



Grace Marie McKenzie

September 16, 2008 - September 27, 2023

Grace Marie McKenzie, age 15 of Omaha, lost her battle with osteosarcoma bone cancer Wednesday, September 27. Grace passed away peacefully at home with her mother, Carrie Messinger, and service dog Snickerdoodle.

Grace was diagnosed with osteosarcoma during the COVID pandemic and battled cancer for three years. Grace's cancer was discovered when she was a remote learner with Millard North Middle School and fractured her left arm during a remote PE class. It was later discovered she had a high-grade osteosarcoma lesion in her left arm that had grown undetected. Grace underwent limb salvage surgery in 2021 at UNMC and received a prosthetic limb. She finished chemotherapy in November of 2021 and relapsed just 8 weeks later with new metastasis in her lungs. Grace experienced four total cancer relapses in the last 12 months and battled new spread in her lungs and spine before her passing.

Grace was loved by her doctors, surgeons and nurses at OrthoNebraska, UNMC, Children's, Children's Home Healthcare, and Endless Journey Hospice. She fought cancer with limitless faith and positivity and will be remembered for her thoughtfulness, courage and strength throughout her battle.

Grace's story was shared on social media, and she received thousands of

cards, letters and gifts from other survivors, warriors and families across the country. Her story reached people as far as Indonesia and India. She was adored by many, and her story inspired countless cancer families to have hope, fight with faith and to stay strong in their personal battles.

Grace's service will be at Bethany Lutheran Church (Elkhorn, NE) Friday, October 6. Visitation will be held from 11-1 with her service starting at 1:30. Flowers can be sent to Reichmuth Funeral Home (Elkhorn, NE) or to the church. Her service will be live streamed and recorded for those unable to attend in person (a link will be provided on the Reichmuth Funeral Homes website under Grace's page). All memorials can be sent to Grace's fundraising Venmo: @keepfightinggrace. All memorial proceeds will go to further her UNMC oncologist, Dr. Don Coulter's pediatric cancer research study currently being conducted in the State of Nebraska.

Cemetery Details

Elkhorn Cemetery

South of W. Center Rd, west of 222 ST. and
Wright St.
Elkhorn, NE 68022

Tribute Wall



“ *Reichmuth Funeral Home created a Webcast in memory of Grace Marie McKenzie*



Reichmuth Funeral Home - October 02, 2023 at 05:43 PM

CR

Love and Hugs to Carrie and family. We are so sorry for your loss. The flowers sent represent our family at her celebration of life. Craig and Cyndia Rose

Cyndia Rose - October 04, 2023 at 10:19 AM

CP

You will be so incredibly missed. I've never seen someone fight as strong as you did. You are a beautiful soul, so caring and truly a treasure. RIP Angel

Courtney, Peds - October 08, 2023 at 08:34 AM

LA

“ *Grace and her mom brought treats from Tous les Jours to the hospital during one of her stays. They gave me one of her cookies, and we had a great conversation. I'll always remember it because it was a good cookie, I now love the store, and it was one of the times I was able to see Grace in a state of joy. As a nurse I unfortunately saw her when she wasn't feeling as good. But that memory of her laughing, playing on her phone, making jokes and just being a kid will always stay with me.
Hugs and prayers for you all, Grace will be missed!*

Lauren - October 06, 2023 at 02:07 PM



“ *Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Grace Marie McKenzie.*



October 05, 2023 at 12:33 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Grace Marie McKenzie.

October 05, 2023 at 12:33 PM



“ *We will love you always. Rest in peace. Uncle Nick.*

Nicholas Mckenzie - October 04, 2023 at 07:43 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Grace Marie McKenzie.*



October 04, 2023 at 07:31 PM

SA

“ Seth, Caleb, Ashley, Dave, Kae, & Abby purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Grace Marie McKenzie.



Seth, Caleb, Ashley, Dave, Kae, & Abby - October 04, 2023 at 10:07 AM

C(

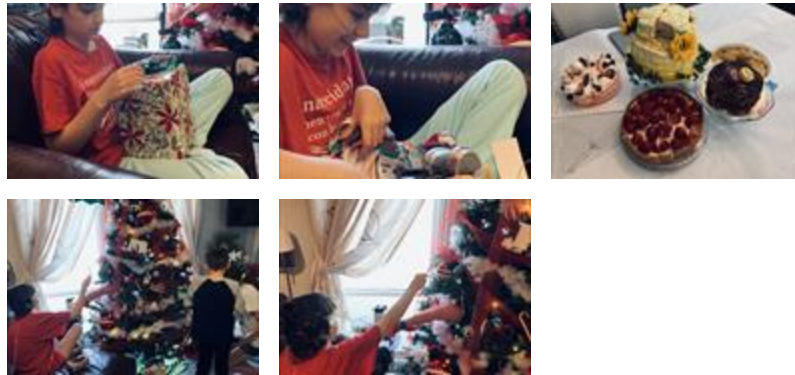
“ These videos are amazing. Even thru cancer Grace still danced and had joy.



Carrie Messinger (mom) - October 04, 2023 at 09:01 AM

C(

“ We celebrated Grace’s birthday and Christmas on her birthday. We called it Gracemas.



Carrie Messinger (mom) - October 04, 2023 at 08:54 AM



“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Carrie Messinger (mom) - October 04, 2023 at 08:52 AM



“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Carrie Messinger (mom) - October 04, 2023 at 08:51 AM



“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Carrie Messinger (mom) - October 04, 2023 at 08:50 AM



“ Basket Full of Wishes was purchased for the family of Grace Marie McKenzie.



October 04, 2023 at 07:49 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Grace Marie McKenzie.

October 04, 2023 at 07:49 AM



“ Gracious Lavender Basket was purchased for the family of Grace Marie McKenzie.



October 03, 2023 at 07:27 PM



“ Christmas gifts!



Hollie Messinger - October 03, 2023 at 02:30 PM



“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Hollie Messinger - October 03, 2023 at 02:21 PM

HM

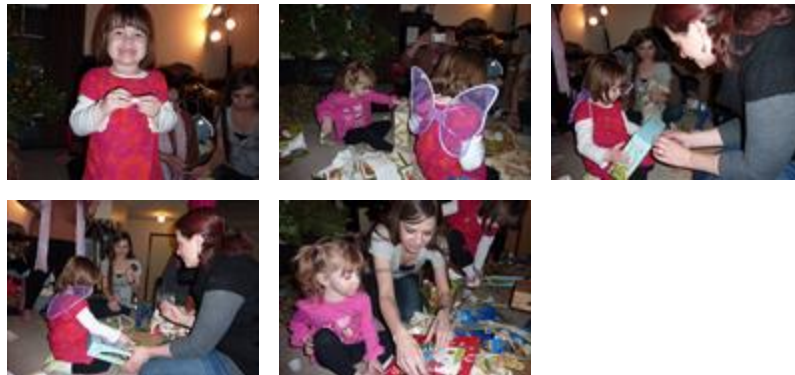
“ 🌻



Hollie Messinger - October 03, 2023 at 02:19 PM

HM

“ 🎅 🌲 🍪



Hollie Messinger - October 03, 2023 at 02:19 PM

PE

“ *Carrie..... Grace will be remembered in our hearts as the girl that loved the color yellow, her smile and laughter, her love of cooking and baking, her quick wit and a bit of sass that would put a smile on your face. May caring thoughts support you and may memories bring you comfort, now and always.*

Paul and Joleen Ekstein

Paul and Joleen Ekstein - October 03, 2023 at 11:25 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Grace Marie McKenzie.*



October 03, 2023 at 11:06 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Grace Marie McKenzie.

October 03, 2023 at 11:06 AM



“ *I was honored that Grace allowed me to call her my niece. My favorite memories of Grace are filled with bottles of glitter, color & slime concoctions, baked treats and art projects. She is deeply missed.*

Kimberly Ekstein - October 02, 2023 at 01:11 PM



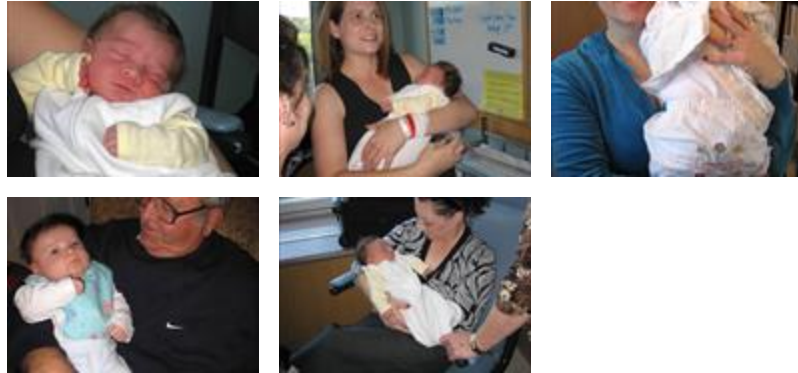
“ *Children's Zoo Fun*



Hollie Messinger - October 02, 2023 at 01:09 PM

HM

“ Sweet baby Grace



Hollie Messinger - October 02, 2023 at 01:09 PM

HM

“ 🐰 🧡 🧡 🧡 🧡 🧡 🐰



Hollie Messinger - October 02, 2023 at 01:02 PM

HM

“ Grace and Sloan



Hollie Messinger - October 02, 2023 at 12:58 PM

C(

I love this photo of the girls

Carrie Messinger (mom) - October 03, 2023 at 03:49 PM

HM

“ *Fun with cousins!*



Hollie Messinger - October 02, 2023 at 12:57 PM

AN

“ *I never met Grace, but her story touched me so much. She is with Jesus in Heaven with no pain. Much Love and Prayers. Thank you for sharing your story.*

Annastasia - October 02, 2023 at 12:20 PM

BM

“ *Bill & Linda Moss planted a grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Grace Marie McKenzie.*

Bill & Linda Moss - October 02, 2023 at 12:19 PM

C(

“ 10 files added to the tribute wall



Carrie Messinger (mom) - October 02, 2023 at 12:09 PM

SC

Beautiful

Susan Cassano - October 02, 2023 at 12:32 PM

BO

Such precious pictures. ❤️

Barb Oetter - October 02, 2023 at 03:39 PM

C(

“ 9 files added to the tribute wall



Carrie Messinger (mom) - October 02, 2023 at 12:07 PM

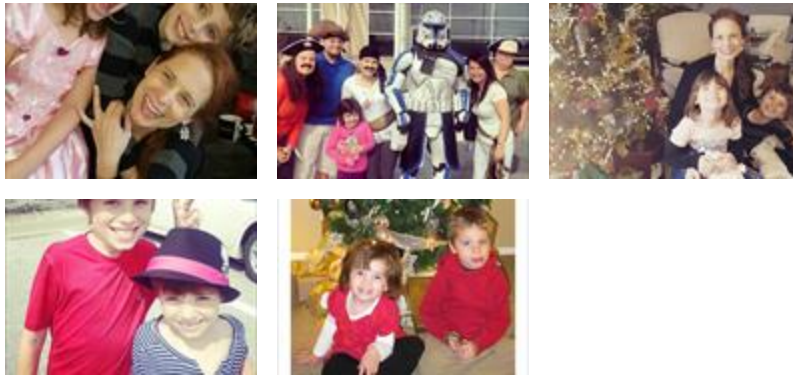
SC

Lovely memories, I hope they bring you peace and joy

Susan Cassano - October 02, 2023 at 12:33 PM

C(

“ Photos with her brother Jack.



Carrie Messinger (mom) - October 02, 2023 at 12:01 PM

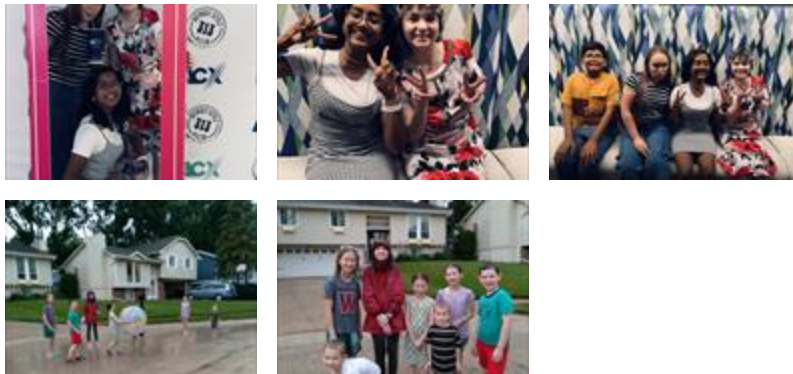
BO

Wonderful to look at these precious pictures. ❤️

Barb Oetter - October 02, 2023 at 03:40 PM

C(

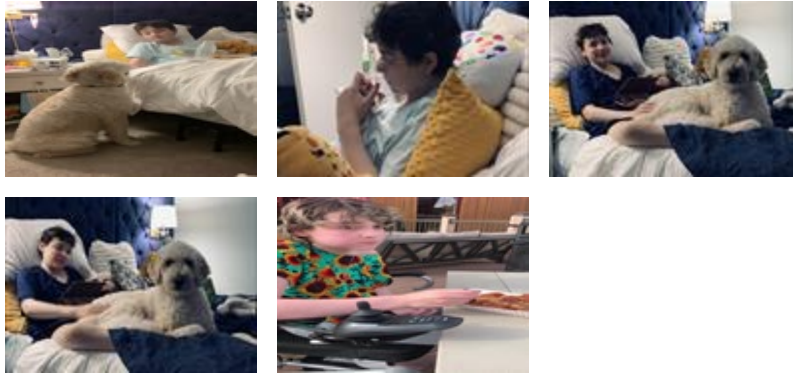
“ Memories with her closest friends.



Carrie Messinger (mom) - October 02, 2023 at 11:46 AM

C(

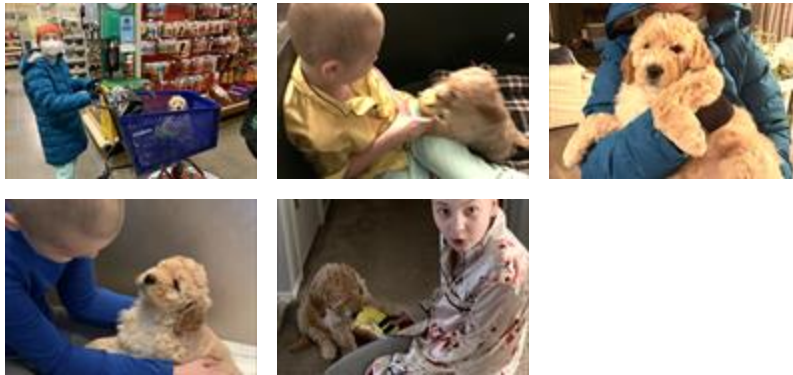
“ Grace’s final days.



Carrie Messinger (mom) - October 02, 2023 at 11:37 AM

C(

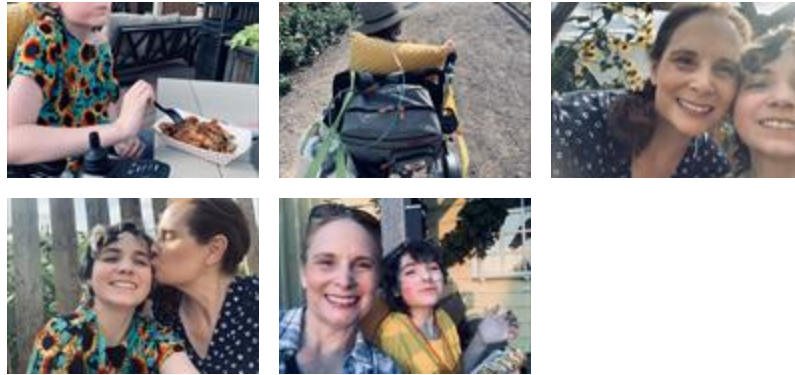
“ Grace adores her service dog Snickerdoodle. They would have been together 2 years this November. Their bond was very special.



Carrie Messinger (mom) - October 02, 2023 at 11:33 AM

C(

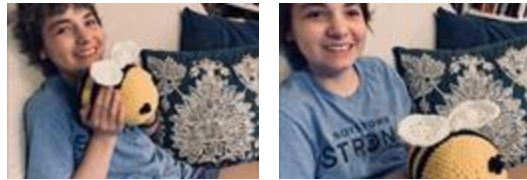
“ One of her last outings was to Vala’s. She had a blast and tasted all her favorite foods. Her favorite was the twister potatoes and sticky buns.



Carrie Messinger (mom) - October 02, 2023 at 11:20 AM

C(

“ Grace learned to crochet this year in three days. She made bumble bees and gave them away to friends.



Carrie Messinger (mom) - October 02, 2023 at 11:18 AM

SC

“ I never met Grace, but I've followed her story thru her mom, Carrie. Grace's fierce and loving spirit has left a mark on my heart. Grace, you have your angel wings. Fly high, and watch over your mom and Snickerdoodle. RIP, Blessed Be

Susan Cassano - October 01, 2023 at 02:23 PM

DE

“ Carrie

Graces biggest wish was to change her name. I will always see her as Grace Messinger. The daughter of a loving mother. My biggest memory of Grace is personal. To hear this quiet girl sing was a gift I would have never imagined. It put a smile on both our faces it was so incredible. When someone you love becomes a memory the memories become a treasure. Both our lives are overflowing with these treasures.

Thinking of both of you always.

Darrin Ekstein

Darrin Ekstein - September 30, 2023 at 01:28 PM