



Nichelle Alfaro

February 27, 1985 - February 14, 2020

Nichelle Alfaro, age 34, passed away on February 14th in Richland due to complications of an auto-immune disease, surrounded by her family.

Nichelle was born in Champaign, IL the firstborn daughter of Carl Wallskog and Deby Sutter. Returning to Kennewick, Nichelle graduated from Southridge HS in 2003 and earned her Masters Degree in Teaching Special Education from Heritage University, where she met the love of her life, Mark Alfaro. They married on September 30, 2017 and Nichelle became Mom to her beautiful daughter, Ari.

Nichelle is well known to the Tri-Cities community for her compassion and advocacy for those with special needs. From the time she was in elementary school, she wanted to take care of those who were unable to take care of themselves. Before she was old enough to work, she volunteered at the ARC of the Tri-Cities, eventually becoming a Site Director for the Partners-n-Pals program. She started the Buddy Club (in collaboration with the ARC) for students to partner with a young person of special needs when she was 14 and President of the Hope Club.

Nichelle's big heart and desire to help others took her in many directions. She worked in a mental facility in Utah, cared for others in group homes in the Tri-Cities and eventually opened her own group home in Richland where she cared for John and Fred. She became a Foster Mom to several special needs children and eventually found her home as a Special Education Teacher at Sage Crest Elementary School, where she will be greatly missed.

Nichelle was a friend and caregiver for over 20 years to Ali Parish, daughter of Paul and Linda. The bond they had was incredibly special and Nichelle loved her "Al Pal" more than words can describe.

Nichelle is survived and missed by her husband and daughter, Mark and Ari Alfaro, her father, Carl Wallskog, her mom and step-father, Deby and Rick Sutter, and sisters Nicholle Vojta and Noelle Wallskog. Also surviving Nichelle are her Grandma, Georgia Baketel, Aunt Linda Alden and Aunt Barbara Roberson, best friends Laura Kirk and Julie Decoria.

Cemetery

Desert Lawn Memorial Park

1401 S. Union St

Kennewick, WA, 99338

Events

FEB **Funeral Ceremony** 10:00AM

22

Pittsburgh LDS Building

724 N. Pittsburgh, Kennewick, WA, US

Comments



“ Happy birthday my sweet, loving angel. I miss you so much.



Mom - February 27 at 09:43 AM



“ When ever she came to the Arc, she always was smiling and happy. Even after her diagnosis she still had a smile, I am sorry that she is gone. We don't have enough people like her in this world.

Nancy Ross - February 22 at 10:14 PM



“ I met Nichelle at a fundraiser, I was photographing golf teams. Nichelle drove the drink cart around and I tagged along. We share a crazy sense of humor and became fast friends. When I moved to a different house, she was quick to offer moving boxes. I did her graduation photos when she got her degree. We had the biggest laugh when we saw a guy on a motorcycle with a sidecar and a dog with goggles sitting in that sidecar. It was so random and he stopped to talk to us. Nichelle was a light, I loved being around her!

Sonja - February 22 at 12:15 PM



“ My fondest memory of Nichelle was watching her build the Buddy Club at Southridge High School. It was the first Buddy Club established in Washington State. As the president of the HOPE (Helping Other People Everyday) club, Nichelle was certain we could get enough student buddies for my class of 12 students. Well, with her heartfelt speech and overwhelming enthusiasm in starting the club, we ended up with OVER 40 applicants !!! And the rest is history. Nichelle just had "the gift" with anyone who had special abilities. She told me often that I was her mentor, when in reality, she was mine !! I learned so much from that 14 year old !! It was a joy to watch her accomplish her goals in her career and her personal life. Nichelle, you are going to be very busy in heaven.

I'm sure all our special people that went before you will be waiting with open arms for one of those big wrap around NICHELLE hugs !!

Sincerely,
Ms. Pat Ellingsworth
(retired teacher)

Pat Ellingsworth - February 21 at 02:35 PM



“ I had the great pleasure of working at Partners n Pals at ARC for many years with Nichelle. She always had a sparkle in her eyes, warmth in her smile and love in her heart for those who needed it most. One of my favorite memories is when she was at an ARC dance in Richland. My son Kyle came out madder than a wet hen. He was so upset, he was crying. Phronsie and I were trying to figure out what happened and Nichelle came out and told us she had danced 1 song with Kyle. Then another client with autism wanted to dance with her. I called her a "Shameless Hussey" and we all laughed. But only Nichelle could have 2 young men with autism fighting Over her. We all know that people with autism DON'T show emotions. Nichelle had a real rough time these last couple of years. But she tried very hard to stay positive in a very negative place. She loved her hubby and daughter sooo much, and it was very apparent to anyone who saw them together. Nichelle, you were a great friend to all. You will be dearly missed.

Sharon Robertson - February 21 at 12:04 AM



“ My heart is breaking for the Wallskog/Sutter families. I have fond memories of watching the Wallskog girls growing up at Southgate Elementary while they attended there. Always a trio of smiles with bright futures ahead of them. Heaven has gained an exceptional angel. May God hold you in his care as you go through this difficult time.



Lynda Rosenbaum - February 20 at 03:25 PM



“ I had the special privilege of being Nichelle's elementary principal at Southgate Elementary School and then watching her continue to blossom as a person as she progressed through school with my son, who was a classmate of hers. The big smile we see on her posted picture and the words about her "big heart" in her obituary are things that I remember most. Nichelle was such a happy and positive person. Even as an elementary student, in a classroom that included several differently-abled

students, she was nurturing and caring with every student. She obviously continued to share her love and compassion for every human being, no matter their challenges or needs, throughout her life. How blessed we were to have someone like Nichelle working with our children even if it was for too short a period of time! I'm sure God will use Nichelle and her special abilities fully.

Le Fulfs - February 19 at 12:17 PM



“ My name is Cindy, and I worked with Nichelle at Washington Elementary. I am going to miss Nichelle's hugs. We didn't get to see each other very often after she moved to Sage Crest. When we did, there was always a "Nichelle hug" that made me feel so loved and cherished! What a perfect friend...

Cindy Dunham - February 19 at 10:31 AM



“ You were such a special person Nichelle!! I'll always remember your love for special needs children. How you cared for those that society often rejected. How you were able to find positivity and happiness in every situation. You were a light in this world! I'll miss your interest in my election coverage here on Facebook but I'll keep on helping people understand civics... Now you are in an eternal Kingdom... Until we meet again my friend!!

Robert Garrison - February 19 at 04:06 AM



“ Nichelle, I will always treasure working and laughing with you. Your heart and passion was so pure. You gave so much to so many people. I miss you and I love you. Heaven gain ed such a precious angel. Stacie



Stacie Vopat - February 18 at 08:38 PM



“ 11 files added to the album Nichelle Wallskog Alfaro



Deby Sutter - February 18 at 06:09 PM



“ Pam Maiden lit a candle in memory of Nichelle Alfaro



Pam Maiden - February 18 at 06:08 PM