

# Sandra **Buza**

May 29, 1953 - January 5, 2017



## *Sandy's Life Story*

All who knew Sandra Buza would agree that there was no one who met her and left unchanged. She was one of the most giving and compassionate people around as she devoted her life to serving others in ways both great and small. Sandy was an amazing mother who cherished this role, but she just might have argued that nothing was better than becoming a grandmother to the grandchildren she adored. Life was not without times of trial for her,

but she faced whatever came her way with strength and courage that were truly inspiring. Life will never be the same without Sandy here, but she leaves behind a timeless legacy that her loved ones will proudly carry on in her footsteps.

It seems only fitting that Sandy's journey began during a time that was as vibrant as she was. It was the 1950s when James Dean, Marilyn Monroe, and Elvis Presley became household names while the television was becoming part of our homes in record numbers. This was also the decade when Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on an Alabama bus, and our country became a nation of 50 states with the additions of both Alaska and Hawaii. Amidst this time of great change was the year 1953 when Daniel and Helen (Thibault) Kendzierski were pleased to announce the birth of the baby girl they named Sandra Marie on May 29, 1953, in Flint, Michigan. She was very close to her brother, Dan, and her sister, Karen, while growing up, and then 13 years later their lives were completed with the last of the Kendzierski children when Lynn was born.

Family always played an important role in Sandy's life, beginning when she was very young. Some of her favorite memories were made with her siblings doing things like ice skating, roller skating, and playing "Tarzan & Jane" with their cousins at Uncle Bob and Aunt Pat's farm. During the Christmas season they usually helped on the tree lot with Aunt Millie and Uncle Herb, which was so fun. There were also frequent sleepovers with Sandy's cousins in the Flint area. These times were filled with bonfires and family gathered around telling stories. When she was 15, their family moved to Rogers City as her father who was in insurance sales, changed career's and went into Real Estate. Sandy's mother owned an arts and craft shop in Rogers City and later in Alpena where she also branched out into antiques. Sandy attended local schools where she was on the homecoming court as a sophomore with her brother, Dan. As a high school student she was involved in GAA, pep club, Cadet teaching, girls basketball, library,





Scouting, and class helper. In addition to all of these things and holding down her studies, Sandy worked at the Roostertail Restaurant for three years. She went on to graduate from Rogers City High School in 1971.

The focus of Sandy's life was on helping others. With a passion for protecting the sanctity of human life, she was on the front lines of this movement. Sandy served as the director of youth ministries and as director of Abortion Alternatives Information, giving pregnancy aid to women who chose life over abortion. She participated in the March for Life in Washington, D.C. and led "Rachel's Vineyard," a retreat for post-abortive people. Additionally, Sandy was a social worker at the Catholic Diocese of Saginaw for many years.

Of course there was nothing that was more near and dear to Sandy's heart than her loved ones. She was so thrilled to be a mother to her four children, Aaron, Mary, Jennifer, and Matthew. When her family later grew to include grandchildren, Sandy couldn't have been more thrilled. Her first grandchild, Courtland, named her "Bicky," and from that point forward that is what her grandchildren affectionately called her. She loved holiday gatherings and celebrated Christmas in February with her children and grandchildren. Sandy also took a memorable trip to Florida with her daughters as well as Courtland and Chloe. She loved taking long walks on the beach looking for shells, visiting all the quaint shops, and even going to a wine tasting event one evening. An important part of Sandy's life were her two Shih Tzu dogs, Chester, and most recently, Maude. When her children were living at home, their friends were always welcome, and in many ways they were a bit like extra members of the family. They affectionally called her "Ma Buza."

Always one to be busy, Sandy was a woman of many interests. She really got into pursuing ancestry questions and information, and she was an avid reader as well. For years Sandy was active in the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life with her sister Karen and her niece Stacy. She liked fall color tours, Christmas light tours, and even just going for long drives with Karen. Sandy took great pride in decorating her home, and all her

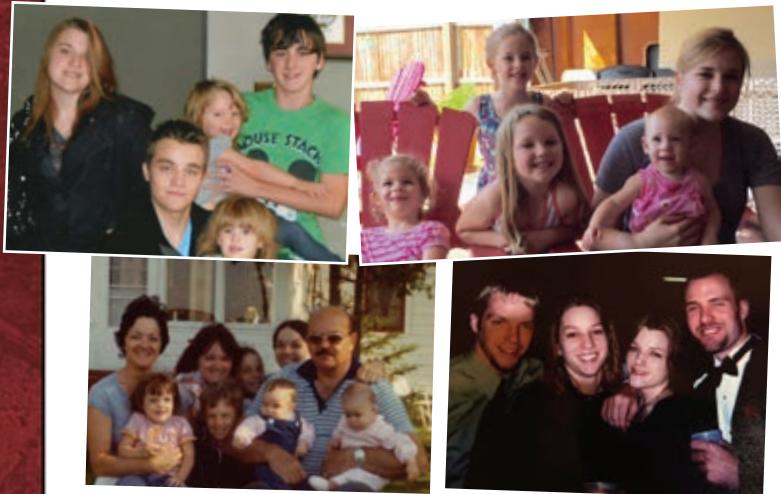
family pictures were beautifully showcased. She did get some inspiration, too, from watching shows like Fixer Upper, and she enjoyed NCIS as well. In April of 2016, Sandy moved to Alpena to be closer to her Northern Michigan family, and it doesn't come as a surprise that she fit right in. In the short time that she was there, Sandy made countless friends and became an important part of their Wednesday night dinner group. Together this group of dynamic people met at various restaurants.





When reflecting on the life of Sandra Buza, words such as hardworking, compassionate, and devoted come to mind, but perhaps the word that paints the most accurate picture of her is the word selfless. Whether she was fighting for those who have no voice, giving a piece of timeless wisdom to someone, or laughing with her grandchildren, she did it with her whole heart. Sandy was reliable and loyal, the sort of person who could be counted on to keep her word. Deeply loved, she will be forever missed.

Sandra "Sandy" Marie, Buza, of Alpena, died on Thursday, January 5, 2017. Sandy's family includes her four children, Aaron (Kari) Buza of Alpena, Mary Buza of Gurnee, IL, Jennifer Buza of Big Rapids, MI, Matthew (Jennifer) Buza of Petoskey, MI; seven grandchildren, Courtland, Chloe, Zachary, Regan, Haley, Zoe, Olivia; mother, Helen Kendziorski and the late Daniel Kendziorski of Alpena; two sisters, Karen (Wayne) McWilliams of Alpena, Lynn Kendziorski of Blue Ridge, GA; brother, Daniel Kendziorski of Oscoda, MI; and her faithful four-legged companion who gave her so much pleasure, Maude. Sandy Buza is at McWilliams Funeral Home – Alpena where friends may call on Friday, January 13, 2017, from 2:00-8:00 p.m. and on Saturday, January 14, 2017, at the funeral home from 10:00 a.m. until the time of the Celebration of Life Service at 11:00 a.m. with Fr. James Fitzpatrick officiating. Inurnment will be at Holy Cross Cemetery in the spring. On-line condolences may be registered at [www.lifestorynet.com](http://www.lifestorynet.com)



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