



## Karen Rae Kelsay

January 16, 1940 - October 1, 2022

### KAREN RAE KELSAY

Karen Rae Kelsay, 82, of Eden Prairie, MN, passed away peacefully at home on October 1, 2022, after a long fight with leukemia.

Karen was the only child of Howard and Frances Swan, born on January 16, 1940, in Des Moines, Iowa. Soon realizing that Karen was destined to have a considerable impact on the world, her parents wisely chose to avoid having another child grow up in her shadow.

After graduating from Valley High School in West Des Moines, Karen attended the University of Iowa. While there, she won the title of Miss Iowa City, and perhaps completely unrelated, she attracted the attention of a number of suitors. One of these was Gary Kelsay, and they were married in 1961. Together they raised three exceptional children: Troy, Stephanie, and Rodney. After enjoying 44 years together, Gary passed away. Karen later married Raymond Vecellio in 2008, joining two family trees into one frighteningly awesome Uber-family. After 11 happy years together, Ray passed away, but the united family remained, led by, The Queen, as Karen was affectionately known by her blended family.

Karen enjoyed a successful career in sales of mainframe computers. One of

her larger clients was Lockheed Martin Corporation and she was a bit apprehensive whenever NASA launched a space shuttle as she was the one who supplied the computers for the space shuttle program and launch control.

Karen's warmth and rare wit was always on display, and she gathered friends in the many places her travels took her. She had an easy directness without being critical, except possibly to those she saw on television with an outsized sense of importance. Quick to praise and encourage others, she might also slip in a casual "Stand up straight" or "Don't frown so much", just to keep you on your toes. She will be greatly missed by all that were fortunate enough to have had her come into their lives.

Karen is survived by Troy & Dani Kelsay (Bailey & Jacob Lampe, Quinn), Stephanie & Todd Campbell (Emily), Rodney & Kimberley Kelsay, Tony Vecellio (Sandy West), Chris & Jennifer Vecellio (Nick & Tess, Ali, Jake, Ben), Mike & Char Vecellio (Gianna, Dominic, Bella), Father Peter, and many extended family and friends.

A celebration of Karen's life is not yet scheduled at this time, while the family is attempting to accommodate the availability of all who loved her and wish to pay their personal respects. For those who wish to do so, a donation in memory of Karen may be made to N.C. Little Hospice in Edina, MN, or to the hospice of their choice. Tax-exempt donations to Little Hospice can be offered at this link: <https://www.littlehospice.org/#donations>

Karen and her family would also appreciate any who would like to raise a glass (or two) of wine in her name.