



Karen Lucille Heilman

May 20, 1941 - May 18, 2026

Karen Lucille Heilman, 84, of Moses Lake, Washington, went home to be with the Lord surrounded by her family.

Karen was born on May 20, 1941, in Wenatchee, Washington, to Tom and Vivian Jackson. She was the second of four children, joining her sister JoAnn, with brothers Fred and Randy arriving in the years that followed. Karen's early years were spent in Cashmere, where her father built and operated Pioneer Market, before the family later moved to Ephrata and eventually settled in Soap Lake.

Karen attended school in Ephrata through the eighth grade and went on to graduate from Soap Lake High School as part of the first class to attend all four years at the newly established school. During her senior year, she was honored as the very first Homecoming Queen—just one reflection of her warmth, kindness, and the way she was loved by those around her.

Following graduation, Karen married her high school sweetheart, Bill Hitzroth, and together they raised five children: Susan, Steve, Kelly, Debbie, and Mark. Karen devoted herself wholeheartedly to her family, creating a home filled with love, laughter, and care.

After many years as a dedicated stay-at-home mother, Karen began working at Soap Lake Elementary School as the school secretary. She also played an important role in overseeing the peer counseling program, offering guidance and encouragement to countless students. She faithfully served the school district for 17 years before retiring.

Karen later married Leo Heilman, and together they shared many wonderful years. They enjoyed traveling and cherished their winters spent in Arizona until Leo's passing in January 2011.

After Leo's passing, Karen became an active member of the Nazarene Church, where she deeply loved her church family. She found great joy in women's ministry and took special pride in decorating for the women's tea, using her gifts to bless others and create beauty for every gathering.

Karen's greatest joy in life was her family. She treasured every moment spent with her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. She was also a devoted fan of the Seattle Seahawks and Gonzaga Bulldogs, rarely missing a game and always cheering them on with enthusiasm.

In recent years, Karen faced significant health challenges, beginning with a back injury in 2020 that led her to downsize her home. Despite ongoing health issues, she remained remarkably positive, strong in spirit, and full of grace.

On April 27, Karen suffered a severe shoulder fracture after a fall. Following three weeks in the hospital and rehabilitation, she developed pneumonia. With her loving family by her side, the Lord gently called her home.

Karen was preceded in death by her husband, Leo Heilman; her parents, Tom and Vivian Jackson; and her siblings, JoAnn, Fred, and Randy.

She is lovingly remembered by her children: Sue (Mark) Yurashak, Steve (Susan) Hitzroth, Kelly (Steve) Pugh, Debbie (Verdell) Hitzroth, and Mark (Kari) Hitzroth; her 14 grandchildren; 20 great-grandchildren; and numerous nieces and nephews who will carry her memory in their hearts.

Karen will be remembered for her kindness, her strength, her unwavering love for her family, and her deep faith in the Lord. Her legacy lives on in the lives she touched so deeply.

Arrangements are under the care of Kayser's Chapel of Memories.

Cemetery Details

Guarding Angels Cemetery

2595 Road L N.E.
Moses Lake, WA 98837
(509) 765-7848

Previous Events

Funeral Service

MAY **22**. 11:00 AM (PT)

First Church of the Nazarene
5th and Balsam
Moses Lake, WA

Tribute Wall

KF

“ I met Karen when I was just a teenager at the first Baptist Church in Soap Lake, then had the opportunity to work with her at Soap Lake school district for many years until her retirement. Back then we didn't have the technology we have now so I had to pencil my school menus and give them to Karen so she could type them out for me and print them off so technically she was doing secretary work for many departments. We shared many fun and funny experiences of course inside jokes at the work place and we found ourselves chuckling over them years later . Karen was a special loving caring friend. She will truly be missed.

Kathleen OBrien Flannery - May 20 at 11:40 PM

JJ

I was blessed to be able to work with Karen when she was a secretary at the elementary school in Soap Lake. Karen greeted everyone with a smile and kind words, which I'm sure made many new students feel at ease and started their days off on a positive note. Karen was so easy to talk to and she had a wonderful sense of humor, with a delightful laugh that drew people in immediately. What a beautiful lady and friend to many! She even painted a beautiful landscape scene on a saw blade that my parents bought. My condolences to the family.

Judi Jensen - May 21 at 08:32 PM