



Barbara Kay Collinsworth-Johnson

September 19, 1946 - December 10, 2010

Barbara Collinsworth Johnson (BC), 64, of Dimondale, MI passed away on Friday, December 10, 2010 after a courageous battle of 14 years with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS or Lou Gehrig's Disease). Ms. Johnson was born September 19, 1946 in Kansas City, Missouri, the daughter of Howard and Alice (Sessions) Hile. BC grew up on a farm south of Ionia, MI. She was the Speech and Drama teacher for Charlotte Public Schools, directing the annual student play and other small plays throughout the year. She also created close relationships with her students and was dedicated to helping them develop their full potential. She retired in 2000. BC helped with blood drives at school, herself being a 60 pint donor with the Red Cross, and encouraging others to donate. She was on the design team of Charlotte Performing Arts Center, a former board member of Eaton County United Way, worked with the Peer Resistance Leader Program and Students Against Drunk Driving (SADD) doing mock accident scenes. She is survived by her son, William, "Willie" Collinsworth of Dimondale; mother, Alice Hile of Ionia; brother, Jim (Kay) Hile of Lansing and her special caregiver, Deborah Loveland of Charlotte. The family will receive visitors Monday, December 20, 4 pm to 8 pm at Pray Funeral Home. Funeral and Affirmation Celebration will be 11:00 am, Tuesday, December 21, 2010 at Charlotte Performing Arts Center with Reverend Steve Ezop officiating. A private interment will be at a later date in Letts Cemetery on Peck Lake Road, Ionia. If desired memorial contributions may be made to A.L.S. of Michigan or The C.P.S Education Foundation for

Arts. Online condolences may be made at www.prayfuneral.com
Arrangements by Pray Funeral Home, Charlotte, MI

Tribute Wall

LR

“ I have been thinking a lot about BC this week and wishing I could be there to celebrate her life and the impact she had on so many of my classmates and beyond. I was trying to pinpoint what it was about BC that set her apart. Many of my fellow classmates have so beautifully expressed many of the things we loved about her and the amazing imprint she left upon us. From reading all of the outpouring here and across the Internet about the difference she made in so many lives, one more gift she had came to mind. BC had the ability to make each of us feel like we were her favorite student. She was able to do this because she so sincerely cared about each of us. I had some great teachers who really wanted to help us learn all about the subject they were teaching us, but BC wanted us to learn all about ourselves and each other. She told you how it was but in a way that you knew she cared. BC was a woman of action - she showed you how she felt about you by giving you her time, her honest opinion, and her love. She got behind causes she believed in giving us real opportunities to affect our community through programs like Peer Resistance and the Mock Accident. She didn't just tell you she cared about you - she showed you and for that reason above all, she will leave a legacy through all of us who were fortunate enough to call her a teacher, mentor, coach, and friend. Thank you BC for always giving us your very best and for showing us how important it is to give of ourselves. Love you!

*Lori Idalski Repovich
CHS Class of 1993*

Lori Idalski Repovich - December 21, 2010 at 12:45 AM

KT

“ Barb was a wonderful Aunt to us. We will miss her dearly.

Kristie Seavolt Tucker - December 20, 2010 at 09:10 PM

VH

“ BC was absolutely one of the most influential women in my life, as a teacher, friend and voice of wisdom in my college years. She gave me the confidence to speak up and shine, a gift that has followed me far beyond HS. She followed me throughout my college years, attended my wedding, and even gave me a pep talk bedside visit before the delivery of my first child. She emulated the type of influence I hoped to be, and I carry her candor and wit with me in spirit, as I attempt to touch lives in my own school career. Here's to you BC: Thank you for the gift of your friendship, watchful eye, caring wisdom and wild spirit---- xoxox

Vanessa Simpson Hogarth
CHS Class of 1993

Vanessa Simpson Hogarth - December 20, 2010 at 12:44 AM

HG

“ Dear Willie, Kay and Jim,

My condolences to each of you. I was so blessed to have had Barbara as my dear friend. Over fifty years have past since we first met at Ionia Junior high. Our friendship grew during high school. We went away to college, raised families, had careers and always remained friends. When we finally found ourselves "semi-retired", we could spend more time visiting and traveling to Florida and cruising in the Caribbean. That's when the real fun began. There are too many fond memories to mention here, but they will live forever in my heart. She may be gone, but never forgotten. She touched too many lives with her smile and wonderful sense of humor.

hglasson - December 18, 2010 at 05:21 PM

KS

“ I had BC for all four years in Speech, Drama, and Independent study in both subjects as well. She was not only a wonderful teacher but a wonderful friend, Barb taught me many things about giving a speech and acting but more importantly about LIFE. We had so much fun in her classes, play practice, and yet we learned a tremendous amount at the same time. I truly loved her, she was a remarkable lady. I will miss you BC. With Love, Kirk Sherman :)



Kirk Sherman - December 17, 2010 at 10:31 AM

TS

“ *B.C. was a wonderful teacher, in fact one of my very favorites. I loved her class and she was in my thoughts very recently when I performed a skit at my work for boss's day. I remember her always being so encouraging and she gave me such confidence and her inspiring words stay close to my heart. I remember being so shy during those awkward teenage years - and yet she pulled me out of my shell. She had such a kind way of encouraging all of her students.*

I remember her classroom and how she loved her little piggies that she had collected. Her calendar, figurines and stuffed animals always made me comfortable and her beautiful, encouraging smile and easy going manner was wonderful.

She's went home to take her place among the angels and I know she's up there smiling down on us all.

Peace to all and I hope to see my B.C. angel again someday...

*-Tiffany
Class of 1999*

Tiffany (Arciszewski) Swartz - December 17, 2010 at 01:01 AM

SP

“ *I was so sorry to hear about the loss of BC. She was truly a special person, an amazing woman who touched many lives. She was a very strong influence in my life, one of those teachers that you never forget, and never forgot her students. She was always there for her them, even after graduation. Please know that your family is in my thoughts and prayers. Godspeed, BC.*

*Stacy Palmer,
Class of 1990*

Stacy (Rohdy) Palmer - December 14, 2010 at 06:31 PM

KF

“ B.C. was my drama teacher. I graduated from C.H.S. in 2000, and B.C. was one of my favorite teachers of all time. She always supported me in every performance and was forever encouraging. When B.C. got had to quit teaching, she also gave up giving blood. She had given blood religiously to save others' lives. I decided to begin donating blood when she had to stop. I'm well past a gallon in B.C.'s name. I sure miss her, and will always remember and love the way she loved others.



Kristin Smith Fosbinder - December 14, 2010 at 06:24 PM

RB

“ i am sadded and lost for word on the passing of BC if it was not for her i would not have stayed in school she was the bested teacher i had
after i graduate from school i lived over a resturant in olivet that i work at
after we closed one night i invited the workers up to my place to relaxed and play board game my boss ask me if is friends could come up and i said sure
well for about a half an hour i kept staring at the women and i shouted out BC name
it been so long after school since i had seen her
well for the rest of the time everyone stay they all talk to each other and BC and I just talk the night away till everyone left
i will always remember that night forever
my thought and prayer are with her family
robert (griffin) blair

robert(griffin) blair - December 14, 2010 at 04:20 PM

BD

“ Willie, Alice, Jim and Kay,
My heart aches, even knowing this day would come, doesn't make it easier. I have so many good memories over the last 34 years. Barb was a "summer Mom" to my two son's and a dear friend to me. What a great listener! She asked the right questions to help with life challenges. Barb gave me more than I returned. I will truly miss a dear neighbor and friend. Barb was part of our family and that extends to you. Willie, I miss the way it was. Keep in touch. Love to each of you, Sherrie and Bob

Bob and Sherrie Davis - December 14, 2010 at 03:53 PM

BD

“ I will miss our monthly pizza dinners. Me, Hayley Uhl (Merrill), and Heidi Tobias (Merrill) would go over to BC's once a month for some pizza and girl talk. We had so much fun with BC. She will be greatly missed!



Billie Jo Day - December 14, 2010 at 09:22 AM

LS

“ To all of BC's family, friends, and students, I send my most heart felt condolences and I sincerely accept yours. BC was more than a teacher to me, she was my friend, confidant, mentor and firm hand of guidance and support during the difficult years of high school.

BC taught more than the class subject, she taught us to grow up. While she will greatly be missed, she will always be with us.

*Le Ann (Shriver) Schlee
Class of 1982*

Le Ann (Shriver) Schlee - December 13, 2010 at 08:42 PM

LR

“ When I graduated early in January 1978 Barb and her husband took me and my boyfriend to dinner to celebrate. My own family did nothing. Barb was my friend and confidant. I think of her often and always will. My thoughts and prayers go out to all who are grieving, there are many. Let all your loving memories heal your heart.



Linnea Rochester - December 13, 2010 at 04:23 PM

NF

“ Jerry and I as well as the rest of my entire family would like to express our condolences to you at this time. We feel the incredible loss of such an amazing woman. Barb walked into my classroom in January of 1987 when I had been hired mid-year as a teacher at CHS. She also walked into my life that day and remained there for over 20 years as a very special friend to me. Barb watched my kids grow up, had them in class, and continued to be a cheerleader for them as well as my husband and I in all of our life pursuits. Besides our regular girl time, Barb attended many family gatherings of ours including graduations, bridal showers, weddings- my family considered her an extended member. We never got together over the last 10 years without some relative inquiring about her. Barb was one of those deep friends who loved to share the joys, but was definitely there for the heartaches as well. I have so many wonderful memories to comfort me as I know you do also. Her spirit lives on! May she rest in peace.

Nancy Fahner - December 13, 2010 at 01:10 PM

JP

“ *My thoughts and prayers are with and for you during this time of grief and remembrance In reading your comments about her always smiling, I was reminded of why I had a crush on her in my high school days, it was that wonderful smile. May our Lord and Savior grant you peace and comfort. Thinking of you in your time of loss.*

John K. Priester

John K. Priester - December 13, 2010 at 01:26 AM

KG

“ Jim, Kay and Willie-

Please accept my sincere sympathy for the loss of your sister, sister-in-law, and mom.

I truly know how difficult it is, and wanted you to know that you are all in my thoughts and prayer's. BC was not only my favorite teacher, but such an incredible influence in my life and I was so fortunate to continue to have her as a dear, dear friend.

Please know that I continued to pray and pray for her as she battled this disease. In spite of the busyness that I experience with my own children, I would think of her, and many times fall back on the advice she gave me as a fragile teen. I am fast approaching those years with my own daughter. I still have the glass blue-bird that she gave me for graduation on the windowsill in my kitchen. When I look at it, I often think about the confidence that she built in me through speech class and ultimately to take on the roll of "lead" in the school play. In fact, my son Kollin, was a part of the children's chorus in the musical Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dream Coat put on by the Charlotte High School Drama Dept at CPAC. I sat in that auditorium and thought to myself, "I wish that I could share this with BC! She would be so proud to see the love of drama live on in the families of her former students."

There was no better "cheerleader" than BC! I can only hope that my children are blessed to connect with a teacher as special as BC was to me.

Be so proud of the support that you gave her!!! She was very lucky to have such a loving supportive family, and could not have done it without you.

May time heal all wounds, and may you find peace and comfort in your wonderful memories and the memories shared by all of those who knew and loved BC so much.

*God Bless!
Kathy Gonser*

Kathy Gonser - December 12, 2010 at 11:55 PM

SJ

“ *My condolences to family, friends and the hundreds of students that shared in BC's life. That was what she did, shared her life with us. She was an inspiration to many and a savior to me. BC was "that" teacher we all talk about when we meet people that graduated from Charlotte. She was a legend. She will be missed. May there be unlimited "large cokes with no ice" just for you BC! Susan Wooters Jackson class of '81*

Susan Wooters Jackson - December 12, 2010 at 04:00 PM

CH

“ *Such a very difficult and unforgiving disease. You can now watch your family and friends from above without the pain and suffering. Bless you!*

CJ Hill - December 12, 2010 at 11:44 AM

AP

“ *I'm so sorry for your loss. BC was a wonderful teacher and my favorite of all times. She gave me her Cat Whiskers to me when Willie had become allergic to him. I remember them bringing him to our home. I was watching her with her son and thought she isn't only a great teacher she is also a great Mom. I would stop by the school once in awhile to say hi and let her know how Whiskers was doing. She will live on in our memories and our hearts.*

angela I priesman - December 12, 2010 at 10:41 AM

JS

“ I am so sorry for your loss. BC was a special person and always gave of herself and enjoyed life, her family, friends and students. She will be sadly missed by so many. Thanks for all the wonderful memories BC. No more pain and illness. Rest in Peace.

Julie Bruce Shaver - December 11, 2010 at 10:29 PM

SM

“ I am so very sorry to hear of B.C.'s passing and of her struggle with such a horrible disease. She was such a fantastic teacher - such an amazing influence on the kids. I remember that she always taught on our level - never looked down on us. If she disagreed with our actions - she'd discuss it with us - but never judged us. What a huge loss...there will never be another B.C. Rest peacefully, dear lady. Yours was a life well lived.

Sherri Eaton McElhaney - December 11, 2010 at 07:07 PM

PR

“ As one of many of her students, Barb, Ms Collingsworth had a lasting impact on me. She taught speech class back then and I waited until one of my last opportunities to take this required class. I did not want to talk in front of a class and I was hoping they would change the requirements. Well, I took the class and Barb helped me to make it through. Now I speak in front of an entire church every week. She was fun, she was caring and she was a very special person. Praying for the Lord's comfort for the family. Pastor Randy Royston Charlotte New Hope Community Church "Class of 73"

Pastor Randy Royston - December 11, 2010 at 06:59 PM

SB

“ *BC was my favorite teacher in high school. She was inspirational and encouraged me to write. She was kind, gentle, compassionate and so much more. I kept in touch with her over the years and wrote about her in an article that was published in a weekly periodical. The imprint she left on my life will never be forgotten. I'm thinking of her family during this difficult time.*

*Sally Nash Boyd
Lansing, MI
Charlotte High School
Class of 1985*

Sally Nash Boyd - December 11, 2010 at 06:39 PM