

Karen (Phillips) Two Hearts, 66, was born on March 11, 1960, in Fort Yates, North Dakota, to Annette (Baker) Phillips and Sherman Phillips Sr. Karen spent nearly her entire life in Wakpala, South Dakota, where she was raised alongside her older sister, Bernie, and her younger siblings, Larry, Marie, Terry, and Sue.

Karen attended Wakpala School and later earned her GED before graduating from a culinary program in Brookings, South Dakota, where she received her Certificate in Culinary. Her love for cooking became more than a profession—it became her way of showing love and caring for others.

Karen was first married to Bruce Thompson, and together they welcomed two daughters, Emmalee and Luve. Although their marriage ended, Karen later found love with Marvin (Sylvan) Strong Heart. Together they had a daughter, Sylvia. Karen and Marvin also lovingly raised her niece, Jesse, as their own, along with Marvin's children from previous relationships, embracing each of them with the love and care of a mother.

Karen later married Darrell "Pops" Two Hearts. The two shared many happy years together until Darrell's passing in 2021.

Karen dedicated much of her career to serving others through her cooking. She began as a cook for the Wakpala School, where generations of children came to know and love her. To many, she was more than the school cook—she was a trusted adult, a comforting presence, and someone who always made others feel welcome. She later worked at Hardee's but soon realized her greatest joy came from preparing homemade meals that brought smiles to people's faces. She continued her career with the Grand River Casino and the Wakpala Nutrition Program, where she remained committed to serving her community.

Karen was known for her kind heart, generous spirit, and willingness to help anyone in need. She worked hard throughout her life until her health no longer allowed her to do so. In her later years, she lived in the Wakpala-Mobridge area before moving to Medicine Wheel Village in Eagle Butte and, eventually, spending her final days at Avantara Mountain View in Rapid City.

Karen was preceded in death by her beloved grandson, Eric Brown; her husband, Darrell "Pops" Two Hearts; and her siblings, Lawrence Phillips, Marie (Phillips) Thomas, SueAnn Phillips, Bernardine Phillips, nephew, Zachariah Tree Top, nieces, Suzette Tree Top and EllaJane Blue Shield.

She is lovingly survived by her daughters, Emmalee, Luve, Sylvia, and Jesse; her brother, Terry Phillips and sister Donise Red Water; as well as many grandchildren and great grandchildren, extended family members, and countless friends whose lives she touched with her kindness, compassion, and unforgettable meals.

Karen's legacy lives on through the many people she nourished—not only with her cooking but with her love, generosity, and support. She will be deeply missed.

In Loving Memory Of



Karen Two Hearts

Sunrise
1960

Sunset
2026



Mama Karen

*She wasn't my mother by name alone,
She was the heart that made our family home.
An aunt to many, yet Mom to me,
A love so deep, so wild, so free.
She raised with strength, she led with grace,
Leaving kindness in every place.
She worked so hard with hands so true,
Always giving all she could do.
She had little wealth the world could see,
But love was her greatest legacy.
Her table was full, her heart even more,
No one ever left hungry from her door.
She lives in every lesson shared,
In every life she gently cared.
Forever loved, forever near—
Our greatest blessing, forever dear.*

-Jesse

IN LOVING MEMORY OF *Karen Two Hearts*

66 Years ~ 3 Months ~ 14 Days

SUNRISE

March 11, 1960

Ft. Yates, North Dakota

SUNSET

June 25, 2026

Rapid City, South Dakota

FUNERAL SERVICE

11:00 AM, Thursday, July 2, 2026

Wakpala Community Center

Wakpala, South Dakota

OFFICIATING

Fr. Jim Hoerter

CASKETBEARERS

Sherman Phillips III ~ Philip LaBlanc ~ Rio Thompson

Shane Oka ~ Daniel Yellow Horse Sr. ~ Davis Soft

Orwin Grazier ~ Percy Brown Otter Sr.

HONORARY CASKETBEARERS

Nurse Jake, Nurse Mora & Avantara Mountain View Staff, Medicine Wheel Staff, Tia Crutcher and Children, Dixie Thompson and Children, Jasmine Phillips and Children, Brandie Phillips and Children, Sister Tudi and Children, Raymond Phillips, Alfred Has Horns and Children, Bryson Bliner, Bryan Phillips, Auntie Toni, Auntie Michelle and Family, Ilene Crow Feather and Family, Monica Bone Club and Family, Brenda Bone Club and Family, Adrian Spotted Horse and Children, Aaron Horn, Wally Lends His Horse, Joe Lends His Horse Jr & Children, Lyle Baker, Alvina Howard, Jerrica Cameron, Richard No Heart Sr., Wilma Medicine, Linda Campbell, Lloyd Montclair, Mary Montclair, Renee Montclair, Joan Ellefson, Sister Jodi, Janie Mann, Kirby Three Legs, Deon Soft, Wallace Ducheneaux, Victoria Ducheneaux, Lynn "Butchie" Ducheneaux, Sister Janet, Yvette Inu, Nico, Draco, Lawrence & MaurKaya Phillips

INTERMENT

St. Bede's Catholic Cemetery

Wakpala, South Dakota

Arrangements Entrusted to Kesling Funeral Home, Mobridge, South Dakota.