

Karen Genrich – Dec. 1, 2022



Genrich - Karen G. (nee Frauenheim)

A loving, devoted, and nurturing mother, sister, elementary and special education teacher, passed away on December 01, 2022 in Portland, Oregon at the age of 76 years young. Karen was preceded in death by her loving parents, George Frauenheim and Grace Yungbluth Frauenheim, stepfather Matthew Jasen, and her brother Robert Vincent Frauenheim, and is survived by her four children, Gretchyn, Gabrielle, Gillian, and Graham; four grandchildren, Vivienne and Madeleine, William and Alexis; her four sisters and brother, Susan Bradley, Rita Byers, Elizabeth Abbott, Kathryn Dennison, and Jeff Frauenheim.

Karen was born to George and Grace Frauenheim in Buffalo, New York. She described her childhood as "wonderful," growing up with four sisters, two brothers and her parents. She had a passion for figure skating, and she described skating as her "main reason for existing from the age of ten years old to sixteen years old." She was later able to get a surprise visit to the Figure Skating Hall of Fame in Colorado Springs, Colorado with her children. Karen received her Associates Degree from Marymount University in Arlington, Virginia in 1965. She then completed her Bachelor of Arts at Le Moyne College in Syracuse, New York, and then later received a Master's in Special Education from the Buffalo State College, New York, while working full time.

When Karen finished college, she and her late friend, Michele, joined the Ice Follies and **Ice Capades**. The skating passion grew and they both later traveled with Holiday on Ice throughout Europe at a time when international travel was uncommon - Karen and Michele were the only Americans selected for that tour. She had many formative experiences overseas and developed a strong appreciation for traveling, which she would continue to enjoy, and later instill in her children. After returning from Holiday on Ice, she began her teaching career.

Later she married Buffalo, New York native Charles Genrich and had four children. She taught elementary school and special education at Hayfield Elementary in Fairfax, Virginia and then later at the Stanley Makowski Early Childhood Center in Buffalo, New York, where she retired in 2011. She brought immense creativity and energy to teaching, such as when she led a trip to Niagara Falls for her whole class. Karen also helped organize a 9/11 American Flag Veteran's Day dedication with a neighbor, Christina, through Amherst Middle School. Each flag was flown over her son's Army base in Afghanistan for 9 minutes and 11 seconds. Her students and colleagues, many of whom she remained in touch with over her lifetime, loved her deeply. Karen visited her children wherever they lived including Florida, Washington, D.C., California, Georgia, Utah, Kansas, Kentucky, Wales, Japan, and Germany. She also enjoyed trips to visit the Oregon coast and Hawaii. She attended every graduation, overseas military homecoming, and never missed an opportunity to watch her grandchildren's recitals. Other passions included

reading, knitting hats and sewing costumes, helping with school projects for her children and grandchildren, and going for long walks with her dogs. Above all, she most treasured the time spent with her family. In her retirement, Karen relocated from Buffalo to Portland, Oregon and lived close to her daughters Gretchyn and Gabrielle as well as her granddaughters Vivienne and Madeleine. She travelled often and spent her remaining years as she had her life - visiting, loving, and supporting each of her children and grandchildren.

Karen was loved by many. There will be a celebration of life back in her hometown of Buffalo, New York, in the Spring of 2023.