

Obituary

Karolyn Louise Lynch Duponcheel 1944-2025

On December 22, 1944, Karolyn Louise Lynch was born in Callaway, Nebraska, as the first-born child of Doris Shields and Lawrence Lynch, who at the time was fighting in the Battle of the Bulge with General Patton's Third Army Corps. Living in the town of Arnold, at the age of 7, Karolyn went to live with her grandmother, Alvina Shields, who ran the kitchen at the Arnold Sale Barn, while her three sisters, Kitty, Kathy, and Linda, remained with her parents. Karolyn would aid her Grandma each day with the production of pies and cookies, and perform many other duties related to running the kitchen. During the following years, Alvina taught her the value of hard work, doing a job right, treating others like you would want to be treated, as well as, honesty, integrity, and other aspects of character that she exhibited throughout her life. Having been taught by her Aunt Lois to read at the age of 2-1/2, Karolyn spent much of her spare time reading and was known by the librarian at the Arnold Public Library as having read virtually every book in the library. During these formative years, Karolyn became passionate about caring for others and for her community. Soon after graduating from Arnold High School, she became the youngest President of the National Young Republicans Organization. This organization brought her to Washington D.C., where she recalled fondly the time that she met President Nixon, literally bumping

into the president as she turned around to head out the door as the president was coming in. Startled, the president stated, "Well, hello young lady."

Karolyn earned her Masters Degree from Kearney State, where she met her future husband, Richard Duponcheel. They were married three days after their graduation and departed for the island of Guam only two days later, where they would start their careers as educators. Karolyn absolutely loved the island of Guam, where she spent the next 23 years serving the residents of Guam as a teacher and principal of George Washington High School and Simon Sanchez High School where she was able to touch the lives of thousands of children. She was universally loved for her work ethic, professionalism, passion, empathy, kindness, and skills as a moderator. She volunteered for many of the most challenging extra-curricular activities, such as, managing the educational process for the school, advising school and student clubs/classes, and organizing class trips to countries like Japan, with 300 students in tow. Her incredible intellect allowed her to run a school with 2,000-plus students, raise a family, and continue with her education, earning a Doctorate in Educational Law from the University of Oregon, where her professor noted that she was the only student he had ever know that had written her entire thesis by hand, with no corrections. Her degree helped to make her a power-house in the Guam Department of

Education system where she ran some of the largest schools on the island, positively influencing the lives of so many, and ultimately earning the coveted Governor's Lifetime Achievement Award. She was even asked by the Governor to lead the Guam Department of Education but declined the offer as she did not want to give up her close personal contact with students, staff, and faculty at the schools. Karolyn often recalled that her years on Guam were some of the best times of her life, having made life-long relationships, thoroughly enjoying the people, her work, the island itself, and the many cultures that one could experience while living there. During her time on Guam, Karolyn gave birth to her two sons, Lawrence and Daniel, raising them with the same love, compassion, and influence of character that her Grandmother had taught her.

After retiring from Gov-Guam, Karolyn and family moved to Oregon for a short bit, but decided to move back to Arnold, to be closer to her mom and the rest of her family. She soon took on the job of principal of Ainsworth High School, where she continued to make many life-long friendships and make a difference in people's lives for another six years, earning a second retirement from the Nebraska Department of Education.

Karolyn really was a lifetime achiever, not only in the world of education, but as a by-product of her personal passions, such as her life-long work in support of the American



Legion, Genealogical/Historical societies, the Arnold Alumni Association, the American Red Cross and many other entities who were making a difference in the world.

Left to cherish her memory are her sister Kitty (Bill) Vogel, step-brothers Duane (Carolyn) Bowers, Glen (Kathy) Bowers and Gary (Linda) Bowers, her sons Lawrence (Carrie) and Daniel Duponcheel, granddaughters Dolores and Danielle Duponcheel, and many other extended family and friends.

A memorial service will be held Saturday, December 20, 2025, at noon at the Arnold Community Center with Father Michael Pampara officiating. Burial will occur at later date.

Memorial donations are suggested to the Arnold Historical Museum, the American Legion Post 130, the Arnold Alumni Association, the Arnold Community foundation, or to the family for an organization they will select.

Condolences may be shared at Box 4, Arnold, NE 69120. Carpenter Memorial Chapel of North Platte is in Charge of arrangements.