

## **Mary Ann Foss – BS 1993 MedCenterOne School of Nursing**

Mary Ann Foss (née Schwartz) passed away peacefully at home in Bismarck, North Dakota, on July 28, 2024, at the age of 79, after a courageous battle with pulmonary fibrosis. Born on March 14, 1945, in Mott, ND, she was the cherished daughter of the late Spencer and Eleanor (née Thompson) Schwartz. Growing up on the family farm with her four older brothers and younger sister, Mary Ann's nurturing environment fostered her caring nature and strong work ethic.

A graduate of Mott Lincoln High School and Dickinson State College, Mary Ann dedicated her career to nursing. She was honored as ND Public Health Worker of the Year in 2002, Woman's Way Program Director in 2003, and Director of the North Dakota Division of Cancer Prevention and Control in 2005. Her passion for women's health was evident through her involvement in the Women's Health Summit, where she educated and supported thousands of women. Mary Ann retired in 2012, leaving behind a legacy marked by compassion, leadership, and a commitment to improving lives. She was also recognized as ND's Women's Wellness Ambassador and shared her story in "Inspired Woman" magazine in 2014.

Mary Ann first married Jack Griffin, with whom she raised three children. She later married Jim Foss, who also had three children. Known as "MA" to many and "Mom" to her blended family of six, she formed strong bonds with nieces, nephews, cousins, friends, and many others she considered bonus sons and daughters.

Mary Ann had many personal passions, including playing handbells in church, clogging, sewing, and enjoying coffee with her quilting friends. Her love for the color green earned her the affectionate nickname "Grama Green" among her grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

She is survived by her children: Danny (Connie) Frisby-Griffin of Madison, SD; Wendy (Scott) Friedt of Albuquerque, NM; and Justin Griffin of Los Alamos, NM. She also leaves behind her stepchildren: Brad (Bonnie) Foss of Watford City, ND; Lori (Dion) Friedt of Mandan, ND; and Clay (JoDee) Foss of Dickinson, ND. Her siblings, Bruce (Julie) Schwartz, Doug (Carol) Schwartz, and Beckie (Kim) Hodell, along with her grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and extended family, will miss her dearly.

Mary Ann was preceded in death by her parents, her husband Jim Foss, brothers Wayne and James Schwartz, and grandson Brady Foss.

A celebration of life will be held at Parkway Funeral Services in Bismarck on Friday, September 6, 2024, with a social at 6 PM and a memorial service at 7 PM CT. There will be an interment ceremony at Sunny Slope Cemetery in Mott, ND, on Saturday, September 7, at 2 PM MT followed by a celebration of life at the Pheasant Cafe. Casual attire and attendees are encouraged to wear green.

Mary Ann's legacy of care, dedication, kindness, humor, and spunky spirit will continue to inspire all who knew her. Her life was a testament to the power of nurturing both individual lives and the broader community.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to local food banks or the Mott Museum, reflecting her commitment to community service. Cards may be sent to 121 E Edmonton Dr, Bismarck, ND 58503.