



Susan Elaine Nidzgorski

May 26, 1960 - April 14, 2017

Susan Elaine Nidzgorski, 56, of Haymarket, VA passed away at her home on April 14, 2017 in the comforting arms of her identical twin Joyce, surrounded by her loving two other sisters Jane and Bobbi, after valiantly battling ovarian cancer for three and a half years. She was a career middle school science teacher, tennis coach, and professional tennis instructor who added meaning and knowledge to every life she touched.

Born on May 26, 1960 in Wilmington, Delaware to Joseph and Angela (Palczewski) Nidzgorski, Sue grew up in the Penny Hill section of Wilmington, attending schools in the Mount Pleasant School District where she enjoyed science subjects, playing the flute, singing in choirs and enjoyed playing all sports. At the age of 10 she learned the game of tennis from her older sister Bobbi who was instructing in the local recreation department. Susan instantly fell in love with the game that became the center point of her next dozen years of high-level competition, and committed her to a lifetime of passion for teaching the game to others, via on court instruction and coaching high school tennis. While attending Mt. Pleasant High School, she and her twin Joyce captained the girls' tennis team and led the team at the Number One and Two Singles positions, while winning several state scholastic championships and state/local/regional tournaments. During those years, she was selected to represent the Middle States Tennis Association in several junior national tournaments at a variety of locations throughout the United States. After being

actively recruited by the tennis programs of several Division I universities, she chose to attend college and play tennis in her native state at the University of Delaware.

There, she earned the position of Number One Singles on the women's tennis team as a freshman, with Joyce playing at Number Two. This one/two positioning was repeated in her sophomore year, during which she and Joyce completed their second straight season of undefeated play. During that time, Sue led the team to breaking the previous school record for most wins in a season. Sidelined with a broken leg in her junior year, she joined Joyce at Number One Doubles in their senior year.

Sue graduated from U of D in 1982 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary and Special Education, with an area of interest in Biology and emphasis in Business. Thereafter, she attained a Master of Instruction Degree from the University of Delaware in 1989.

Susan's career of teaching began in 1982 at St. Helena's Catholic School in Wilmington. A few year later, she transitioned to the Upper School of the Alfred I. du Pont Institute and Children's Hospital (long term rehabilitative hospital with an in-house academic program) in Wilmington. There, she learned and respected the intricacies of providing traditional subject-based instruction to children with significant physical impairments. Over the next two years, having moved to Hilton Head, South Carolina, she taught middle school science and a Language Arts Honors program at the H.E. McCracken Middle School in Buford. Simultaneous with school teaching, and especially during summer school vacations, Sue pursued multiple tennis instructional positions, including at the Sea Pines and Shipyard Plantations. Sue also continued her coaching pursuits there, with a highlight being leading the Hilton Head Prep Boys' tennis team to a State Championship.

In the summer of 1992, she moved north to northern Virginia where she has made her home for the past 25 years. She briefly taught at Franklin Middle School before joining the staff at Stone Middle School in 1993. She taught biology for one year at Westfield High School in 2002 and then returned to

Stone Middle School where she remained until December 2016, serving as Science Department Head for many years during her tenure there.

Sue has coached secondary school tennis teams at multiple high schools. Her coaching involved Boys' and Girls' teams for many years at Chantilly High School, sometimes encompassing fall and spring seasons. In 2003/2004 she coached the Boys' and Girls' teams at Westfield High for one year. Thereafter, she coached the Boys' Team at Battlefield High School in Haymarket for two years. Sue was named Coach of the Year on multiple occasions by fellow conference coaches. She was a United States Professional Tennis Association P1 level teaching professional and was awarded the Mid-Atlantic President's Award in 2017 and High School Coach of the Year in 1997-98 by that organization.

Sue's love of science and animals of course included being committed to tight bonds with a never-ending string of ownership of dogs, a cat, snakes, rats, and fish. She was especially fond of whales and dolphins and loved to share her knowledge of these mammals with students, family, and friends.

Highlights in Sue's life include traveling to China under a Fulbright Scholarship, a trip to her descendants' native homeland of Poland to study and learn Polish at Jagiellonian University, and many trips to Mexico!

Susan's life was marked by a gigantic, sharing heart. She was always bestowing material gifts as well as the gift of knowledge and experience.

Whether it be information about cell division, trees, aquatic life, plants, how to hit an overhead smash, how to combat residential structure pests, or how to plan awesomely fun and educational annual school springtime trips to Florida, Susan threw all of her energy and passion into pleasantly imparting her knowledge with all whose paths crossed with her. Her smile, her words, her positive attitude, her generous gifts, her hearty laugh, her incredible strength, her compassion for all, her humble pride, her competitive fight in sports and against illness, and her never-ending sharing of all that she knew, will be forever engrained in the minds and souls of all who knew her.

Susan is survived by her sister and brother-in-law Jane and Richard Howe of Darlington, MD, their son Artemis "Ricky" Howe and his wife Andrea, and their son, Dominic; sister Bobbi Nidzgorski of Niantic, CT; and twin sister and brother-in-law Joyce and Thomas Doud of Colchester, VT, and their three sons, Joseph and Braeden of Colchester, VT, and Galen of Nashua, NH. Numerous cousins throughout the United States survive Sue. She thoroughly treasured a nurturing role with Logan and Bryce Owens as their beloved "Tia". On behalf of Sue, the family would like to deeply thank the administration and staff of Stone Middle School for all their love and support of our sister. They would also like to acknowledge the kindness and loving care from the nursing staff at the Woodburn GYN Outpatient Infusion Clinic and her oncologist Dr. Bicher.

A memorial service to celebrate Susan's life will be held at Stone Middle School, 5500 Sully Park Drive, Centreville, VA on Sunday, April 30th from 2:00 - 4:00 pm. The service will be in the auditorium followed by a tree planting dedication ceremony near the science wing and concluded with refreshments in the library.

In lieu of flowers, it was Sue's wish that donations in her memory be made to Stone Middle School (address above) or the Nancy Yeary Women's Cancer Research Foundation, 351 Hospital Road, Suite 506, Newport Beach, CA 92663, 949-642-5165, www.nancycancer.com

The family is soliciting photos and stories of happy moments you have shared with Sue. Please send any such mementos to the email address of nidzmemories@gmail.com

Previous Events

Service

APR **30**. 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM (ET)

Stone Middle School
5500 Sully Park Drive
Centreville, VA 20120

Tribute Wall

SM

“ Sue a.k.a. Ms. Nidz was a kind soul and someone we were all lucky to have come across. I unfortunately missed the news of her passing, but her kindness and grace are not forgotten.

Shane Martin - April 11, 2023 at 11:58 PM

SM

“ I am just learning of Sue's passing. I knew Sue through my work at Earth Foundation, the educational partner of The Nature Conservancy. For Sue's family members, I am sure Sue encouraged you to purchase our environmental t-shirts to save the rainforest. I loved working with Sue. She was my favorite teacher client, and we became good friends. She and I had a lot of long-winded conversations. :) Sue had compassion for others like few possess. Her enthusiasm for her students to have a sense of achievement was so refreshing. She loved saving the rainforest and using our project to give her students a sense of achievement. I wish there were a million+ teachers like Sue in education. How blessed all would be. I remember talking to Sue after 9/11. I told her about flying on the first plane out of Houston to land at the Reagan Airport in Washington and seeing the gap in the Pentagon. Sue, in turn, asked me if I had seen the huge American flag draped over the gap. Sue said, "One of my student's father is a fireman who draped that flag over the gap. Isn't that the coolest thing you've ever heard? I have a student whose father helped drape that flag." That was Sue. She was a bundle of love, joy, enthusiasm and compassion. Love to the members of Sue's family. Rest in peace, Sue. Hope your keeping the courts in Heaven busy and you're racking up ships.

Sheridan Meek - August 12, 2021 at 02:54 PM

AW

“ Sue invited me to teach her students at Stone MS about the Chesapeake Bay. Each year I visited, I left energized from her enthusiasm to teach. Her passion to share and educate will always be remembered. I will certainly miss you, Sue.

Andrew Wilson - September 12, 2018 at 06:11 PM

RL

“ Mrs. Nidz you were my 7th grade science teacher back in 2015 - 2016 at stone and you were probably my favorite teacher of all time. You were fun caring and passionate, thank you for being a part of my life
Rest easy - Ronny Lu

Ronny Lu - June 14, 2018 at 02:57 PM

ST

“ Sue, my friend and classmate since Edgemoor Elementary. Even in elementary school, Sue brought out the best of me. She encouraged me to play hard and do my best. I was not very popular, and was shunned by some of the kids, but Sue didn't. I was her friend. As the years grew, we went our separate ways, but still played in the band together.
I still followed her and Joyce in their sports accomplishments and was proud for them.
My condolences to her sister and my friend and classmate, Joyce, all her friends, family, and everyone that she touched in her short lifetime. Sandy Troupe. Mt. Pleasant High School

Sandy Troupe - May 07, 2017 at 04:41 PM

JH

So very sorry to hear of Sues passing. Sending prayers to her friends and family.

Judy Trincia Handlin - June 22, 2017 at 05:41 PM

CR

“*'Ms. Nidz', as she was known to the kids and parents of Stone Middle school, was a force of nature. She had enthusiasm, passion, humor - all the things that make for a great teacher. I had the pleasure of working with her to put together a special program for the 7th grade at Ellanor C. Lawrence Park and it was a great experience. I'm so sad to learn of her loss. My sincere condolences to her family.*

Cheryl Repetti - April 30, 2017 at 06:53 PM



“*I was on the tennis team at Chantilly high school from 98-01 where Sue was our coach. This was a rough time for me and I still remember Sue being there for me and guiding me not only as a tennis coach but a mentor who cared. I never got to see her again after school. But, in my brief experience with her, I felt that she was a strong compassionate women who made the people around her better. She will surely be missed.*

Avinash Kondagunta - April 30, 2017 at 12:11 PM

DB

“ My family was fortunate to have known Sue. My son, Branden, was coached by her at Chantilly High School when he was a sophomore and until he graduated in 2001., and I helped as the team mother. My daughter, Alicia, was also privately coached by Sue as she wanted to make the Chantilly tennis team. Sue was a great coach who instantly became a source of leadership, strategy, and guidance. for the boys and girls she coached. The boys all loved her, who blended in with them as they went to Hooter's to celebrate a win. Over the years Sue became a friend that I always looked forward to seeing. The world has lost a wonderful, genuine person, but she will never be forgotten for Sue is one of those people that lives in the hearts and memories of people and will forever bring warmth and a smile to one's life whenever one thinks of her.
Darlene Beets

Darlene Beets - April 30, 2017 at 11:34 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue* was purchased for the family of Susan Elaine Nidzgorski.



April 28, 2017 at 06:58 PM



“ *Enchanted Cottage* was purchased for the family of Susan Elaine Nidzgorski.



April 28, 2017 at 01:44 PM



“ *Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of Susan Elaine Nidzgorski.*



April 28, 2017 at 01:12 PM



“ *Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Susan Elaine Nidzgorski.*



April 26, 2017 at 06:46 PM



“ *Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Susan Elaine Nidzgorski.*



April 26, 2017 at 09:46 AM

MZ

“ I will forever fondly remember the kindness and passion that Ms. Nidz had for life and and for science. It was in an IEP Meeting that Ms. Nidz exemplified her kindness and drive to push her students for success. When many teachers didn't believe in my potential she saw past my deficiencies and encouraged me to be passionate about science and frankly about life. I am incredibly thankful to have had a teacher like her to serve as a role model to help navigate against life's challenges. When life was hard in college the resiliency she showed in class motivated me and inspired me to push harder. I credit the skills that she gave me with helping me to graduate from West Point last year. She will forever be a part of many lives including mine.

My deepest sympathy,

Matthew Ziegler

Matthew Ziegler - April 24, 2017 at 06:09 PM



Natalie Goodman

Wow! Amazing story. Beat Navy!!

Natalie Goodman - April 27, 2017 at 10:21 AM

MS

“ *Matthew Ziegler (Former Stone Student) purchased the Sweet Tenderness for the family of Susan Elaine Nidzgorski.*



Matthew Ziegler (Former Stone Student) - April 24, 2017 at 05:05 PM



“ *Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of Susan Elaine Nidzgorski.*



April 24, 2017 at 10:46 AM



“ *Sue always had such a wonderful laugh & an amazing ability to make people feel comforted and cared about.*

Please accept our most heartfelt sympathies for your loss...our thoughts are with you and your family during this difficult time.

- Brian & Lori Kilczewski

Brian Kilczewski - April 24, 2017 at 09:50 AM



“ *Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of Susan Elaine Nidzgorski.*



April 23, 2017 at 08:30 PM

JM

“ We are so sad at the passing of Sue. She was a great neighbor and dear friend. We had many conversations about the deer, bear, birds and other wildlife that Sue loved to watch. We are going to miss her smile her waving whenever she saw us outside. Our sympathy and prayers go out to Jane, Bobbi, Joyce and Tom, whom we have come to know. May Sue rest in peace in the arms of the Lord.

Love,
JT & Didi

JT & Didi McConnell - April 23, 2017 at 05:26 PM

LG

“ My thoughts and prayers are with Sue's family and friends - I remember her tennis prowess from my high school days in Wilmington - she was an incredible competitor and her love for her sport always shined through

Leigh Grady - April 23, 2017 at 05:13 PM

MD

“ Nidz is by far my all-time favorite coach throughout my life whether in sports or my career. She is the best and left a legacy. I look forward to celebrating her life on April 30th. RIP Nidz.

Melissa Dornan - April 21, 2017 at 11:30 AM

MB

“ A great teacher and wonderful person. Both of my daughter's loved her class and I was fortunate to work with her last year when her class attended a field trip at Cub Run Park. She made such a positive difference in so many young people's lives. Godspeed Sue.

Mike Bishop - April 21, 2017 at 10:04 AM

 Natalie Goodman

“ Sue was my tennis coach at Chantilly in '96 and '97, and I have nothing but great memories of her (unless running was involved, haha). She was so passionate about tennis, and as I read her obituary, I realized how committed she was to the kids in FCPS. She truly gave all of herself to the schools and the kids, and I am just in awe of her.

My thoughts and prays are with her family as they grieve such a tremendous loss. She will truly be missed.

Natalie Goodman - April 21, 2017 at 09:19 AM

 Natalie Goodman

“ 1 file added to the album *New Album Name*



Natalie Goodman - April 21, 2017 at 09:15 AM

 Patrick
Daniel

“ I cannot begin to say how much this news of Mrs. Nidz's passing pains me. Mrs. Nidz was by FAR one of my favorite teachers from my childhood education. She made learning FUN, and it sticks with me to this day. I had the pleasure to find myself as an Instructional Assistant while I was working on my Special Education masters, and found myself working at Stone Middle. It took me straight back to being a student, and wondered if Mrs. Nidz was still working there. When I found that she was, it took her all of 5 seconds to remember me! I know found myself lucky to become a Colleague for a few years. I even inherited a lovely Ball Python through Nidz who still resides with my family to this day. I never got to say this to her, but she is one of the main reasons I wanted to go into education! If I can impact students the way the Mrs. Nidz could, I know my life can be just as complete as I know hers was!

Stone and FCPS education will not be the same. I hope to be half the teacher that Mrs. Nidz was, and if I can live up to that.....then I know my teaching career has been complete.

Rest In Peace Nidz!!

Patrick Daniel - April 21, 2017 at 08:34 AM

 Phill
Nacelli

“ Saddened to hear of Coach Nidz's passing. She was a great coach, colleague and friend on and off the court. Had the honor of playing on her team my Jr and Sr year in HS and later working with her as a teaching professional at Chantilly National, her energy and positivism was contagious to all who were fortunate to be around her. My thoughts and prayers are with her entire family and her sister Joyce who I heard so much about.

Phill Nacelli - April 20, 2017 at 11:01 PM

JM

“ Good teachers stay in your memory forever. Mrs. Nidz taught me in 7th grade back in 1993 at Stone. I have thought about her every now and then over the years. I was even convinced I saw her working with a student in the library in Haymarket one day. Maybe it was her after all 😊 Thoughts and prayers to her family.

Jeanine Mitchell - April 20, 2017 at 08:01 PM

BM

“ She was such a beautiful soul, the dedication & the amount of helped a student at stone middle school she gave me was truly incredible! I've never had a teacher that as actually taken the time to sit with me and help me understand and help me different ways if I didn't understand, she was truly the best science teacher I've ever had, words can't express how deeply sorry I am for this family, I'm so sorry you've lost such a beautiful soul and amazing woman, also a fighter! She will always be in my memories. My thoughts and prayers go out to her family and loved ones & everyone that got to meet this beautiful intelligent women! God bless your family. You will always be in my heart ❤️

briana marcey - April 20, 2017 at 07:45 PM

 Connie Johnson

“ I am so sorry for the loss of Ms Nidz. She will always be remembered as a great teacher loved by her students, so energetic and inspiring.

Connie Johnson - April 20, 2017 at 07:38 PM

JC

“ My heart goes out to Ms. Nidz' family, friends, co-workers, students, and everyone whose life was touched by her. She was loved and respected and had such a zest for life and learning- a fantastic teacher who made learning fun! She will be missed!

Jennifer Campbell - April 20, 2017 at 07:20 PM

MM

“ As a mother of 2 of her students I loved her from the first orientation day and heard her pronounce "werter" the right way! She is the reason my daughter is going to major in Biology next year in college. Most memorable trip was taking Allie back in the werter in florida to hear the manatee eat the barnacles off the piling and get that on DVD. She couldn't wait to get a copy for me so we could have it. I'm just so incredibly sad that such a huge influence in all these kids lives is gone. We will always remember her and the terrific legacy she has left in all of our spirits.

Mary Ann Cox (The Frye Girls mom) - April 20, 2017 at 06:52 PM

NC

“ Sue was not only an amazing and fun coworker but she was also a great inspiration for my two girls Caroline and Stephanie. They both have commented how they fell in love with the sciences in Miss Nidz class. Today they are both engineers one with a masters in bio-medical engineering and the other with a PhD. Thank you Sue, we will forever remember you. Rest in Peace dear friend.

Nilda Comas - April 20, 2017 at 06:28 PM

JF

“ I was very lucky to have the opportunity to be a student of The Nidz in both middle and high school. Her one-liners were famous in the halls of both Stone and Westfield. I will never forget her passion for science, sports, and being a positive influence in the lives of everyone she interacted with. Very sorry to hear of her passing.

Jared Free - April 20, 2017 at 04:12 PM

DT

“ Ms. Nidz was probably one of the best teachers I've ever had. Not only did she teach the content so well, but she was always willing to listen and she had such great energy and passion that could lighten up any day. I remember her bringing her twin, Joyce, to class once, trying to convince us that Joyce was actually her. My thoughts sincerely go to her family. I will always keep Ms. Nidz's lessons with me and will miss her very very dearly. We all love you Ms. Nidz #NidzKidzForever

Dao Tran - April 20, 2017 at 03:44 PM

TJ

“ Sue's Stone Family's hearts are broken. We miss her more than words can say. Her memory will live on in the lives of those she touched. Our prayers and thoughts go out to her sisters and family. Hoping that one day one of Sue's former students will be the one to find a cure for cancer. She was truly an inspiration and positive force for all of us.

T Johnson - April 20, 2017 at 03:04 PM

CS

“ I had the opportunity to work with Sue. She was a great coach and a great person. I will always have that memory and Sue will definitely be missed.

Chauncey Street - April 20, 2017 at 02:11 PM

TO

“ *The Westfield High School Activities Office purchased the Basket Full of Wishes for the family of Susan Elaine Nidzgorski.*



The Westfield High School Activities Office - April 20, 2017 at 10:45 AM

CS

“ *1 file added to the album New Album Name*



Christine Sekhon - April 19, 2017 at 08:01 PM

MT

R.I.P Girl friend I really want to miss you

Marla trottmann - April 19, 2017 at 08:53 PM

LT

“ Our thoughts and prayers are with Joyce and all of Sue's family and friends. Through Joyce, UD Women's tennis had the opportunity to draw inspiration from Sue's courageous battle with OC and gain awareness about the disease. My heart sank this evening as I heard the news... and an hour or so later, this article (written by current sophomore Sara Komer) was released.



http://www.bluehens.com/ViewArticle.dbml?DB_OEM_ID=29100&ATCLID=211565339

- Laura Travis

Laura Travis - April 19, 2017 at 07:22 PM