



Karen Marie Morley-Smith

June 21, 1961 - January 17, 2022

KAREN MARIE MORLEY-SMITH

June 21, 1961 ~ January 17, 2022

On Jan. 17, 2022, in Vancouver, WA, Karen Morley-Smith passed away in her home surrounded by her family, her favorite disco music hits, and a house full of memories and love. Karen was 60 years old.

Karen was born in San Luis Obispo, CA, on June 21, 1961, to William C. Morley and Alexis R. Danielson and she spent her early life in Morro Bay, CA. She was beautiful, brilliant, stubborn, witty, generous, compassionate, and never suffered fools. From high school cheerleader, to Miss Morro Bay 1979 and Miss California 1979 contestant, to a tough, award-winning journalist, counselor, pastor, and Washington State History Teacher of the Year 2011, she succeeded at everything she touched.

Karen met the love of her life, Kevin Smith, in Morro Bay in 1979. As a high school senior, she worked at a local department store with Kevin. He asked her out several times before she agreed to their first date. Two years later while in college in the Los Angeles area, Karen had just turned 20, Kevin was 22 and the two were married. July 25, 2021 they celebrated 40 years of marriage. These were 40 years full of love and joy as they raised their three surviving children, Cameron, 37, McKinley, 33, and Shay, 31. Karen found deep joy in spending time with her husband, kids and their spouses (Noel, 30, and Fadi, 30) and three beautiful grandchildren.

Karen loved dancing in her living room on Friday nights and being surrounded by her family and friends. She was the social chair and organizer in her tight knit community. She once rallied a group of moms to participate in the local Harvest Days parade dancing with decorated brooms to "Stayin' Alive" by The Bee Gees. She started local chess clubs across the Battle Ground and Evergreen School Districts teaching kids as a chess coach and sharing her love for chess.

She established the "We the People" program in the Evergreen School district, a program to teach fifth graders in U.S. history and civic duty. She most recently taught at Sunset Elementary School which dedicated the civics section of its library in Karen's memory. Her impact continues to ripple through the generations of students she influenced.

She and her husband traveled in Europe and Iceland, across the US, and loved to take road trips along the west coast. She lived her life with a fervor for doing good, a strong faith, and a love for good food and her husband's famous margaritas.

Whether or not you had the pleasure of knowing her personally, the next time you drink a margarita, I invite you to raise your glass to toast Karen and her legacy. The world is a better place because of her life.

Karen's family will be hosting an open memorial service to honor her life. This will take place at Church of the Holy Spirit in Battle Ground, WA, a building that Karen helped build along with her church community. The service will be Saturday, Jan. 29, at 2:00 p.m. There will be a second service in Karen's hometown of Morro Bay, CA, at St. Peter's By the Sea church on Saturday, Feb. 5, at 11:00 a.m. Masks are required. All who knew and loved Karen are welcome. In lieu of flowers, please donate to the ALS Association's Oregon & SW Washington chapter.

Please share a memory @ www.columbian.com/obits

Tribute Wall

AM

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

A Memorial Tree was planted for Karen Marie Morley-Smith - February 04, 2022
at 12:00 AM