

## **Belinda Niebuhr remembered as a mother for everyone**



Belinda Niebuhr

**By Shanon Quinn/Moscow-Pullman Daily News**

Belinda Niebuhr's favorite color was purple.

She loved Tom Petty, Nickelback, Creedence Clear-water Revival, and anything outdoors.

Her favorite flower was the iris.

The 47-year-old mother of five — and stepmother of two — died Saturday in the last of three shootings in Moscow that residents say “devastated” the community.

Born in Sacramento, where the majority of her family still lives, Niebuhr had worked at the Moscow Arby's for several years and was well regarded by her co-workers.

“She was the best boss you could have. She kept me on track, but wasn't mean. I've worked harder for her than I have on any of my other jobs because I don't want to let her down,” said her longtime friend Carlene Carney.

Carney said she met Niebuhr about seven years ago when they became neighbors.

“She had the biggest heart of anybody I knew,” she said. “Anybody who didn't have the chance to know her missed out on something special.”

Carney said Niebuhr struggled through life before her move to Moscow, but her past did not weigh her down.

“She had a rocky background and since then she never judged anybody. She knew she wasn’t perfect but in her eyes everyone else was,” Carney said.

Carney said Niebuhr was never afraid to address problems at Arby’s — where she typically worked six days per week — and would volunteer to wait on customers who seemed to be having a bad day.

“She knew customers by name, and more than that, she knew about their lives and their families, not because she had to for customer service, but because she wanted to. She had a way about her — she could turn people’s day around,” she said.

Friend and former co-worker Shelly Shaw said Niebuhr touched everyone she came in contact with.

“I worked for Arby’s for a little over a year,” she said. “She was an amazing woman and an amazing boss. She was there for me when I was pregnant and there for me when I had my baby girl.”

Shaw said Niebuhr had a habit of taking care of others so much so that she sometimes neglected herself.

Carney agreed.

“She had mom problems. She wanted to mother everybody, take care of everybody,” Carney said.

Carney said Niebuhr had plans to spend time in Spokane later in the month for her anniversary with her fiance, Donald Fristoe.

Shaw said Niebuhr and Fristoe had a relationship with a bit of a slow start, but it had blossomed in recent years.

“Don chased her and chased her and she kept saying no, but when they got together they were one for the stars. Big bouquets of flowers would show up at Arby’s with this man behind them and she would run out from behind the counter to meet him,” Shaw said. “They just loved each other so much.”

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