



Fly High In The Sky

WAKE SERVICE

Monday, August 25, 2025 7:00 pm

Tuesday, August 26, 2025

Margaret Henderson Parish Hall, Opaskwayak, Manitoba

FUNERAL SERVICE

Wednesday, August 27, 2025 1:00 pm

Veteran's Hall, Opaskwayak, Manitoba

Presider: Rev. Gloria Lavallee

Music Ministry: Russell Cook Memorial Singers

INTERMENT

Lakeside Cemetery, The Pas, Manitoba

RECEPTION

Royal Canadian Legion Hall, The Pas, MB

PALLBEARERS

James Carriere, Jack Ducharme, Vernon Campbell,
Lionel McKenzie, David Campbell, Mike Zolinski,
Sean Nabess, Konrad Jonnason, Richard Danielson,
Pat McKenzie, Keestin Danielson and Abel Cook.

HONORARY PALLBEARERS

All her Godchildren: J.R. Lathlin, Jaime Clemons,
Rochelle Bignell, Christy Carriere-Fenner,
Patrick Constant Jr., Amy Carriere-Ducharme,
Angela (Young) Bercier, Harold (Carriere) Desmarais;
Don Dorion; Mixed Cree Fastball teammates;
St. Paul's coworkers and Kikiwak Inn coworkers,
poker buddies, camping buddies and all who loved her.



Hemauer Funeral Home, The Pas, Manitoba

www.hemauerfuneralhome.com

Unauthorized copies will result in poor quality and are not the responsibility
of Hemauer Funeral Home.



In Loving Memory of
Marlene Louise Bignell

July 7, 1958 – August 20, 2025



In loving memory of our mother, wife, granny, chapman, Marlene "Morning Star" Louise Bignell (nee: Carriere) who lost her courageous battle to cancer with family by her side on August 20, 2025 at St. Anthony's General Hospital in The Pas at the age of 67 years. Marlene was a devoted wife to Tom Bignell and loving mother to Ray Jr., Clarissa, Cherie and Kristen (Steve) and a caring granny to Sienna, Keestin, Marcus, Myles, Kacey, Kylie, Jett, Melanie, Dallas, chapans Aviah and Viviana and stepchildren Tom Jr., Ryan, late Melanie and Mary Jane (Curtis). Marlene will be deeply missed by all who had the privilege of knowing her.

Momma Bear grew up in Young's Point and is the 9th of 11 children. In 1974 Marlene married Ray Burns Sr. During this time, Mom gained numerous extended family with many sisters in law, brothers in law, nieces and nephews from her first marriage.

Mom and Tom began their lives together in 1996, then got married on July 7, 2007. Mom was very happy and content with Tom whom she loved very much. Tom was a very good husband, soulmate and partner in crime.

Mom's favorite past times in her early years was playing fastball with the National Championship team called "Mixed Cree", then slo-pitch with the "Down & Dirty" team as well as league bowling. Mom also travelled the queen trapper circuit, which then lead to training her daughters to compete. For many years we heard how proud she was about her record time of 7 minutes in tea boiling event in Thompson, Manitoba. Mom would proudly wear her full buckskin outfit every February with new additions every year, she would smile and mingle with the crowd and pose for pictures. Mom was also a solid competitor during Opaskwayak Indigenous Days winning Swan and Snowy Owl vest through the years.

Our Momma Bear was a strong woman. She was a friendly, easy going, generous, hardworking, with an amusing personality. Mom was always in a teasing mood and always meant well.

Later in life, Mom's hobbies were hosting poker parties at the house, hosting card games at the campsite in Rocky Lake, attending socials, dancing also camping, travelling North America, canning veggies, gardening, creating wood and paper projects, enjoying outdoors, decorating her home on special occasions, sitting around the fire pit enjoying tea, coffee and at times having a few drinks with friends.

Together Mom and Tom enjoyed travelling to watch fastball championships, attending various music festivals, they travelled from coast to coast over the years. Mom was always the 'life of the party', she had a great sense of humor. Mom was a work horse always cleaning. Whenever we told Mom to sit down and relax she would say, "I can't. I don't know what that word means." Then she would continue on with whatever she was doing, cleaning, sorting, etc. She also was a loud and proud supporter sitting on the sidelines watching her children and grandchildren's extra-curricular activities: hockey games, baseball games, soccer games. Mom was very organized, precise and

tidy with all her belongings. She made friends easily. Her presence attracted people. One of mom's requests was one of her best friends to attend her daughter Kristen's wedding in her absence.

Marlene's work history began at the age of 13 years. She worked at various places, cleaning at the weekly newspaper, dishwasher/room attendant at the LaVerandrye Motel, clerk at the Met in the Otineka Mall, labourer/press pounder at the Flin Flon mine, mom worked as housekeeper/laundry at The Pas Health Complex, then as nurse's aide at St. Paul's Residence. Marlene then began working at the Kikiwak Inn as housekeeping/laundry supervisor, assistant General Manager then retired August 31, 2022 after 26 years of service. Mom said, "Everyone respected me and listened when I spoke". Mom really knew how to crack the whip.

Even after her retirement in 2023 she still kept busy, she joined OCN community engagements: sewing, ribbon skirt making, beading, moccasin making, and she also became an important asset to the Elder's Program when she spearheaded the elder's bingo fundraising committee! Mom was anticipating the annual Elder's Gathering this fall. Mom was just so good at bossing people around in a good way, she had her way to not get anyone mad, and they just knew to listen when she spoke. Mom was also a proud member of the Royal Canadian Branch #19 Legion Ladies Auxiliary. Mom was very pleased of her accomplishments, she recently entered a logo contest for the Ministikok program and she won! You can see her logo on t-shirts in the community.

Mom attended elementary school at Opasquia, Mary Duncan and Kelsey School for grades 1 to 8; then went on to MBCI for grade 9; KCC for grade 10; then to Oscar Lathlin Collegiate to achieve her high school diploma the age of 64, WOW! Mom was so proud of her marks, she smiled from ear to ear sharing that she earned 98% in Math, 87% in English and 94% in Cree. Mom's achievements also include Health Care Aide in 1989 and Manitoba Tourism and Education Counselling in 1992. Mom would have told us, "I'm smart my girl, smart!" with a big smile.

Marlene is predeceased by her parents Alphonse and Hilda Carriere; grandparents Lionel and Agnes Carriere, Cyril Sr. and Sophia Grymonprez; brothers Joe and Jim; nephew Bradley Carriere and numerous family and friends.

Mom is survived by husband Tom; children Ray Jr., Clarissa, Cherie and Kristen (Steve); grandchildren Sienna, Keestin, Marcus, Myles, Kacey, Kylie, Jett, Melanie, Dallas; chapans Aviah and Viviana; stepchildren Tom Jr., Ryan, late Melanie and Mary Jane (Curtis); siblings Margaret (Frank), William, Raymond, Walter, Rose (David), Emile, Jeannie; half brother Abel Cook. Also, extended family members too numerous to mention. If we forgot anyone it was not intentional.

The family would like to thank the staff at St. Anthony's General Hospital and Opaskwayak Health Authority for the care and support you have given to our mother during the last stages of her life.

