



Joan Michele "Princess" Bales

March 9, 1950 - April 26, 2026

Joan Michele Bales, lovingly known as "Princess," passed away at her home on Sunday, April 26, 2026. A devoted member of St. Cornelius Catholic Church in Crocker, Joan lived a life rooted in compassion, service, and joy.

Joan graduated from Waynesville High School before continuing her education at the University of Missouri (Mizzou), where she earned both her Bachelor's and Master's degrees. While at Mizzou, she was a proud member of Delta Gamma sorority.

She dedicated 30 years of her life to education in the Waynesville R-VI School District, where she made a lasting impact on countless students—most of those years as a beloved middle school science teacher.

Joan shared a beautiful marriage with her husband, Richard "Dickie" Bales for 54 years—a love story for the books. She was a proud and loving mother to her son, Brandon Bales, and daughter-in-law, Hilary Bales. She cherished her role as grandmother to Walker, Gabe, Leslie, and Avery, who brought her immense joy and pride.

Joan will be remembered for her infectious laugh, her unwavering faith in God, and her gift for building deep and meaningful friendships. She adored her church family and found great joy in cooking for them—she was especially

known for her amazing pies. She loved spending time with her friends and with her niece, Heather, and took special joy in cooking meals for her family, especially June and JD Bales. She also enjoyed traveling, shopping, and spending time with those she loved. Joan had a special gift for writing incredible cards and never missed a birthday, thank-you, or holiday. She had a special fondness for collecting Longaberger baskets and teddy bears. She had a passion for playing cards—especially bridge with her dear friends, where endless memories were made. Joan had a remarkable ability to light up any room and truly loved life.

She was preceded in death by her mother, Shirley McReynolds; her father Phil McReynolds; her brothers, John McReynolds and Phil McReynolds (and his wife, Kathy); and her sister, Jeri Davis (and her husband, Den).

Joan's legacy of love, laughter, and faith will live on in all who knew her.

Celebration of Life Services were held at 5:00 p.m. Thursday, April 30, 2026, in the Waypoint Church of Waynesville, Missouri with Pastor Brett Reith and Pastor Danny Graves officiating. Joan's daughter-in-law, Hilary Bales, read a beautiful eulogy she had written in honor of her mother-in-law. Music was provided by Pianist David Lawson.

Mass of Christian Burial were held at 10:00 a.m. Friday, May 1, 2026, in the St. Cornelius Catholic Church of Crocker, Missouri with Father Michael Murphy officiating. Music was provided by Soloist - Mike Beattie and Pianist Denise Holtzscher.

Both services and arrangements were under the care and direction of Memorial Chapels and Crematory of Waynesville / St. Robert.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions are suggested in memory of Princess

Bales to the Waynesville R-VI Foundation or to the St. Cornelius Catholic Church of Crocker, MO and may be left at Memorial Chapels and Crematory or at either service locations.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life Service

APR 30. 5:00 PM.

Waypoint Church Of Waynesville

Mass of Christian Burial

MAY 1. 10:00 AM.

St. Cornelius Catholic Church Of Crocker

Tribute Wall



“ *Memorial Chapels and Crematory created a Tribute Video in memory of Joan Michele "Princess" Bales*



Memorial Chapels and Crematory - May 04 at 09:57 AM



“ *I knew Joan through our Shaklee Wellness Group. Anytime we met at her house, she was very gracious and enjoyed feeding us her best delights. When she came to our meetings at my house, she would surprise me with a hostess gift. She was always jolly, smiling, and so appreciative of the fellowship and information. The Celebration of her Life Service was very well done. I'm glad it was so well attended. I know that her family and this whole community will miss her. But I pray that her love and her example will inspire us all to be better for having known her. She was truly a Princess.*

Annette Catts - May 05 at 12:34 AM

CQ

“ *Joan Bales was my sixth grade teacher. Baked into her responsibilities as a school teacher she taught life lessons. Fundamental to her teaching was a mantra generally based on the belief that 'you get what you work for'. It was apparent that she did this because she wanted each of us to be successful in life. She and her teachings are a treasure that remain in the memory of every person blessed to be taught by her. Rest in peace Princess.*

Chuck Quick - May 02 at 10:48 PM

LS

“ Princess made home feel like home.

Until we meet again! ☐

LS - April 30 at 09:12 PM



“ 71 files added to the album Life Tributes



Memorial Chapels and Crematory - April 30 at 01:54 PM

JR

“ John Sandy Rickert lit a candle in memory of Joan Bales



John Sandy Rickert - April 29 at 09:28 PM

AY

“ Mrs. Bales was the best teacher I ever had. She taught me to think logically and to make rational decisions. I loved her so much. I owe my career as a biology professor to her. She was amazing and we were so lucky to have her in our lives.

Angel Yocum - April 29 at 09:00 PM



“ *Dagmar Lambert lit a candle in memory of Joan Bales*



Dagmar Lambert - April 29 at 07:19 PM

MH

“ *I will miss you so very much.I always loved seeing and husband at restaurant. You always had a smile. You were a beautiful person.love Marilyn*



Marilyn Hayden - April 29 at 06:03 PM

VO

“ *You were always such a sweet person. Rest in Pease Princess! My condolences to Dickie and the family...*

Vivyan Ortiz - April 29 at 08:51 AM

VO

“ *Vivyan Ortiz lit a candle in memory of Joan Bales*



Vivyan Ortiz - April 29 at 08:48 AM

DM

“ *Debby Myers sent a virtual gift in memory of Joan Bales*



Debby Myers - April 28 at 07:45 PM

MG

“ *Such a precious lady who held up to her name. Always had a smile and hug for me. I know where she is and am blessed to have known her. Prayers*

marty gann - April 28 at 01:48 PM

SJ

“ *Princess was a focal point in High School so many years ago. She had an infectious laugh, mischevious smile and quick wit. She and Dick made a great couple, easily withstanding time. I am very sorry for Dick, her family and many friends.*

Steve Johnson - April 28 at 01:13 PM

SJ

“ *Steve Johnson lit a candle in memory of Joan Bales*



Steve Johnson - April 28 at 01:07 PM

MP

“ *Joan was a very dear friend to me and my family. . Prayers for Dickie and the family.*

Margie Thiltgen Perney - April 28 at 12:52 PM



“ *Princess always had a smile and always friendly. She will be missed. She was my friend for my many years.*



Suemarie Herron - April 28 at 12:44 PM

DB

“ *Oh - now this IS a loss for our entire community but no greater loss than to the precious family that she so cherished. May perpetual light shine upon our dear Princess, and may The Comforter bring peace to Dickie, Brandon & Hillary, and those treasured grandchildren. Diana & Vic Bentele*

Diana Fox Bentele - April 28 at 11:50 AM

MS

“ *Marge Scott sent a virtual gift in memory of Joan Bales*



Marge Scott - April 28 at 09:34 AM

PL

“ *An amazing lady, great friend, and always helping others*



Pauline LaMountain - April 28 at 06:40 AM

ND

“ *Among many different times of "having fun" with Princess, I borrowed my mother's car,,going into Waynesville at night, and we're followed by some probably nice soldiers from the training base FLW. They followed us and in my hurried, inexperienced driver's mode, where we careened into a neighbor's yard, fishtailing mom's '63 Chevy Bel Air and tore up these lovely elderly couple's yard. Very sorry we're we, yet we laughed about how two girl misfits made ourselves unavailable for a harsh reprimand. There were SO many more. GOD BLESS the soul of Mrs. BALES.*

Nancy Ann Dunn - April 28 at 01:26 AM

LH

“ *I loved Princess. She was a great friend and a great person. She will be missed by so many. My love to her family. Luge*

Luge Hardman - April 27 at 11:51 PM

TC

“ *Tamara Cheney lit a candle in memory of Joan Bales*



Tamara Cheney - April 27 at 11:10 PM

DM

“ Dawn and Robert McKee lit a candle in memory of Joan Bales



Dawn and Robert McKee - April 27 at 10:39 PM

SC

“ Shelly Collins Cherner lit a candle in memory of Joan Bales



Shelly Collins Cherner - April 27 at 10:26 PM

DE

“ delma lit a candle in memory of Joan Bales



delma - April 27 at 10:08 PM



“ I will miss you sweet friend, your beautiful smile and laughter. Bagels & coffee will never be the same. The memories of laughter shared over breaking bread will always be in my heart. I wish we had more . . . Jesus was waiting for you with open arms Princess.



Gloria McBeth - April 27 at 10:06 PM

NR

“ Two of my best friends (Princess and Dickie) at Waynesville High School back in the day. So sorry to hear about the passing of Princess. 😞 Sending my deepest sympathy to your entire family.

Nancy Roberson - April 27 at 09:47 PM

SL

“ Stephanie Leuthen lit a candle in memory of Joan Bales



Stephanie Leuthen - April 27 at 09:22 PM

JT

“ Princess/Joan will be missed by so very many friends and family who's life she touched through out her life.



Janis Thompson - April 27 at 09:10 PM

NO

“ She was one of my most memorable and favorite teachers. I had her for sixth grade and she meant business. We learned a lot that year, including the process for writing a science research paper, with note cards, outline, citations, etc.

Back in that day, everyone was a lot more trusting. After the last day of school, Mrs. Bales and her husband hosted the whole class for a sleepover at their acreage in Crocker to celebrate the end of elementary school. The girls piled into the living room with sleeping bags, and I think the boys were in tents outside with Mr. Bales supervising.

I'm grateful for Mrs. Bales and will always remember her fondly.

Nanette (Kasper) Olsen - April 27 at 08:48 PM

JF

“ Mrs. Bales was my 6th grade teacher in 1979/80 school year. After I grew up and served in the Navy, I came home and went to see her and her class at the school. Wonderful teacher and person. My condolences to the Bales family
Jack Fincher Jr.

Jack Dale Fincher - April 27 at 08:21 PM

DS

“ Joan Always had a kind heart for everyone.
She will be deeply missed by all! RIP



Debbie Stockstill - April 27 at 08:09 PM

DM

“ *Debby (Johnson) Myers sent a virtual gift in memory of Joan Bales*



Debby (Johnson) Myers - April 27 at 07:54 PM

MS

“ *Merrie Christensen and sisters lit a candle in memory of Joan Bales*



Merrie Christensen and sisters - April 27 at 07:31 PM

HR

“ *Hildegard Redmond lit a candle in memory of Joan Bales*



Hildegard Redmond - April 27 at 06:39 PM

EA

“ *Earl & Michelle Arnold lit a candle in memory of Joan Bales*



Earl & Michelle Arnold - April 27 at 06:19 PM

KL

“ *Kathy Lessard lit a candle in memory of Joan Bales*



Kathy Lessard - April 27 at 06:17 PM

CD

“ *Cornelia & Robert Dodds lit a candle in memory of Joan Bales*



Cornelia & Robert Dodds - April 27 at 06:03 PM

PT

“ *Princess was always kind and generous. A true beauty.*



Pamela Thompson - April 27 at 05:08 PM

JS

“ *James/Belinda Sands lit a candle in memory of Joan Bales*



James/Belinda Sands - April 27 at 05:06 PM

DV

“ *Such a blessing meeting and getting to know Joan... she was such a warm smiling lady. She will be missed but with the Lord and no longer hurting. Love you Princess ❤️ Thoughts and prayers to Brandon and his family. 🙏*

Darrel and Robin Vaughan - April 27 at 05:01 PM

WA

“ *William anderson lit a candle in memory of Joan Bales*



William anderson - April 27 at 04:57 PM