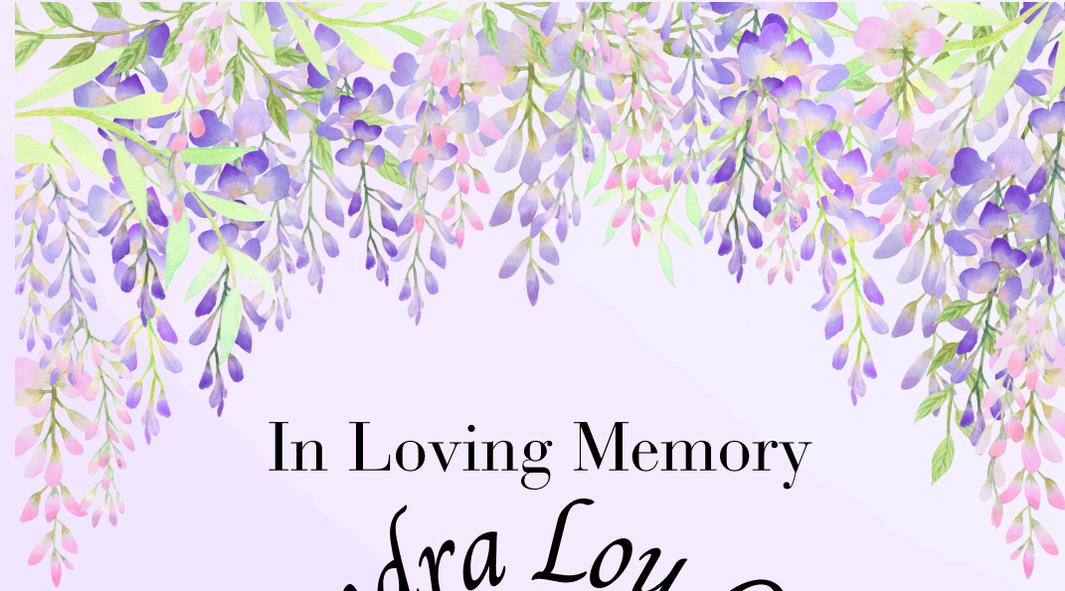


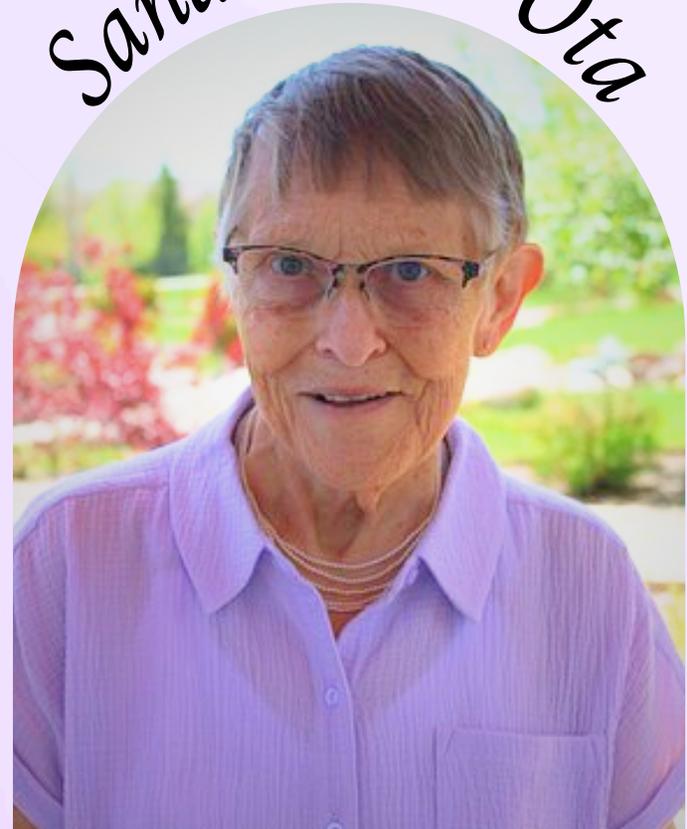
Our awesome wife and mother, Sandra (Schilling) Ota, formally of Gillette, Wyoming, passed away peacefully at home in Severance, Colorado, on January 7 at the age of 73. She was born in Sheridan, Wyoming to Jerry and Joan Schilling on April 5, 1952. Her brother, Bruce, came two years later and she was instantly the "big sister," boss and leader. She practiced her "leadership" skills on Bruce by convincing (forcing) him to do things like play with dolls, play house, run away from home, do her chores, and simply just do as she wished - and he obliged. She knew Bruce had her back because in school when kids would be mean, she would tell Bruce and he would take care of it. In high-school, Sandra's date was not the gentleman he should have been. Bruce taught him a memorable lesson the next day in the school hallway.

Growing up, her family moved around Wyoming until they settled in Worland, where she graduated high school in 1970. Her favorite class in high school was sewing. She said she loved the precision of sewing and also the freedom she discovered when she could make her own clothes. This skill continued throughout her life when she would make her children's Halloween costumes and beautiful quilts for friends and family. She also enjoyed crafting and cross-stitching. Her cross-stitch projects were often large and very detailed. After graduation, Sandra went to Japan as a Rotary International Club exchange student. She often told the story of how she wanted to experience many different modes of transportation during her exchange. Returning home, she chose to travel by cruise ship (the President Cleveland, American President Lines). Little did she know her next adventure was just starting! She met Tetsuo on the Cleveland where they struck up a lovely friendship that resulted in a 53 and a half year marriage, which also produced what Sandra would consider her greatest accomplishment, her three children - Lance, Janell and Trent. Sandra was a natural caregiver. Her career as a nurse was another joy in her life. She enjoyed caring for the moms and babies and loved her friends at CCMH. She was instrumental in bringing all five of her grandchildren, Bruce and Laurie's children, and then their five grandchildren into the world, too! Her empathy, expertise, and hallmark encouragement made her an exceptional and highly memorable nurse to many. She was a natural teacher, mentor and a dedicated life-long learner. She graduated with her Masters in Nursing Education in 2003. She taught at Gillette College and for the University of Wyoming until she transitioned to full-time "Obaa-chan" (grandmother) in 2014. Sandra's grandchildren filled her with immeasurable joy. She cherished creating experiences in the home by making delicious treats and dishes, on the road by adventuring to national parks, teaching them about nature by gardening, and most of all, seeing them smile and gain everlasting memories. Their custom home in Gillette fused American and Japanese culture. It featured a tea ceremony room, gardens and a koi pond that brought comfort and entertainment. In 2023, they were able to move to Colorado and begin a new adventure. She loved the warmer weather, the mountain views, the bluest skies and the new variety of restaurants! Most importantly was the safe, compassionate, dedicated care and love Trent gave daily. She believed being with family was the most precious time and living with Trent was the greatest gift. In the last year, Sandra enjoyed having all three of her kids with her multiple times, especially at Thanksgiving and Christmas. Sandra is survived by her husband, Tetsuo, of Severance, Colorado; her children Lance (Summer) of Austin, Texas, Janell (Joe) Uhler of Tea, South Dakota, and Trent of Severance, Colorado; her grandchildren Jayden and Bryton Ota, Annie and Hallie Riley, Carter, Kadence, and Cohen Uhler; her first great grandchild, Amelia; her brother Bruce (Laurie) Schilling; her uncle (Clarke Pollard); her in-laws in Japan (Nobumasa, Takako, Yoko) and three nieces (Ayako, Akemi, Christa) and three nephews (Yasuhiro, Masatoshi, Trevor). Sandra was preceded in death by her mother, father, and her grandmother, Marguerite Pollard.



In Loving Memory

Sandra Lou Ota



April 5, 1952 – January 7, 2026

John 14: 1-4



Funeral Service

Friday, January 16, 2026

1:00 p.m. at Gillette Memorial Chapel

Gillette, Wyoming

Officiating: Donnie Colby

Order of Service

Processional

Welcome: Donnie Colby

Prayer: Jayden Ota

Reflection: Donnie Colby & Kadence Uhler

Eulogy: Lance Ota

Final Farewell: Donnie Colby

Recessional



Please scan this QR code to
share a loving memory or
tribute.



RITA MASHAK | TARA AANONSON
TARA COWGER
FUNERAL SERVICE-MONUMENTS-
ADVANCE PLANNING-CREMATION-
LENDING LIBRARY, LEARNING TO SAY
GOODBYE; CHILDREN'S TOUR.