



Duane W. Leitzke

April 4, 1932 - April 12, 2011

Duane W. Leitzke, 79, longtime Moses Lake resident and former principal at Frontier Junior High School passed away Tuesday, April 12, 2011 at Samaritan Hospital. Mass of Christian Burial will be held at 11:00 a.m., Tuesday, April 19, 2011 at Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Church, 200 N. Dale Road. Private family committal will be at Guarding Angels Cemetery, 2595 Road L. N.E., Moses Lake.

Duane was born the oldest of six children to Alvin Leitzke and Annie (Smetana) Leitzke on April 4, 1932 in Minot, North Dakota. He graduated from high school, went to college and taught one year at the rural school. He was then called into the army. After basic training he went to Fort Belvoir, VI and completed his Combat Engineer Foreman training. When he returned he went back to Minot State Teacher's College and received his degree in 1959. He and his fiancé, Bernell Lima, came to Moses Lake to teach in 1959. They were married in 1960 and raised 2 children, Jeff & Karen. Duane spent 30 years at Frontier Jr. High School starting as a teacher then Vice Principal and on to Principal. He coached football, basketball, school baseball and Pony League. He enjoyed his 27 years as a volunteer fire fighter, was a member of the American Legion for some 65 years and also a lifetime Elks Club Member. Duane is survived by his wife, Bernell; son Jeff Leitzke; daughter Karen (Dan) Wiersma; granddaughter, Kelsy (David) Timofeyev; brothers, Everett (Marilyn) Leitzke, Larry (Betty) Leitzke; sisters, Carolyn (Ardien) Tandberg, Pearl (Richard) Sauer and Marilyn Sauer.

Duane was a friend to many over the years and most will miss the “Happy Birthday” call.

The family would like to thank the nursing staff at Samaritan Hospital for the compassionate care they provided to Duane and the family.

Previous Events

Service

APR **19**. 11:00 AM (PT)

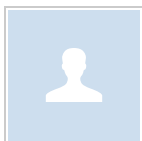
Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Church (Mass of Christian Burial)
200 N. Dale Rd
Moses Lake, WA

Tribute Wall



“ Mrs. Leitzke and family, I am so saddened to read of Mr. Leitzke's passing. He was my typing teacher at Frontier Jr. High way back.....I think even before you were married. I dearly loved him. He was a tough, but loving teacher and I did learn to type. All the girls were ditzy over him as he was so handsome and not anything like our other teachers. We typed to music which I still think is a great way to teach typing He always tried to make our class reunions (Class of 1964) and always had a smile and friendly chat when he stopped in at the PUD to say hi (I worked there as a Customer Service Rep). I am sure your loss is beyond words as he was such a presence. I hope it helps to know there are many of us that fondly remember him as one of our best teachers and friend. May God fill your hearts with peace.
Carla (Anderson) Landon##imported-begin##Carla Landon##imported-end##

May 18, 2011 at 11:20 AM



“ We are very sorry to hear about your loss. Duane was a terrific man. We'll always remember him. Our thoughts and prayers are with you.##imported-begin##From Theresa and Suzi, nurses at the Moses Lake Clinic##imported-end##

April 28, 2011 at 06:04 PM



“ *Mr. Leitzke was a great teacher to me at frontier and i will never forget him.i really did get alot of influence from him in the way he dressed and his quick wit always. i really learned how to type well in his class. thank you so much.*
v.cantu##imported-begin##Vincent Cantu##imported-end##

April 26, 2011 at 12:40 PM



“ *I remember Duane (Mr. Leitzke) as no nonsense Principle during my years at FJH and for that reason he influenced me to take responsibly for my actions. I remember being bullied by someone in school and after telling Duane the situation he did not hesitate to take action. I could not have asked for a better Principle...
WE NEED MORE PEOPLE LIKE HIM IN THE SCHOOL SYSTEM!!!!*

May the LORD bless you and your family in this time of grief.##imported-begin##Casey Gleason##imported-end##

April 25, 2011 at 09:33 PM



“ *What a class act ! Such a giving and special teacher. I have fond memories that go back to Frontier Jr. High days. I'll never forget that wood yardstick and all the laughs in typing class. My heartfelt thoughts and prayers go out to all of you. Joan Engelhart##imported-begin##Joan Schuster/Engelhart##imported-end##*

April 22, 2011 at 11:59 PM



“ We just called him Leitzke...he will always have a special place in our hearts. Leitzke cared! He was one of the most sincere men I have ever known. He cared about being "real". A great man, we will never forget and always love.##imported-begin##Merrily Harris##imported-end##

April 22, 2011 at 10:54 AM



“ I have so many great memories of Mr. Leitzke while growing up just down the street from him. He would always give us coins to add to our collections. If we ever needed something, Dad would ask him if we could borrow it, but upon returning it, Mr. Leitzke would always say, 'no no just keep it down at your house' Mr. Leitzke and Jeff would help Dad prune the trees in our yard and would make frequent visits to the house on their walks. I will always remember the times staying home sick from school laying on the couch...if he dropped by that day he would always say, 'Well, shouldn't you be at school? What's wrong with you today?' He is already greatly missed and was a true genuine person!##imported-begin##Katrina (Penrose) Betes##imported-end##

April 22, 2011 at 12:50 AM



“ Duane was a man that had a big influence on my life. He had a stern way about him, but once you took the time to get to know him he was a very caring person. Duane's influence on me was at school as well as my adult life. He gave me a lot of sound advice when I got my teaching certification in 2000. Duane will be remembered as a man who truly believed in people.##imported-begin##Ray Moog##imported-end##

April 21, 2011 at 09:09 PM



“ Good morning my name is Kathy Zarate Badely and I just right now seen that Mr. Leitzke has passed on. I just wanted to say I am so sorry for your loss. I used to be a student at Frontier and at that time we never got along, but I am glad Mr. Leitzke was strict with us that kind of made us a better person. You never know how much you think of someone til there gone. So I say God Bless Your Soul Mr. Leitzke you did a good job. God bless your family also.##imported-begin##Kathy Zarate Badley##imported-end##

April 20, 2011 at 10:42 AM



“ Karen:

We are so sorry to read of your Dad passing. May God wrap his loving arms around you and your family as you begin healing. Keep your loving memories close, they will comfort you in days to come.

Our thoughts and prayers are with you.

With Deepest Sympathy,

Darrel and Bev##imported-begin##Darrel and Beverly Kulm##imported-end##

April 19, 2011 at 11:08 PM



“ Mr. Leitzke as my Vice Principal at Frontier Jr High, you were one of many I looked up to! you made me a better kid, and as an adult, it was great to run into you at different times and visit, last time we got to chat was in Wenatchee, you will be missed, You touch so many Lives, I am glad God put you in mine!##imported-begin##Dale Roth##imported-end##

April 19, 2011 at 07:29 PM



“ Duane will be missed by all that had the good fortune to meet and talk to him. He was a good friend. I didn't know him as a teacher or a coach but as a fan. He was one person you could count on being at sporting events rooting for the kids. There are very few people that would be considered "Special". I beleive Duane was one of those. He will be greatly missed.
My condolences to Mrs. Leitzke, Karen and Jeff###imported-begin###Rick Koba###imported-end##

April 19, 2011 at 03:05 PM



“ One of the best! Great Man, educator, Friend, and role model. Thank you Mr Leitzke!###imported-begin###Alfredo (Jr.) Valdez###imported-end##

April 19, 2011 at 01:56 PM



“ As a regular visitor to Mr. Leitzke's office during my tenure of Frontier Jr. High in the early eighties I was able to get to know him well. He taught me the difference between right and wrong and was always fair. Although at the time my opinion of adults needed lots of work, I always respected and appreciated Mr. Leitzke. At the time I didn't know why I just did. Now when I read about the extraordinary volunteerism he exhibited during his lifetime I now know why. There are many lessons he taught me that I carry with me to this day 31 years later.

My condolences to the family,

Jack Edward Whiting###imported-begin###Jack Edward Whiting###imported-end##

April 19, 2011 at 01:15 PM



“ Mrs.Leitzke & Family,Darrell and I would like to express our deepest sympathy.We too loved Duane he was a wonderful man who will be missed by many people.I to am one of those he always stoppped by on my birthday when I worked at Moses Lake Clinic and after I left at my home to tell me Happy Birthday.I will always remember and cherish those stops.Last year I wasn't home so he called the dental clinic to tell the girls to call me to tell me .God Bless you& you family thank you fro sharing such a wonderful man with all of us.Sincerely,Darrell&Christina Schafer###imported-begin##Christina Schafer###imported-end##

April 18, 2011 at 11:56 PM



“ Kindest thoughts and memories to the Leitzke Family. My memories of Duane started in 8th grade. He was my typing teacher, and from that day forward I credit his skills and mentoring for carrying me forward through my school years. With every opportunity I had in the work world, I credited Duane's guidance. He was a remarkable man, a kind and generous man, and I will remember him always. Please cherish your memories. I know myself and his former students will cherish our memories.###imported-begin##Sharon Schuster Leesburg###imported-end##

April 18, 2011 at 07:37 PM



“ A great coach, boss and friend. Thanks for helping dad.###imported-begin##Ron &Cathy Seibel###imported-end##

April 18, 2011 at 07:36 PM



“ For the last couple of years I have enjoyed your friendship over a cup of coffee and appreciated your help in pruning my trees.##imported-begin##Ralph Seibel##imported-end##

April 18, 2011 at 07:30 PM



“ Bernie, Karen & Jeff please know our thoughts and prayers are with you during this difficult time. We have fond memories of Duane playing church league softball with Brian and garage sailing with Tami. We were always greeted with a smile and hug from him at many activities in town and at church. We will truly miss his cheerful greetings and warm embrace. May he rest in peace.##imported-begin##Brian & Tami Wilson##imported-end##

April 18, 2011 at 06:08 PM



“ I will miss you Duane. You were always a smile and a handshake to brighten my day!##imported-begin##Sam Thornton##imported-end##

April 17, 2011 at 11:39 PM



“ To Bernell and family: It is impossible for me to put in words what a great friend Duane was over the years. I am so pleased that we were able to have the phone conversation that we recently had. I'll never forget the years of teaching, coaching and socializing together. The world has lost one hell of a "MAN". Duane and I started teaching together in 1959 at Frontier - coached together - and did much story telling over the years.##imported-begin##Dr. Byron and Millie DeShaw##imported-end##

April 17, 2011 at 06:39 PM



“ Dear Bernie and family,
Over the years I have heard many teachers reminisce about the good old days at Frontier when Duane was an administrator. He was respected as a disciplinarian who was kind and fair to the students but no-nonsense when it came to the rules. Teachers appreciated that and were happy to work with him. He will be greatly missed at the Frontier Reunion potlucks and for his birthday calls.##imported-begin##Barbara Jacobs##imported-end##

April 17, 2011 at 02:13 PM



“ Thinking of all of you at this time with Love and Prayers! Everette will remember Duane worked for my Dad and was a very nice person. He came to visit my Dad once when he was home and came over and visited with me when I was still working. Lots of nice memories of the boys. Wonderful dancers for one!
Darlene(Weber) Hendershot##imported-begin##Darlene/Dick Hendershot##imported-end##

April 17, 2011 at 12:49 PM



“ My condolences to his family..Mr.Leitzke was the best principal ever!##imported-begin##Teresa Willard##imported-end##

April 17, 2011 at 02:44 AM



“ From the time I was in first grade through a graduate degree at WSU, I would imagine I had well over 100 teachers. The one I remember the most and only one I have kept in touch with over the years was Mr. Leitzke.

I would probably say there are a thousand or more students who attended Frontier who feel the same way as I do.

From the time that Mr. Leitzke showed up at Peninsula Elementary to volunteer as our after school sports coordinator, I knew that I wanted to be a Physical Education Teacher and Coach. My desire only grew stronger as I had the privilege to have Mr. Leitzke as my football, basketball and baseball coach for three consecutive years.

As all of us moved on to high school, he gave us the confidence to succeed at the next level, and then the next level and then through life. He always shared the right words at the right and he truly "Walked the Walk"

Through my teaching career, I would always return home for a Chief baseball game or two and Mr. Leitzke was there and he had a welcome home smile and words of encouragement for a colleague.

Hard to believe that I was now a colleague, but he was always the teacher and would ask questions which showed that he really cared about all of our careers and families.

When we celebrated our 40th high school reunion only a few years ago, the highlight of our night was having Mr. Leitzke there celebrating with us after all of those years. He thanked us never considering that he was the one that needed to be thanked - yes for his whole life he "Walked the Walk" and we are all better people, husbands & wives, mothers & fathers, and yes now grandfathers & grandmothers because we knew Duane Leitze.....

Blessings and prayers to Bernell and the whole family,

*Bobbie Jack Melson
Frontier class of 1963##imported-begin##Bobbie Jack
Melson##imported-end##*

April 16, 2011 at 03:20 PM



“ *Bernie, Jeff and Karen Mr. Leitzke was one of the nicest men we had ever met. He always sat behind us in church and never missed a week. It was always nice to see him sub at Longview school. When we both heard about the passing of Mr. Leizke my husband said, he was going to miss seeing him at garage sales. They always shared their fishing stories and talked about fishing rods and reels. Our Deepest Sympathy to you all. We loved Mr. Leitzke. Luis and Trina Alfaro##imported-begin##Luis and Trina Alfaro##imported-end##*

April 16, 2011 at 01:03 PM



“ *Duane was awesome person who touched so many lives. He will be greatly missed by all of his family and community. Wishing we could be by your side at this time, our deepest sympathy. Karen and Paul Kern##imported-begin##Karen Kern##imported-end##*

April 16, 2011 at 12:08 PM



“ my heart and prayers go out to the Litzke family mr. Litzke was a true inspiration to all that new him , always a smile and a kind word . one could only wish to be the kind of human being that he was . god be with you my friend.##imported-begin##todd voth##imported-end##

April 15, 2011 at 11:02 PM



“ I will miss seeing him after mass. My heart felt prayers are with you.##imported-begin##gordon minnis##imported-end##

April 15, 2011 at 10:33 PM



“ What a beautiful family you are and what fond memories we will always have of Duane.
Our Love and Prayers,

Fred % Shirley##imported-begin##Fred & Shirley
Rhodes##imported-end##

April 15, 2011 at 08:33 PM



“ Duane impacted so many students and community members in such a positive way. It is obviously his time in the Moses Lake School District was not just a job, but truly a life's passion. Duane has touched my life from my Frontier days to now. Duane understood the importance of relationships and certainly had the God given talent to let others know how important they were to him. My condolences to the family. God bless you.
Vicki##imported-begin##Vicki Groff##imported-end##

April 15, 2011 at 07:56 PM



“ I will never forget my first grade teacher at Pratt School/ He was so young and such a nice young man. I learned so much from Mr Lietke. Sorry to hear he had been so ill. My thoughts and prayers are with the family.##imported-begin##Avisann (Herslip) Rogers##imported-end##

April 15, 2011 at 07:30 PM



“ Our deepest sympathy go out to you, Bernell, and your family. Holly has many fond memories of "Mr. Leitzke" while going to Frontier. He was a real mentor to kids and his caring went well beyond the classroom. We remember his strong support of youth sports in ML. We always enjoyed running into him over the years; our short conversations were always pleasant & uplifting. We are so, so sorry for your loss.##imported-begin##Holly & Barry Moos##imported-end##

April 15, 2011 at 06:48 PM



“ To the Leitzke family; We were so sorry to hear, that Duane has passed away. Duane embraced the joy of life. He did so many things in his life time, starting in the Army, teacher, principal, plus baseball, football, fighting fires, Husband, Father, and Grandpa. He will be remembered for his sense of humor, infectious smile, his sense of optimism, and his enormous amount of patiences. Frontier Jr. High, would not have been the same without Duane. He helped us raise our 4 children, while they attended school at Frontier. The world is left a better place, because of Duane.

Our thoughts and prayers are with you all, and please know, that Duane is safe in God's care.

Sincerely, Cathy and Paul Kersey##imported-begin##Cathy & Paul Kersey##imported-end##

April 15, 2011 at 02:45 PM



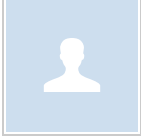
“ My thoughts and prayers are with you at this time...I will miss all our friendly chats. Sincerely, Harold##imported-begin##Harold Blanchard##imported-end##

April 15, 2011 at 02:31 PM



“ Sorry for your loss, your family is in my thoughts and prayers.##imported-begin##Diane Bristow##imported-end##

April 15, 2011 at 12:56 PM



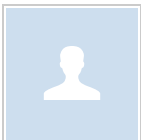
“ I first met Duane on the Pony League Field behind the old Safeway in 1963 at my first practice on the Eagles Pony League team. He earned my respect and captured my attention at the first team practice and would continue to keep it for the next 40 some years. One always knew just where you stood with Duane. He was always more interested helping us develop our skills and most of all our character as young men than he was with winning the game. Later in life it was always such a pleasure to run into him downtown, as he would always make time for a visit. Over the years, I always considered Duane as a mentor and would call him for advice or to discuss certain issues. I consider to be one of Moses Lake's greatest teachers, coaches and citizens. He will be missed by all who knew him.##imported-begin##David Hopkins##imported-end##

April 15, 2011 at 10:26 AM



“ I remember he was the principle at Frontier he was an awesome person i will be sure to miss him.##imported-begin##shawna c##imported-end##

April 15, 2011 at 01:17 AM



“ Moses Lake has lost a wonderful man and mentor. Mr. Leitzke was one of the best teachers I ever had. He taught us to be respectful to ourselves and fellow classmates. We always knew he cared about his students and wanted us to do our best. Mr. Leitzke came to every one of our class reunions. We always appreciated that he would take time to join us. We had our 40th reunion this past summer and there he was to give us all a big hug and reconnect. His memory will stay with me forever. My prayers and thoughts go out to his family.##imported-begin##Barbara Garbe##imported-end##

April 15, 2011 at 12:49 AM



“ Mr. Leitzke was the best neighborhood grandpa in town! Well worn baseball gloves, balls returned back over the fence, and no broken windows. We will miss his visits to the ball field, the stories he shared, and yes, the birthday calls! Bernie and family, our prayers and thoughts are with you as your loved one is resting peacefully among the angels now. May our warm hug reach around you and offer comfort.##imported-begin##The Johnstons~ Jason, Jackie, Brad & Eric##imported-end##

April 15, 2011 at 12:31 AM



“ Our deepest & sincere condolences to your family. Duane was a wonderful, caring man who touched the lives of many. We've both known Duane for years, at Frontier and also with the MLFD. The world is a better place because Duane was a part of it. We are sorry for your loss! NK & Benita Shearer##imported-begin##Nk & Benita Shearer##imported-end##

April 14, 2011 at 10:35 PM



“ Bernie, Jeff and family; May your loving memories bring you peace during this difficult time. Your family is in my thoughts.##imported-begin##Lisa ##imported-end##

April 14, 2011 at 08:18 PM



“ We are so sorry for your loss. Mr. Leitzke was a true gentleman and will be greatly missed. Please know you are all in our thoughts and prayers.##imported-begin##Colleen & Ron Roth##imported-end##

April 14, 2011 at 04:41 PM



“ *Bernie, Jeff and Karen, Duane was bigger than life to me. A great friend and mentor. From your first arrival in Moses Lake Duane treated me like his son. Duane taught me many things in life. I have always felt my favorite years were in junior high under his guidance and watchful eye. We will all miss a great man. We really only leave two things in life our family and memories. Duane was one of the best.*###imported-begin###Bob Trask Jr###imported-end##

April 14, 2011 at 10:55 AM



“ *Dear Mr. Leitzke, family and friends. With your passing, Duane, another of the mainstays of Moses Lake from the 60s through the 80s has moved on.*

*Thanks for the positive impact that you had and continue to have on hundreds of classmates and community members from the several decades we have had with you. God bless you and yours as the journey of life plays out for the rest of us and until the day of your reuniting with your loved ones. it shall surely come... Love,
David###imported-begin###David Miles Oman###imported-end##*

April 14, 2011 at 01:05 AM



“ *Bernie and family, I am so sorry for your loss. Duane was a good person who always was so kind to our family. There aren't words to express how much Duane's visits to Dad meant to him. Dad could always count on a smile and a "how are you" from Duane. We former students will remember him for his involvement and even for the many class reunion he has attended in the past 50 yrs. We loved having him, he was just part of the class. I personally will remember when you lived in our basement and the two of you were dating. As a young girl I thought that was pretty cool. Duane leaves behind many memories and I will cherish mine. Love to you all as you take this journey.##imported-begin##Terry Trask Skeesick##imported-end##*

April 13, 2011 at 08:35 PM



“ *Mr. Leitzke was such a handsome man right up to the very end. The last time I saw him was at Andrew Betes funeral. He was a teacher when I went to Frontier in the 60's. Funny how the years make the difference in your ages disappear. Such a nice man. I am so sorry to hear of his passing.##imported-begin##Cathy Glaesemann##imported-end##*

April 13, 2011 at 06:33 PM



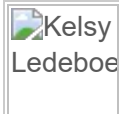
“ One of my favorite teachers.. one of my favorite people. His sense of humor was enormous and witty. He was always firm and fair and kind with us at school and everyone grew to love and respect him for it. As I became an adult and a parent that respect for him just grew. It was a privilege to know him and always a delight to see him when ever he came into the office to bring in his "football"picks in the fall. He was truly a living legacy and his absence will be felt by an entire community.##imported-begin##Connie Cummins
##imported-end##

April 13, 2011 at 01:02 PM



“ There was not a kinder or nicer gentleman in town. Whether it be a cheerful greeting, birthday wish,or asking about how your kids were doing, Duane was a man who could truly brighten your day. Not only will he be greatly missed by his family, but the community has lost a giant among men.##imported-begin##Jerry and Ronda Kayser##imported-end##

April 13, 2011 at 12:36 PM



Going back through and re-reading all the posts to my grandfather and grandmother as the anniversary of her death is tomorrow. And I just wanted to say I appreciate your words so much, he definitely was a giant among men -Kelsy

Kelsy Ledeboer - July 22, 2021 at 10:26 PM