



## Arlene Martha Ahlbrandt

June 19, 1930 - October 7, 2010

Arlene Martha Ahlbrandt passed away on October 7, 2010. She and her twin sister, Darlene Marie, were born in Fort Collins on June 19, 1930. She was the daughter of John Wesley, Sr. and Anita Marie Freyermuth Briggs. Arlene was a 1949 graduate of Fort Collins High School. She enjoyed keeping in touch with her classmates and life-long friends. She graduated from the Colorado State College of Education CSCE, now known as the University of Northern Colorado UNC. Arlene worked as an elementary teacher and as a secretary. For the past 25 years, writing was her avocation. She wrote books on local history and served as a newspaper correspondent, contributing numerous articles and columns. Writing was her way of preserving the history of her community and of the home town she loved. On September 19, 1953, Arlene Briggs married Harry Lee Ahlbrandt. The couple had three sons, Jerry, James Jim, and Joe Ahlbrandt whose wife is Michelle. They were blessed with three grandsons, James JC, Hayden, and Straten; and one granddaughter, Chelsea. Recently, two great-grandchildren joined the family. Arlene was preceded in death by her parents; her son, Jerry Lee; and her brothers, L. Wesley Briggs and John Wesley. Arlene was a 50-year member of Beta Sigma Phi sorority, a member of the Fort Collins Historical Society, the past president of the Pioneer Women Association, the past president of the Terry Lake Homeowners Association, and a member of the American Legion Auxiliary. She also enjoyed the Red Hat Society. Her hobbies included collecting music boxes and books, traveling, and working crossword puzzles

with her husband. Together, they enjoyed coffee-time at the Fort Collins Club with special friends. Her life will be remembered at an evening visitation service at the Bohlender Funeral Chapel from 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. on Monday. Funeral services will take place at 10 a.m. on Wednesday at First United Methodist Church, 1005 Stover. Interment will be at the family plot at Grandview Cemetery. Memorial Contributions may be made to Pathways Hospice in Care of Bohlender Funeral Chapel, 121 W. Olive, Fort Collins, Colorado 80525.

# Tribute Wall

BL

“ When Arlene Ahlbrandt died last month, northern Colorado lost one of its finest history writers, and I lost a friend. She was a longtime member of the Fort Collins Historical Society, served as its president, and was honored by the Society "for her continuing efforts to preserve and record the pioneering spirit in Larimer County."She wrote several books, including a two-volume "Larimer County History"; "Women to Remember of Northern Colorado"; "The History of Wellington and the Boxelder Valley," and others. Two of her books were used in local schools: "Annie the Railroad Dog" and "Lady Moon and Her Animal Friends." Arlene wrote history articles for the Senior Voice. She was among our most popular writers—a kind, talented woman who contributed greatly to preserving northern Colorado's heritage. It is with great sadness that I say, "Goodbye, dear friend. I will miss you."

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**Bill Lambdin** - November 24, 2010 at 12:00 AM

JA

“ Mom, Thank you for teaching me that "The Time is Now" If you are ever going to love me, Love me now, while I can know The sweet tender feelings Which from true affection flow. Love me now While I am living. Do not wait until I'm gone And then have it chiseled in marble, Sweet words on ice-cold stone. If you have tender thoughts of me, Please tell me now. If you wait until I am sleeping, Never to awaken, There will be death between us And I won't hear you then. So, if you love me, even a littlebit, Let me knoe it while I am living So I can treasure it. Auther Unknown Mom, you taught me this the last few weeks of your life, Thank you! I know that we shared more in that time than I ever could have dreamed, I thank you for the last lesson you gave me. I Miss you and think about you so often, you give me strenth to be a better person than before. Thank you for giving me this strenth, it helps when I miss my mom. Always Love, Joe

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**Joe Ahlbrandt** - October 27, 2010 at 12:00 AM

CM

“ We are so sorry about the passing of your Mom. Arlene was an amazing woman who made great contributions to our community. She was always so positive and kind to all, even to my wacky aunt who she shared her gift of history with. She was so proud of her family, and we will miss her. Jim and Cheryl Mauro

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**Cheryl Mauro** - October 27, 2010 at 12:00 AM

JN

“ Dear Aunt Arlene, I will miss your zest for life and adventurous spirit. TP'ing the schools, camping in the driveway, Jiffy Pop popcorn,... You were always your own person and I admired you for that. There was always laughter whenever you were around. Thank you for the love you gave to all of your family. We will miss you!

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**Jacque Niesent** - October 25, 2010 at 12:00 AM

MF

“ Dear Arlene, It's been a joy to have you in my Life and in the Life of my family. Thank-you so much for your kindness toward my daughter and her place in your family. We have all grown from the experience from knowing and spending time with you! Thank-you so much for the opportunity to be the artist in two of your books, what a great honor!! You will be missed my friend. I hope you and my mother will find wonderful moments together in the beautiful place you both are now!!! All my love to two loving Mother's Myrtle and Arlene. A loving daughter, Marlena

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**Marlena Friend Farago** - October 25, 2010 at 12:00 AM

MF

“ Dear Arlene, It's been a joy to have you in my Life and in the Life of my family. Thank-you so much for your kindness toward my daughter and her place in your family. We have all grown from the experience from knowing and spending time with you! Thank-you so much for the opportunity to be the artist in two of your books, what a great honor!! You will be missed my friend. I hope you and my mother will find wonderful moments together in the beautiful place you both are now!!! All my love to two loving Mother's Myrtle and Arlene. A loving daughter, Marlena

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**Marlena Friend Farago** - October 25, 2010 at 12:00 AM

LP

“ I have admired your courage for many years. You always had a smile & kind word for everyone. When I visited you many times in the hospital you still smiled and made me wonder at your strength, you never complained. You will be missed by your sorority sisters, red hat and your many readers that read your columns and books. My heartfelt sympathy to Darlene, Harry and all your family. You leave a void no one can fill.

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**Lorraine Pappas** - October 24, 2010 at 12:00 AM

SA

“ Grandma, I miss you so so much, I miss your bright smile and warm touch, Your happy face, attitude and such, I will miss the fish and such, And the feeling of your touch, I miss you Grandma so so much. -Straten

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**Straten Ahlbrandt** - October 21, 2010 at 12:00 AM

VB

“ Dear Sweet Aunt Arlene, You were an amazing beautiful woman that I miss so much already. My heart goes out to Uncle Harry, Joe and his family, Jim and your twin sister. I will always cherish the wonderful times shared with you learning about our family history and the interesting people you met and wrote captivating stories for everyone to share. I'll always admire your spunk for life. I know you're in a better place. You're now with my father, mother, grandparents, your brothers and Jerry, this is wonderful?.but we miss you. God bless you, Aunt Arlene.

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**Victoria Briggs** - October 20, 2010 at 12:00 AM

HA

“ To my loving wife; maybe I have said it, and maybe I have sung it to you, you'll never know how much I love you You'll never know how much I care And if I tried I still couldn't hide my love for you I'm going to miss the wonderful life we had together, times we've been fishing together, enjoying the cabin or vacations. You were always so warm and wonderful to our children and grandchildren. I understand how important it was to you to help our children in a loving way If I have never express how proud I am of you, I want you to feel it now. All your accomplishments and the books you wrote mean more to me than I could ever express. I'm missing my wonderful wife. Your Bunny Bunch, Harry

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**Harry Ahlbrandt** - October 20, 2010 at 12:00 AM

SG

“ *What a wonderful service was held for you Arlene! You would have been proud that so many people came to say good by to you on that Wednesday morning. Straten said it best in his letter to you, to his grandma, what a special person you were. We miss you Arlene, as a friend and as a neighbor. With love, Seraina and Johannes*

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**Seraina and Johannes Gessler** - October 18, 2010 at 12:00 AM

MA

“ *A thank you letter to Arlene- I have so many things to thank you for. Thank you for letting me become a part of your family and loving me like a daughter. Thank you for sharing yourself,who you are, what you stand for, and all your knowledge with myself and my children. Thank you for all of your love. Thank you for enriching my life with your life. I will miss your smile, your opinions, being called "kid", and all of our "girl" times. I love you- Michelle*

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**Michelle Ahlbrandt** - October 18, 2010 at 12:00 AM

HA

“ *Grandma, I'm going to miss you so much , but I know it is better for you to have moved on. Going through everything this last week has brought back many cherished memories. I want to say thanks for being such a great grandma and giving me so many funny, positive memories to look back on. Of these, I'd have to say the top is just about everytime we went fishing. I'm going to miss my fishing buddy, but I know you'll be "throwing in vitamins" for me everytime I go fishing now. Love you lots!*

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**Hayden Ahlbrandt** - October 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM

JJ

“ I had the honor of meeting Arlene in 1985 when she contacted me about putting our family in the History of Larimer County Colorado book. She said that she knew that she would not be able to include all of the families that she wanted to and would need to write another book. I told her that I would love to help her work on it and that wish became a reality in 1986 when she asked if I would like to help represent the Bellvue area. Working on the history book with Arlene was truly one of the highlights of my life, an honor to work with her and an opportunity to get to know her. Our friendship continued and grew over the years....we had so much in common and loved the same things. Such an amazing woman with a huge heart. Amazing to me that she never complained and always wanted to know how "you" were doing. She was truly a mentor to me in many ways and I loved her dearly. Thank you for blessing my life with your friendship, Arlene. Love Always until we meet again,  
Judy

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**Judy Jackson** - October 16, 2010 at 12:00 AM

ES

“ I first met Arlene in the water aerobics class at the Fort Collins Club, about eight years ago. I soon met her family and some of her friends. Arlene was a friendly, caring person who made new friends feel welcome no matter where she was. I have enjoyed her stories about her family and her travels. Most of all I enjoyed her sharing of the little things in here purse, and her famous words ?don?t tell Harry?, though I am sure he already knew most of it. Arlene was a charter member of the Red Hat Society chapter Les Rouges Chapeaux. Arlene introduced me to my first Red Hat chapter lunch. I am sorry she did not know I am now Queen of that very society chapter. I thank her for that first invite. She will be missed. I offer my condolences to her family and to her sister Darlene. May God Bless all of you.

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**Elaine Sweet** - October 16, 2010 at 12:00 AM

CA

“ Dear Uncle Harry, Jim, Joe and family. You are all in my thoughts and prayers. So many wonderful memories of dear Aunt Arlene ... her encouraging all of us 'kids' to perform talent shows at family gatherings ... her taking Jacque, Debbie and me camping in your new camper - even if we were only in the driveway ... her deviled eggs at family gatherings ... and her forever being responsible for me being 'Cherie Sue'.

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**Cheryl Ahlbrandt** - October 14, 2010 at 12:00 AM

DD

“ Arlene was just an amazing woman, and she contributed so much to Fort Collins through her columns, books, and involvement in so many community groups, including the Pioneer Association. She was so friendly & genuinely cared about so many people. I will miss seeing her sweet smile. I also was aware of her long and happy marriage to Harry - and I saw often at church their genuine looks of affection to each other. Arlene was meticulous in her research on anything about the history of Fort Collins - and she has left an incredible legacy of local history to the community. My sincere condolences to all the family for your loss.

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**Debbie Dixon** - October 14, 2010 at 12:00 AM

RS

“ Dear Arlene will be missed by us in so many ways! Since it's getting close to the holidays one in particular stands out for me...making my husband's favorite pecan pie for our holiday meals. We will miss the pie of course and more than that, we will miss Arlene as she always thought of others first and how to make them feel special in her presence. Our prayers and blessings to all the family. Ray and Debbie

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**Ray Pigg / Debbie Scalva** - October 14, 2010 at 12:00 AM

VF

“ Arlene was a special lady and will be missed by many in our Fort Collins family. Virginia

Virginia Febinger - October 14, 2010 at 12:00 AM

SS

“ I met Arlene through The Pioneer Association and at the Wellington High School reunion. What a wonderful person I'll remember always!

shirley hatten smith - October 14, 2010 at 12:00 AM

AJ

“ It was no surprise that Arlene would fill a church at 80 years old. Arlene knew no stranger and accepted friendship from people of all ages. When Arlene would make introductions, she always made you feel exceptional. I first met Arlene when she would visit Loretta in the nursing home where I worked. Loretta was the daughter of the man who first found Annie, the Railroad Dog. Arlene was passionate and personally involved with all the characters in her many books. Fort Collin's is so lucky Arlene took the time to write down history about her beloved town. At EVERY event that involved history, Arlene was sure to attend with books in hand. I am deeply grateful to have known Arlene. Harry and Arlene were so fortunate to have shared the journey together. My favorite quote to the most giving and unselfish women of Fort Collins. "It is no fool to give what he can not keep to gain what he can not lose." All my best to Harry!  
Angie Joseph

Angie Joseph - October 14, 2010 at 12:00 AM

EB

“ Harvey and family, I would like to give all of you my condolences for your loss. It was always a pleasure talking to Arlene when she came to Albertsons. I was a cashier and Arlene was always so nice to me. I was honored when she gave me a signed copy of 101 MEMORABLE MEN of Northern Colorado. She was proud of her family and truly loved everything she was involved in. I truly enjoyed her friendship and I know that God has called this wonderful woman home. At this moment Arlene is still watching over her family that she loved so much. "GOD BLESS YOU ARLENE" A friend Earl D. Buckendorf

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**Earl D. Buckendorf** - October 13, 2010 at 12:00 AM

KB

“ Upon meeting Arlene 3 years ago, our friendship was immediate, characterized by many talks about faith, family, friends. I reveled in watching Arlene grow closer to her Savior as she dug into Bible studies. We shared laughter and tears, as mothers do, over long discussions about our families, always so thankful for them. Arlene shared with me her love for one man, "My Harry," as she called him. A special legacy from Arlene was to always look for the best in people. Arlene remains to me a role model, an inspiration, and a dearly loved friend. I know a part of her will always live on in me. To Harry, Jim, Joe and Michelle, and her grandchildren and great-grandchildren, my thanks for sharing Arlene with me, and know I cherish my ongoing friendship with all of you. I miss talking with my dear friend, as I know you do...yet I rest assured of seeing her again in Heaven, which will be the grandest home of all. With much love, Karen

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**Karen Boehler** - October 13, 2010 at 12:00 AM

SM

“ Harry, Joe, Michelle and Grandchildren, My prayers are with you as you grieve. Know that I am thinking about you all as we honor the memory of Arlene. Her smile, her hugs and her stories always warmed my heart. She will be missed. May you find peace knowing she is no longer suffering but at home with our Lord.

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**Steve Miget** - October 13, 2010 at 12:00 AM

KR

“ We have been so fortunate to have Harry and Arlene as neighbors for the past five years. Arlene has been an inspiration to us with her talent for writing, her gentle spirit and genuine warmth. Bruce and I want to express our condolences for Harry and their family members. Arlene will be greatly missed.

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**Kit Robinson** - October 13, 2010 at 12:00 AM

AP

“ With sympathy from Alan Beatty and Catherine Pankonin

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**Alan Beatty & Catherine Pankonin** - October 13, 2010 at 12:00 AM

KH

“ My thoughts and prayers are will all of you. I was fortunate to have seen Arlene give a speech at the filling station in Wellington in late spring early summer. I was thrilled to see her and Harry and gave her a hug, she recognized me right away. we were neighbors growing up I am so glad that she got to meet my husband Matt and my 3 year old daughter Maggie! She accomplished so many amazing things and she will be greatly missed. God Bless all of you Kimberly, Matt and Maggie Hawkins

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**Kimberly Hawkins** - October 13, 2010 at 12:00 AM

MB

“ Arlene was such a generous and loving person. When I first came to Fort Collins in 2001 she knew of my interest in genealogy and history and she introduced me to the pertinent organizations and to the local Red Hat Society. I will miss her. She was a dear. Mary Lee Birmingham Lady Flossmore

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**Mary Lee Birmingham** - October 13, 2010 at 12:00 AM

JB

“ It has been a difficult time and I am praying for you Uncle Harry, Jim, Joe and all the family. Aunt Arlene was deeply loved and will be missed. I am sorry I will be unable to attend her beautiful memorial as I am in Bolivia at this time. It was such a blessing to see her in July and have that chance to talk, reminisce, pray and say goodbye. May she rest in peace in the arms of her sweet Savior, Jesus. Love Judy

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**Judy Briggs Bauman** - October 12, 2010 at 12:00 AM

JC

“ Dear Harry, Jim, Joe and Family ~ We are so sorry for the loss of our dear friend, Arlene. She has been part of our lives for many years. We will always be grateful to her for when she was a judge at the Annie Walk, and awarded a prize to our granddaughter Kelly and her dog “Smokey” in the “Look Alike” contest. She has long been a part of the group in the water aerobics class at the Fort Collins Club, when we gathered for coffee after class. Her friendship and support has meant a great deal to us. With love,

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**June & Alex Cringan** - October 12, 2010 at 12:00 AM

JS

“ To the AhlbrandtFamily: What a void you must be feeling at this time with the loss of your beautiful Arlene. She was such an inspiration and positive force during her lifetime and especially during her illness that you were left with the feeling of being a better person having known her. So proud of her family, it must be a great comfort to know she is still watching over each and every one of you. Thoughts and prayers are with your family during this difficult time.

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**Jerry and Donna Schott** - October 12, 2010 at 12:00 AM

CF

“ Arlene was a wonderful lady and will be deeply missed. May her family find comfort in the memories she left behind. Our thoughts and prayers are with you, Doug, LaDeane, Ryan and Brianne

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**Cutter Family** - October 12, 2010 at 12:00 AM

AH

“ It was a great blessing for me to share some music with Arlene and Harry at their home one beautiful August morning. I played and sang some of Arlene's favorite hymns and songs, including Hymn of Praise. My 2 1/2 year old son and mutual friend Karen Boehler came with me and Arlene was so sweet to my little Brady. We laughed, talked about teaching and music there in the front room where the organ is, and Arlene was full of energy, spirit, and smiles. The best part came next when we all trekked downstairs to see and play the player piano, one of her great loves, and she strapped on her banjo! That day is very precious to me and always will have a special place in my heart, even though it was the first time I had met both Arlene and Harry. You have blessed me again by asking me to be part the celebration of her remarkable life.

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**Amy Hloucal-Sager** - October 12, 2010 at 12:00 AM

NH

“ We have lost a genuine treasure and good friend in Arlene. She knew more about local history than most will ever know. Thank goodness she wrote so many books for us to remember her by. A special lady who will be missed.

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**Nancy Hansford** - October 12, 2010 at 12:00 AM

BN

“ Harry, Jim, Joe & families To know Arlene was to love her. She was always willing to care/help others and looked for only the good in all she met. Her love for Harry,her boys and family was always evident. She showed so much courage as she fought her illness. We shall treasure our wonderful memories of good times shared at Crystal Lake. We feel blessed to have had Arlene in our lives. "It's the friends you meet along life's path who help us appreciate the journey."

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**Bob & Maryla Nix** - October 12, 2010 at 12:00 AM

GP

“ Harry - our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family. We will really miss Arlene's friendly smile and love of life and her family. We enjoyed so much getting better acquainted with her at the health club and coffee.

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**Glen and Margaret Perkins** - October 11, 2010 at 12:00 AM

BM

“ We are sorry to lose Arlene. She was a favorite author of ours. We've read her contributions in the Senior Voice long before we even met her. We have three of her books that she authored or co-authored. Her presence at the Fort Collins club will be missed.

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**Bill & Sue Miller** - October 11, 2010 at 12:00 AM

RB

“ It's still hard for me to comprehend that she is not there at her home, and won't be at any more Pioneer Club or Historical Society meetings, or writing for the Senior Voice, or worst, no longer available for a bit of jolly gossip. Arlene is simply irreplaceable and will be greatly missed.

Rose Brinks - October 11, 2010 at 12:00 AM

BF

“ My deepest sympathies to Arlene's family from a fellow writer and historian. I admired her courage and depth of knowledge about the Fort Collins/Wellington area and enjoyed my occasional interactions with her. She will be missed.

Barbara Fleming - October 11, 2010 at 12:00 AM

KS

“ We enjoyed Arlene's knowledge of history, her wit, her humor, her ever-present smile & her love for her family. She made the world we live in a better place. We're so very fortunate to have known such a wonderful young lady. Write on!

Katie Driscoll & Husker Stevie - October 11, 2010 at 12:00 AM

SC

“ The short time I've known Arlene I found her to be a very nice lady. It was impressive all that she knew about the history from the Fort Collins area. She will be missed.

Skip Colyer - October 11, 2010 at 12:00 AM

KG

“ It is very sad to hear of Arlene's passing. I have always treasured the many books she authored and signed for me. God Bless.

Kris Miller Gates - October 10, 2010 at 12:00 AM

JO

“ Mom, I already miss you and thank you for beng such a wonderful mother and being there for so many people. Congratulations on your final chapter here on earth. I know you were ready to complete this chapter and move onto the next adventure with-out the cancer and pain that went with the disease. Thank you for preparing us all to move on in your absence. I will always cherish the wonderful talks you and I shared the last few days, you were strong and shared your intelligence and wisdom all the way to the end of your wonderful life! Your third baby, Joe PS:Please let Jerry know we love him and miss him.

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**Joe** - October 10, 2010 at 12:00 AM

CP

“ My Dear Sweet Aunt Arlene, I have so many wonderful memories of you. One of my favorite's is our song you would play for me on your piano, "You are My Sunshine". You were always such a loving Aunt to me and I will miss you deeply. I love you Aunt Arlene. May you rest in peace. Love, Christie and Family

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**Christine Pinkosh** - October 10, 2010 at 12:00 AM

IB

“ TO HARRY AND FAMILY,I GRIEVE OVER ARLENES PASSING,SHE WAS SUCH A WONDERFUL WIFE AND MOTHER AND A PRECIOUS FRIEND TO ALL. I WILL MISS OUR PHONE CALLS, I SEND YOU ALL MY LOVE . IONA C, BECK , DENTON TX. OCT. 10 2010

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**IONA C. BECK** - October 10, 2010 at 12:00 AM

JB

“ We grieve with you on Arlene's passing; Arlene was a great friend to our family over the years. Her writing and historical accounts of Northern Colorado will live on. We send our condolences to Harry and the other family members. Jim and Carol Burrill

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**Jim Burrill** - October 09, 2010 at 12:00 AM

DG

“ Sorry of our loss, let un know if there is anything we can do. Dave & George Garrison

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**David & George Garrison** - October 09, 2010 at 12:00 AM

JS

“ We will miss our lovely former neighbor. We are so honored to have known and loved her and we were truly blessed to have lived next door for nine plus years. She gave so much to the entire community and she will be missed by one and all. We know the past months have been very difficult and we can take comfort in the fact that her suffering is over. Love and hugs to the entire family. Mary Lou and John

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**John & Mary Lou Shadduck** - October 09, 2010 at 12:00 AM

BC

“ Arlene was a sweet, generous, fulfilled woman. There are not enough positive adjectives to describe her. We are very fortunate to be called Arlene's friends for all these many, many years. Bob is going to miss his hugs from Arlene when he would see her at the Fort Collins Club in the early morning. Arlene will be greatly missed by all who knew and loved her.

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**Bob and Kay Cushatt** - October 09, 2010 at 12:00 AM

RF

“ Harry, Jim, Joe and family, I will miss my long visits with my second mom but will always remember being her girl. I will remember going to see the classic movie *Gone with the Wind* with her, taking me to the college to go ice skating and always there for me when the neighbor boys picked on me. She will definitely be missed. Due to work constraints I will not be able to make it for the funeral but I will definitely be praying that God comforts all of you during this difficult time. With Sympathy and Love, Raylene

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**Raylene Fisher** - October 09, 2010 at 12:00 AM

IG

“ So sorry to hear the loss of Arlene it makes me so sad. Arlene was the student teacher when I was in the first grade at Pleasant View. I kept in contact with her throughout the years and enjoyed her stories of all the local history. Arlene will be missed by all. Ida

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**Ida and Ron Gonzales** - October 09, 2010 at 12:00 AM

SL

“ I will never forget Arlenes smile, laugh or kindness. It was and always will be a privledge to have known Arlene and her family. May God Bless.

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**Shelly Rae Denison Lockman** - October 09, 2010 at 12:00 AM