



## Karen Rae Thorell

December 25, 1944 - December 12, 2025

Karen Rae Thorell, 80, passed away peacefully in her home late Friday morning, December 12, 2025. She was born on December 25, 1944 to Karl and Margaret (Finck) Sarutzki. She was raised in Menno, South Dakota. While working at the state hospital in Yankton, SD, she met her husband, Dennis. They were married February 4, 1967. After short stays in Sioux Falls, SD and Omaha, NE, they relocated to the Kansas City area. During their 31 years of marriage they had three children: Derek, Doug and Kim.

Karen worked as a daycare provider for 30 plus years. She had a natural gift connecting with the children she cared for in her home. After the death of her husband, she became a nutrition services associate at Shawnee Mission Medical Center.

Karen loved to decorate for Christmas, which also happened to be her birthday. Hosting family and friends during the holidays brought her great happiness. In her free time she was known to love playing cards, crafting and listening to country music, Elvis and Kitty Wells.

Karen was preceded in death by her husband Dennis Thorell; son Derek Thorell; both of her parents; and siblings Charlie Sarutzki, Floyd Sarutzki, Bobby Sarutzki, Fred Sarutzki, Darlene (Bob) Polzin, Betty Thompson, and Alice Hill.

She is survived by her children Doug Thorell and Kim Harrington; sisters-in-law Kathy Sarutzki, Mary Tegels, and Eilene Thorell; and many nieces, nephews and great nieces and nephews.

A visitation for Karen will be held at Maple Hill Funeral Home on Tuesday, December 16, 2025 from 5:00 - 8:00 PM. A funeral service will be held at Maple Hill Funeral Home on Wednesday, December 17, 2025 at 10:00 AM with burial to follow at Maple Hill Cemetery.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

DEC 16. 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Maple Hill Funeral Home  
3300 Shawnee Dr  
Kansas City, KS 66106  
(913) 831-3345  
info@maplehillfuneralhome.com  
<https://maplehillfuneralhome.com>

## Funeral Service

DEC 17. 10:00 AM (CT)

Maple Hill Funeral Home  
3300 Shawnee Dr  
Kansas City, KS 66106  
(913) 831-3345  
info@maplehillfuneralhome.com  
<https://maplehillfuneralhome.com>

## Burial

DEC 17 (CT)

Maple Hill Cemetery  
2301 S 34th St  
Kansas City, KS 66106  
(913) 262-6610  
info@maplehillfuneralhome.com

# Tribute Wall

LS

“ Aunt Karen touched so many lives and was a blessing to everyone she met. Her home was always open and she just made the world a better place.

Linda Soyland - December 16, 2025 at 02:29 PM

C.

“ C. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Karen Rae Thorell.

C. - December 16, 2025 at 12:09 PM

C.

“ C. purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Karen Rae Thorell.



C. - December 16, 2025 at 12:09 PM

FE

“ From Dallas and Ellie planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Karen Rae Thorell.

From Dallas and Ellie - December 16, 2025 at 09:58 AM



“ *Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Karen Rae Thorell.*



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December 16, 2025 at 09:58 AM



“ *Aunt Karen I will miss you so much u were the last of my real family there is a hole in my life now a it will never be filled until I see you and aunt Alice again I love you and miss you guys bye for now Tammie Smith*



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**tammie smith** - December 16, 2025 at 12:08 AM



“ *The LAST of a Family I have known for MANY years...always smiling, usually laughing...THAT is how I shall remember her. Condolences to ALL who knew her. Steve WAGNER - Sioux Falls, SD*

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**Steve WAGNER** - December 15, 2025 at 04:34 PM



“ *Gutierrez, Soyland & Bulkley families planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Karen Rae Thorell.*

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**Gutierrez, Soyland & Bulkley families** - December 15, 2025 at 02:59 PM

GF

“ *Gutierrez, Soyland & Bulkley families purchased the Guiding Light Bouquet for the family of Karen Rae Thorell.*



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**Gutierrez, Soyland & Bulkley families** - December 15, 2025 at 02:59 PM

RB

“ *Rod Banks planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Karen Rae Thorell.*

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**Rod Banks** - December 15, 2025 at 02:01 PM

RB

“ *Rod Banks purchased the Simply Elegant Spathi phyllum for the family of Karen Rae Thorell.*



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**Rod Banks** - December 15, 2025 at 02:01 PM