



## Karen D. Verraneault

August 6, 1953 - January 31, 2021

Karen D. Verraneault, 67, of Kearney, was welcomed into heaven Sunday, January 31, 2021 at her home after a courageous journey with breast cancer. Memorial services will be 10:30 am, February 5, 2021 at St. James Catholic Church with Fr. Art Faesser officiating. Private family committal service at Kearney Cemetery will follow the service. The service will be livestreamed and can be viewed at <https://stjameschurchkearney.org/> A wake service will be held at 6:30 pm, February 4, 2021 at St. James Catholic Church. Due to the current mask mandate, a face mask is required by those attending the service, and all social distancing guidelines will be followed. In lieu of flowers, memorials are suggested to St. James Catholic Church, C.H.I. Health Regional Cancer Center at Good Samaritan Hospital, or scholarships in her honor for her grandchildren.

Karen was born to Clayton “Beenie” and Mary “Vel” (Koetter) Harmon on August 6, 1953 in McCook, NE. She was raised in McCook where she graduated from high school in 1971. She enjoyed being a cheerleader and the lifelong friends she made.

Karen graduated Suma Cum Laude from Kearney State College in 1975 with a comprehensive major in special education. Later, she added endorsements in Resource and Itinerant Teaching and Early Childhood. Upon college graduation she married her high-school sweetheart and the love of her life for

45 years, Steve Verraneault, on July 19, 1975. They made their home in Kearney and together raised three wonderful children: Andrea, Gregory, and Matthew. Karen often said this was her proudest and greatest accomplishment. She delighted in her children and was blessed to be able to work part time while they were growing up. Her children were very blessed to be raised in a loving home, and to have such an amazing mom. Karen's selflessness, kindness, positivity, and strength will leave a lasting impact on those who were fortunate to know her.

Karen was in field of education for 43 years, retiring in 2018. The first four years were spent as a special education/resource teacher at Shelton and Kearney Public Schools. Educational Service Unit 10 is where she taught the remaining 39 years. She began by serving as special education teacher in rural schools in several counties. Her passion was helping children learn to read. She built lasting relationships with students, parents, and colleagues. During her tenure at ESU 10, she served as the Resource Coordinator, Early Childhood Planning Region Team Co-Chair, and as a member of the Central NE Autism Team. Grateful to have worked with friends and the best boss, made it the most perfect place to work. She loved teaching and the children and families that came into her life.

During her journey with cancer, she was at peace and filled with the "joy of the Lord", wanting only to bring glory to God. She was extremely grateful for her family and many friends who supported her. Her husband, Steve, was her best friend and primary caregiver.

Karen enjoyed watching her children's and grandchildren's numerous activities and sports. She and her husband were avid baseball fans, from little league to professional teams. Making greeting cards, rubber stamping, watercoloring, and playing Bunko with friends brought her joy. Bible study and "RAK Coffee Groups" were important to her. She loved to laugh and cherished

the humor of her husband, children, grandchildren, and friends.

Karen will be remembered for: her deep faith, devotion to family, and love of her dear friends.

She is survived by her husband, Steve; and children: Andrea (Matthew) Mack of Grand Island; Gregory (Nicole) Verraneault of Omaha; and Matthew Verraneault of Omaha. Cherished by grandma, known fondly as "Mimi", are her grandchildren: Aaron, Jared, and Willa Mack; and Lily, Maci, and Piper Verraneault. In addition, survivors include: her mother, Vel; twin brother, Kurt (Patty) Harmon of Torrington, WY, and their children John, Ben, and Caitlin; and sister-in-law and brother-in-law, Carol and Larry Ommert of Cambridge and nephews: Jeff, Tim (Chrystal) and Ryan (Monica) Ommert; and nephew Eric (Jessica) Cunningham, VA. Extended family include: her Aunt Sharon Koetter and Uncle Art Koetter, both of McCook; and Uncle Jim and Aunt Barb Koetter of Pocatello, ID; and many cousins.

She was preceded in death by her father, Clayton; sister, Jennifer, and in-laws Margaret and Lionel (Boz) Verraneault.

# Previous Events

## Wake Service

FEB 4. 6:30 PM (CT)

St. James Catholic Church  
3801 Avenue A  
Kearney, NE 68847

## Memorial Mass

FEB 5. 10:30 AM (CT)

St. James Catholic Church  
3801 Avenue A  
Kearney, NE 68847

# Tribute Wall



“ Karen D. Verraneault

January 29, 2023 at 11:14 AM



“ Steve - I am so sorry to hear of Karen's passing. I have so many fun memories of growing up years in McCook - walking to and from school w Karen - downtown excursions - time at one another's homes. My prayers will be lifting you for God's comfort, strength and peace of mind and heart. Becky (Jones) Davis

Becky (Jones) Davis - February 19, 2021 at 01:45 PM



“ Dear Steve & family,  
Jerry and I send our sympathy and prayers to/for you and your family. We are so sorry for your loss of your precious wife and mother. It has been a few years since I have seen or talked with Karen. But always, in the past her beautiful smile and warm greetings were ready in a moment! Her teaching abilities were numerous and she touched so many children with her love and her abilities.  
May God's deep comfort be with you all,  
Jerry & Jean Hueser

Jean Hueser - February 08, 2021 at 12:58 PM

CA

“ Dear Steve and family,  
So sorry for your loss. A saint once saw a vision of human beings as "living sparks" of God's love, coming from God, as daylight from the sun. That certainly describes Karen!  
I'm so grateful for the "holy moments" we shared together at church activities, especially helping with CCD and RCIA, and praying together with the Women's Bible Study and the Mother's Rosary group. And I'm sure she's cheering us on to continue to share that spark of love.  
Love and prayers,  
Cynthia Archwamety

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**Cynthia Archwamety** - February 07, 2021 at 04:34 PM

GM

“ Steve,  
I read the obituary of Karen and saw her beautiful picture (You've got to love that red hair, don't you? And I thought they called you 'Red.'  
I'm so sorry for you and the family. God IS good and will get you through this tough time.  
Gary (once red/now gray) Mason

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**Gary Mason** - February 07, 2021 at 12:16 PM

MJ

“ Remembering Karen as a fellow elementary teacher at Shelton Public Schools. We were young teachers together & also shared being pregnant at the same time with our first born daughters. Remembering Karen for her positive outlook, her dedication to teaching, & her fun-loving spirit.

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**Marcia Jones** - February 06, 2021 at 12:47 PM

CM

“ I am going to miss our text messages to each other. I hadn't text since Thanksgiving and feel so bad I've waited. I waited too long to talk to her one more time. She was such a joy to work with. She and I both loved the kids we worked with so very much. I know you, her family have been bless with her in your lives. I will be praying for all of you and am so very thankful she is at peace with The Heavenly Father. If you ever stop by TCCC, I will cry with you. Loved your mom and grandma.  
Love, Carolyn Mills

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**Carolyn Mills** - February 05, 2021 at 09:43 AM

AM

Thanks Carolyn, Andrea

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**Andrea Mack** - February 05, 2021 at 07:50 PM

PN

“ I was so sad to read about Karen's passing. I had the pleasure of working with Karen through the ASD team. I learned so much from Karen and the whole team! She was so encouraging and always did her work with a smile! She was an awesome teacher and mentor! My condolences to her family. Prayers for God's comfort during this difficult time! She was one of the best!❤️ Pam Northup

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**Pam Northup** - February 04, 2021 at 09:58 PM

AM

Thanks, Pam, love, Andrea

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**Andrea Mack** - February 05, 2021 at 07:50 PM

EW

“ Steve and family, So sad to read of Karen's death. I remember Karen as a pretty and sweet girl when we went to school together. I am sure she had not changed. Heaven will a little brighter with Karen there. Thoughts and prayers with you Steve and family. Deepest sympathy, Elaine Wells



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**Elaine Wells** - February 04, 2021 at 07:35 PM

GL

“ Steve,

We are so saddened to hear that Karen passed away. Truly a great loss for family, friends, and acquaintances. She will certainly be missed. Our most sincere condolences go out to the entire family.

Gary and Beth Loop

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**Gary Loop** - February 04, 2021 at 06:51 PM

MK

“ Steve & family,  
I am so sad to hear of your loss. To each of you may you find peace in the memories of Karen.  
Michael & Merry Koetter

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**Michael L. Koetter** - February 04, 2021 at 06:18 PM

MS

“ Steve & family,  
So very sorry for your loss. Heaven has gained a beautiful soul. Our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family. Cherish the memories.  
Ron & Molly Sears

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**Molly Sears** - February 04, 2021 at 05:11 PM

AW

“ The ASD Network team offers our sincerest condolences for the loss of Karen to her beloved family and friends. Karen served as a regional ASD Network team member, consultant, trainer, encourager, mentor and any other role we needed her to fulfill. There are so many fond memories of working with Karen over the years but here are a few...

*Karen volunteered every year to work the ASD Network Conference registration booth. She worked tirelessly throughout the conference to make sure it ran smoothly. She would volunteer to work through dinner so the rest of us could grab a bite. She truly had a servant's heart and it will not be forgotten.*

*Karen participated in the ASD Network STEPS training as a mentor to new/younger educators working with individuals with autism. This meant that Karen, year after year, sat through many of the same trainings we provided, and then assisted the person she was mentoring with applying the content. We would often joke that she could do the trainings herself and I would apologize for her having to hear it again. Following the presentations she would complete the evaluations and write the nicest messages, encouraging us and making sure we knew what we had done well.*

*On a personal note, I have kept every beautiful note she has ever written me because they were so encouraging. She was a bright light to all of us and those who attended our trainings. She will be greatly missed.*

*Sincerely,*

*Annette Wragge*

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**Annette Wragge** - February 04, 2021 at 04:55 PM

AM

*Thank you, Annette! Andrea*

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**Andrea Mack** - February 05, 2021 at 07:52 PM

DM

“ *I am so sorry to read of the death of Karen. I had the pleasure of knowing her when I worked at ESU 10 as a speech/language pathologist in our early years in education. What a beautiful person she was on the inside and the outside! We were pregnant at the same time and we were both going to have Andrea's if we had girls. Karen had an Andrea and I had an Andrew! Although I went to work for a school system in the early 80's I would still run into Karen at various staff development gatherings. I loved catching up with her during these times. She was such a joy filled person! May our Lord and Savior give you His peace as you mourn her loss. We rejoice knowing she is with her Heavenly Father in heaven!*

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**Diane Meier** - February 04, 2021 at 04:34 PM

AM

*Thanks, Diane! Andrea*

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**Andrea Mack** - February 05, 2021 at 07:52 PM

GL

“ *Steve and Family,*

*We are so saddened to hear that Karen passed away. Truly a great loss for family, friends, and acquaintances. Karen will certainly be missed. Our most sincere condolences go out to the entire family.*

*Gary & Beth Loop*

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**Gary Loop** - February 04, 2021 at 01:03 PM

BB

“ Steve,  
We so sorry to hear of Karen's passing this past week. Our prayers  
are with you and your kids and grandkids. Deepest Sympathy.

*Brad and Cindy*

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**Bradley Brenning** - February 04, 2021 at 08:22 AM

MR

“ Our hearts are with you as you say goodbye to such a special wife,  
Mother, Grandmother and friend ! She was an amazing woman of  
faith whose heart and spirit touched so many lives in a very  
beautiful way, and now, will live on in all of you. I too have recently  
experienced breast cancer, and visited with Karen, receiving  
understanding and support from her even in her challenging  
struggle, and was very grateful. She was such a selfless and caring  
woman and the world is a much more beautiful place because she  
was in it !!!

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**Mary and David Radliff** - February 03, 2021 at 10:28 PM

AM

*Thanks, Mary and Dave! Andrea*

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**Andrea Mack** - February 05, 2021 at 07:53 PM

LA

“ *Andrea,  
The team at NE Functional Medicine send our sympathies and love.  
Loosing your Mother is heartbreaking and we are so sorry.  
She sounds like she touched so many lives, especially little children.  
Can't you see her now in Heaven lining up kids, wiping their faces,  
straightening their halo's and sharing her beautiful smile. She has a  
new purpose now. Cherish the many memories and have faith.  
We look forward to giving you our hugs.  
Keri, Lisa and Brittany  
NE Functional Medicine*

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**Lisa Asche** - February 03, 2021 at 06:07 PM

AM

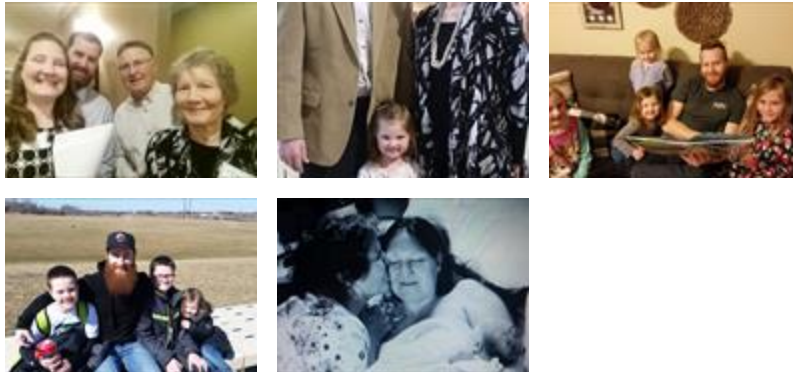
*Thank you so much, ladies! Andrea*

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**Andrea Mack** - February 05, 2021 at 07:53 PM

AM

“ *25 files added to the album Mom*



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**Andrea Mack** - February 03, 2021 at 04:37 PM

LV

“ *Lynn and Jeanice Vinduska purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Karen D. Verraneault.*



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**Lynn and Jeanice Vinduska** - February 03, 2021 at 01:53 PM

ML

“ *We are so sorry to hear about Karen. Our prayers go out to Steve and the family.*

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**Myra Lezanic** - February 03, 2021 at 12:26 PM

BS

“ *Steve and family, I am so very sorry of hear of Karen's passing. Seems like yesterday that we were all in McCook growing up in the "Good Life." Deepest sympathy to all of you at this time and in the days to come.*

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**Bob Sautter** - February 03, 2021 at 11:38 AM



“ *Magnificent Life Spray was purchased for the family of Karen D. Verraneault.*



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February 03, 2021 at 11:36 AM

AD

“ *Heaven gain a beautiful angel! Karen was so fun to work with and she was so knowledgeable. She touched many lives. Cherish your memories....I always remember her beautiful laugh...makes me smile. Sending you positive thoughts during this difficult time. Alice Dingle, School Psychologist*

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**Alice Dingle** - February 03, 2021 at 10:13 AM



“ *Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Karen D. Verraneault.*



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February 02, 2021 at 11:45 PM

DF

“ *Darleen M Farwell lit a candle in memory of Karen D. Verraneault*



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**Darleen M Farwell** - February 02, 2021 at 07:48 PM

RC

“ *My deepest sympathy to Karen's family. I worked with Karen at ESU 10 and admired her so much. She was always a positive and cheerful person and so easy to work with. Everybody loved and admired her.*

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**rosemary cervantes** - February 02, 2021 at 06:37 PM

AM

*Thanks, Rosemary! Andrea*

**Andrea Mack** - February 05, 2021 at 07:54 PM

BP

“ *Karen and I went through Kearney State for Special Education. She was always a happy, friendly lady whom I enjoyed being around. You all have my sympathies. Praying for all of you. Barb (Valentine) Pageler*

**Barb Pageler** - February 02, 2021 at 05:58 PM



“ *Beautiful Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Karen D. Verraneault.*



February 02, 2021 at 11:52 AM

SA

“ *My prayers are with your family. I worked with Karen at ESU10. She was a beautiful person. There was never a time I saw her upset, always had a smile. I could always count on her to give a helping hand or a kind word. A true treasure. She will be missed!*

**Susan Adams** - February 02, 2021 at 11:35 AM

MA

“ *Steve and family, our thoughts and prayers are with you during these difficult days. May Karen rest In Peace.*

*Allibone family.*

**Mike Allibone** - February 02, 2021 at 11:08 AM

LG

“ Karen always had a smile , and a friendly hello when ever you would see her , she will be miss , so sorry goes out to Steve and his family .

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**Larry Giddings** - February 02, 2021 at 08:41 AM

LG

“ Larry Giddings lit a candle in memory of Karen D. Verraneault



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**Larry Giddings** - February 02, 2021 at 08:38 AM