



Karen Gwyn Leary

February 5, 1952 - May 31, 2023

Karen Gwyn Leary February 5, 1952 ~ May 31, 2023 Karen Gwyn Leary, 71, passed away May 31st at PeaceHealth Southwest Medical Center in Vancouver, Washington after suffering a stroke.

Born Karen Heptner in Merced, Karen grew up in California. She was a Navy veteran who worked in the Pentagon during the Vietnam War. After serving in the military, Karen married and welcomed a daughter while living in Pensacola, Florida.

A cross-country drive brought Karen to the Pacific Northwest. Karen resided briefly in Hood River before moving to The Dalles, Oregon where she filled her daughter's childhood with songs, bedtime stories, imaginative play, and day trips to Portland.

Karen met the love of her life, Scott Leary in The Dalles and they married in 1986. Karen and Scott were perfect for each other; never fighting, and always enjoying each other's company and good humor. Whether traveling, shopping for houses, or teaching together, Karen brought laughter and light to every experience they shared. God only knows how much Scott loves her.

Karen worked in education while living in the Yakima Valley, Washington. She earned a Bachelor's degree in Education followed by a Master's degree in School Administration. As a teacher, Karen created rainforests out of tall carpet tubes to bring a lesson to life and inspired students to love learning. Later, as a school principal in Charlotte, North Carolina and Vancouver, Washington Karen mentored teachers and made lifelong friendships with

colleagues.

Karen hated salmon and loved dark chocolate. She enjoyed luxury beauty products and dressing up for work. She was an incredible cook and party hostess, stylish decorator, and creative artist. She was terrible with directions. She always used correct grammar. A lifelong learner, Karen taught herself how to tile the bathroom long before YouTube existed and decided to write and publish two books after retirement.

Karen felt led by God to serve others. She sought out opportunities to give heartfelt messages, gifts, monetary assistance, food, and friendship to others. She was generous with her time, eternally optimistic, and beautiful beyond measure. She showered her grandchildren with heartfelt gifts and affection. Karen was preceded in death by her mother, Donna Burton, and by her father and stepmother, Jack and Mary Heptner. She is survived by her devoted husband, Scott Leary of Camas, Washington; by her daughter Jennifer Holloway and her husband Jason, and their children, Emily and Jacob, of Portland, Oregon. A memorial service will be held at Evergreen Memorial Gardens Funeral Chapel in Vancouver, Washington on Saturday, July 1 at 3:00 p.m. We will miss Karen's embrace, contagious laughter, and generous spirit and she will remain with us through the memories and traditions we hold dear. We will love her forever.

Tribute Wall

AL

“ *We are deeply sorry for your loss ~ Evergreen Memorial Gardens Cemetery, Funeral Chapel and Crematory*

A Memorial Tree was planted for Karen Gwyn Leary - June 05, 2023 at 12:00 AM