13 AM

TK

“ Tammie Klawitter lit a candle in memory of Kristen Bielema



Tammie Klawitter - April 07, 2017 at 11:13 AM

RR

“ AI, BJ, and Abbey - we are sorry for your loss. We remain convinced that we will all meet again in eternal life. We remember Kris for always finding the good in other people and promoting a positive attitude. Remember that she loved you and that you will always carry her love in your hearts.

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**Ron and Deb Root** - April 07, 2017 at 10:57 AM

JT

“ So very sorry for your loss AI and family. I remember Kristen well and will never forget her smile and laugh. She was a wonderful fun lady. Jim and I will be praying for all of you through this difficult time.

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**Jim and Vickie Thompson** - April 06, 2017 at 11:34 PM



“ When Kristen and I were in Women of Today together, we always had so much fun, especially when we went to convention. I remember one time, at a hotel in the cities when she and Leslie Restemayer and myself shared a room. I had started to fall asleep and those two were visiting, talking about Leslie's brother. Well, I had started dreaming, but all of a sudden I sat up in bed and declared, "I just got off the bus with your brother Leslie." As soon as the words left my mouth, we all just laughed so hard we cried. Here's to all the great memories!

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**Mim Maas** - April 06, 2017 at 04:41 PM



“ *Pretty Please* was purchased for the family of Kristen Bielema.



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April 06, 2017 at 03:22 PM

MW

“ *Myron And Karen Winkelman lit a candle in memory of Kristen Bielema*



Myron and Karen Winkelman - April 06, 2017 at 12:59 PM



“ *Basket Full of Wishes was purchased for the family of Kristen Bielema.*



April 06, 2017 at 11:53 AM

JF

“ *John And Audrey Blashack Family lit a candle in memory of Kristen Bielema*



John and Audrey Blashack Family - April 06, 2017 at 11:12 AM

LO

“ *Prayers that she has a safe trip home! Wonderful lady!*

Lori ostrowski - April 06, 2017 at 10:10 AM



“ *She was both my daughter's speech teacher and a sweetheart. She will be greatly missed*



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**Jennifer Burrows** - April 06, 2017 at 09:30 AM

DG

“ *Deanna Gould lit a candle in memory of Kristen Bielema*



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**Deanna Gould** - April 06, 2017 at 09:21 AM

DG

*My children and I are so blessed to have had Kristen in our lives. Thank you Lord for bringing her into our lives.*

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**Deanna Gould** - April 06, 2017 at 09:23 AM

SO

“ *Sharyl Olson lit a candle in memory of Kristen Bielema*



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**Sharyl Olson** - April 06, 2017 at 09:03 AM

LW

“ *Lynda Wosmek lit a candle in memory of Kristen Bielema*



Lynda Wosmek - April 06, 2017 at 07:57 AM

HS

“ *Heidi Stokes lit a candle in memory of Kristen Bielema*



Heidi Stokes - April 06, 2017 at 07:44 AM

KB

“ *Keith And Janice Bastian lit a candle in memory of Kristen Bielema*



Keith and Janice Bastian - April 06, 2017 at 07:02 AM

KD

“ *Katlyn Dykhoff lit a candle in memory of Kristen Bielema*



Katlyn Dykhoff - April 05, 2017 at 10:08 PM

CW

“ Codey Wolff lit a candle in memory of Kristen Bielema



Codey Wolff - April 05, 2017 at 10:07 PM

HW

“ Heidi, Codey, And Cole Wolff lit a candle in memory of Kristen Bielema



Heidi, Codey, and Cole Wolff - April 05, 2017 at 10:06 PM

MF

“ Mark & Renee Frethem lit a candle in memory of Kristen Bielema



Mark & Renee Frethem - April 05, 2017 at 09:56 PM

MF

*She was a wonderful teacher with a great sense of humor. Mark and I have some fond memories over many years of friendship...*

Mark & Renee Frethem - April 05, 2017 at 10:00 PM

DF

“ *Dave & Sharon Folkestad lit a candle in memory of Kristen Bielema*



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**Dave & Sharon Folkestad** - April 05, 2017 at 09:54 PM

 Shawn Speed

“ *Kristen was a big part of my life and a great great woman, she will be missed. So sorry for your loss.*



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**Shawn Speed** - April 05, 2017 at 09:45 PM

AB

“ *Alicia Bowman lit a candle in memory of Kristen Bielema*



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**Alicia Bowman** - April 05, 2017 at 09:37 PM

DO

“ *Douglas And Joan Ostlund lit a candle in memory of Kristen Bielema*



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**Douglas and Joan Ostlund** - April 05, 2017 at 09:33 PM

MB

“ Mike Bauck lit a candle in memory of Kristen Bielema



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**Mike Bauck** - April 05, 2017 at 09:31 PM

BS

“ Al and family, we were so sad to hear about Kristen. I will always remember the conversations and good laughs we had in the teachers lounge! While working at Bertha-Hewitt she touched so many lives of students as well as staff. She truly will be missed! Our thoughts and prayers are with you Al and your family at this difficult time.  
Bob and Deb Sieling

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**Bob and Deb Sieling** - April 05, 2017 at 09:22 PM



“ Shelley Speed lit a candle in memory of Kristen Bielema



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**Shelley Speed** - April 05, 2017 at 09:13 PM

RM

“ Ralph & Rosalie Miller lit a candle in memory of Kristen Bielema



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**Ralph & Rosalie Miller** - April 05, 2017 at 09:06 PM

DW

“ *She was a wonderful speech teacher! Very kind and loving and really enjoyed her job! She will be missed!*  
*The Wachlin's*



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**Diane Wachlin** - April 05, 2017 at 09:04 PM

MK

“ *Wonderful person. So kind hearted. Prayer's for the family. Rip*



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**Melissa koski** - April 05, 2017 at 08:28 PM

CS

“ *Carrie Sellnow lit a candle in memory of Kristen Bielema*



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**carrie sellnow** - April 05, 2017 at 08:11 PM

MS

“ *Mike And Lea Snyder lit a candle in memory of Kristen Bielema*



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**Mike and Lea Snyder** - April 05, 2017 at 07:54 PM

Travis  
Allen

“ *She was a great teacher. She always had a smile on her face. She will be missed by many!*

Travis Allen - April 05, 2017 at 07:01 PM

BB

“ *Bruce And Barb Brown lit a candle in memory of Kristen Bielema*



Bruce and Barb Brown - April 05, 2017 at 06:04 PM

CS

*She will be greatly remember by the Sellnow's . She was my son Austin Mattson speech teacher ..*

carrie sellnow - April 05, 2017 at 07:53 PM

SS

“ *Alan and Family. My heart goes out to you all. Kristen was always such a wonderful person to be around. I am a fellow employee of Kristen's, she was a very strong person and fought so hard to beat this horrible disease. Prayers go out to you all. She will be truly missed by all.*

Sandy South - April 05, 2017 at 04:59 PM

GA

“ *Bowling nights!! We had many. Rest in peace, Kristen.  
Bob and Gail*



Gail - April 05, 2017 at 04:41 PM