



## Karen L. Hodges

July 13, 1949 - January 23, 2013

Karen L Hodges

July 13, 1949-January 23, 2013

Karen Louise Hodges passed away surrounded by family in Bellingham on Wednesday. Karen was an exceptional wife, mother, aunt, grandmother, teacher and friend. She was born in Fullerton, CA to Carl and Louise (Graves) Montgomery, grew up in Brea, and graduated from California State University Fullerton in 1972. Karen began her elementary teaching career in Garden Grove, CA, and moved to Whatcom County in 1982. Karen began teaching in the Mt. Baker School District and continued for 27 years at Deming, Harmony, Mt. Baker Jr. High, Maple Falls, and Kendall schools. In 1984 Chuck Hodges fell for Karen's witty, smart and fun nature. They married at their home on the Goshen Road in Bellingham, where she resided until her death.

Karen was a loyal, supportive and honest friend. She was tolerant, understanding, considerate and could always be trusted with secrets and dreams. She developed friendships that lasted throughout her life. As a young woman, Karen thoroughly enjoyed listening and dancing to country music. Her alter-ego, "Karrie Lou", loved the stories in the lyrics and looked great in her cowboy hat and boots, two-stepping around the dance floor. She moved to Whatcom County because she thought the area was so beautiful, and she

loved the small town feel of county life. Karen truly enjoyed getting to know members of the community, relishing in their family stories and generational connections. She developed close ties with her neighbors, who were members of the Nooksack Tribe.

Regarded by her co-workers as an amazing teacher, Karen was a role model for others, providing leadership in each of the buildings in which she taught. Her teaching style was unique; part entertainer, part coach, part mother and task master. She had the ability to reach even the most challenging students, to whom she was especially drawn. Karen took her job quite seriously, but never herself.

Karen was devoted to family—the one she came from as well and the one she created with her husband. She was proud of her family history; and taught her children, nieces and nephews about their ancestors' role in the Civil War and the story of the Ritchey Mansion, a family home that is now a museum in Newtonia, Missouri. Her family had a long and storied military history with one member serving in the Revolutionary War, four in the Civil War, three in WW I, eleven in WWII, two in Korea, one in Viet Nam, one in Iraq, and five in peace time. An engraved stone in Gold Canyon, Arizona, marks this record.

The most important part of Karen's life was raising her children. Her children enjoyed family vacations, summers by the river, and participating in sports events. She was simply always there for them. When they were young, her children thought of Karen as strict. Now, as adults, they appreciate how her role model guided them to become caring, responsible parents themselves.

Karen is survived by her husband Chuck, sons, Jason (Kira) Hodges, Casey (Miranda) Hodges; and grandchildren Isabella, Payton, Madelyn and Ira. Her brothers Jim (Janie) Montgomery, Carl (Betty) Montgomery and Larry (Pat) Montgomery and 8 nieces and nephews also survive her. She was preceded

in death by her son, Christopher Hodges, and daughter, Jennifer Thompson.

A memorial service will be held Saturday, February 2, at 1 PM, at Mt. Baker High School in Deming with a reception following. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to Karen Hodges Memorial Scholarship at the Mt. Baker Scholarship Foundation, PO Box 875, Deming, WA 98244

Please share memories at [www.farewelltributes.com](http://www.farewelltributes.com)

Moles Farewell Tributes-Bellingham

Farewell Tribute Information

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# Tribute Wall

SL

“ We are sorry for your loss. Karen will be missed by all. She was a special lady and friend. Our sympathy, Patty & Steve Lagerwey

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**Steve & Patty Lagerwey** - January 23, 2013 at 12:00 AM

PP

“ Chuck,, words cannot express how sorry both Pete and I are, for your loss. You have definitely had your share. We pray that God & Angel will hold you in their protective, loving arms, and help you with your loss. God Bless, Marie, Pete, and Families.

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**Peter & Marie Pavlik** - January 23, 2013 at 12:00 AM