



Karen Severson

April 6, 1952 - May 9, 2026

Karen Dougherty Severson

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Karen Dougherty Severson, 74, passed peacefully in the care of Hope Hospice on May 9, 2026. Born in Wilmington, Delaware, on April 6, 1952, Karen's life truly began when her parents gave her an extraordinary gift at age nine—a move to Fort Myers Beach. The sun, sand, and salt air of Southwest Florida would shape her soul for the rest of her days. Growing up alongside her three sisters, Denise, Sheila, and Annie, and two brothers, Eddie and Bernie, Karen soaked up the beach life before the family moved inland, where the kids attended St. Francis and Bishop Verot and could be found tearing up and down McGregor Boulevard. The ocean, the trees, and the breezes she discovered on the beach never let her go—they remained a spark of joy throughout her entire life.

After studying art in Fort Lauderdale, Karen met her first husband, Rick (preceded in death), and together they welcomed two beautiful daughters, Rachel and Jessica. When Karen and the girls eventually struck out on their own, the pull of home brought them back to Fort Myers—and to Karen’s beloved Saturdays on Fort Myers Beach beside the Neptune Inn, in the shadow of “the Pink House.”

It was on those beloved shores that Karen met the love of her life, Randy. The two spent 39 wonderful years together, and for Karen, visiting the beach simply wasn’t enough—they got married and moved there full-time. She walked the sand, swam in the Gulf, and let it all pour into her art, painting countless scenes of the everyday beauty she found at the water’s edge. An avid and versatile creator, Karen worked in many media, always finding new ways to capture the life and nature around her.

Faith was a steady thread woven through Karen’s life from her earliest days at Catholic school. During her time in art school, she became part of The Way, the Truth, and the Life—an outreach ministry that took her to North Carolina and Texas as she spread the Gospel along the way. Later, she and Randy deepened their faith and community at St. Peter’s Lutheran Church, where they even portrayed the Virgin Mary and Joseph in the Christmas play one year.

Karen worked tirelessly as a single mother to raise her daughters—and even purchased her own home, an achievement she carried with quiet and well-deserved pride.

Karen is survived by:

Her beloved husband, Randal Severson; sisters Denise Bensko (Andrew), Sheila Zajack

(Ron), and Annie Vigil; brother Bernie Dougherty (Yuki); daughters Rachel Peacock

(Cole) and Jessica Dye (Jesse); grandchildren Hannah, Sterling, and Jackson; and many

loving nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Edward and Elizabeth Anne Dougherty; her

beloved brother, Edward Dougherty Jr.; and her first husband, Rick.

Karen often found her own quest in the words of Don Quixote from Man of La Mancha:

“This is my quest, to follow that star ... No matter how hopeless, no matter how

far, To fight for the right, without question or pause ... To be willing to march into Hell for a Heavenly cause ... And I know if I'll only be true to this glorious quest, That my heart will lie peaceful and calm when I'm laid to my rest.”

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

MAY 14. 12:00 PM (ET)

Good Sheperd Lutheran Church
4770 Orange Grove Blvd
N Fort Myers, FL 33903

Tribute Wall

MM

“ Mandy and Matt purchased the Basket of Memories for the family of Karen Severson.



Mandy and Matt - May 13 at 09:12 PM

LL

“ Love Cat, Mac, Jake, Kryslé and Lex purchased the Blue Caribbean Bouquet for the family of Karen Severson.



Love Cat, Mac, Jake, Kryslé and Lex - May 13 at 08:21 PM

SG

“ Steve & Mary Grafton purchased the Crystal Cross Bouquet for the family of Karen Severson.



Steve & Mary Grafton - May 13 at 05:55 PM

SG

“ Steve & Mary Grafton planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Karen Severson.

Steve & Mary Grafton - May 13 at 05:55 PM

MR

“ Our sincere condolences to your family ,on your loss.

Robert & MaryAnn (Bucci) Ross



maryann ross - May 13 at 05:49 PM

LD

“ Love, Lori Dye purchased the Beautiful Heart Bouquet for the family of Karen Severson.



Love, Lori Dye - May 13 at 03:00 PM

LD

“ Love, Lori Dye planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Karen Severson.

Love, Lori Dye - May 13 at 03:00 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Karen Severson.



May 13 at 02:25 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Karen Severson.

May 13 at 02:25 AM



“ The Edison and Ford Winter Estates purchased the Ocean Breeze Spray for the family of Karen Severson.



The Edison and Ford Winter Estates - May 12 at 03:19 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Karen Severson.

May 12 at 02:08 PM



“ Karen’s daughter , Jessica, is my best friend. Karen spread her love to me as a Mom and fellow April baby. She always made space for me in her world and I will cherish her blessings and remember her voice. I will think of her when I hear the ocean and touch a hibiscus flower. I will see her in her daughters and on an ocean breeze. Love You Karen 🌺🌊🌺💕🌊🌺💕 ~Rebecca Hartmann

Rebecca Hartmann - May 12 at 02:03 PM

LF

“ Love, Anderson and Borne families purchased the Enchanted Cottage for the family of Karen Severson.



Love, Anderson and Borne families - May 12 at 07:02 AM

CF

“ Hi it's Cindy the neighbor! Karen and I would sit out front of the house and just talk. She was like a mom to me. She and Randy would come to our cookouts. Karen is going to be missed very much.

cindy flowers - May 11 at 06:44 PM

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Rachel Peacock - May 11 at 06:38 PM

TF

“ *The Borne family purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Karen Severson.*



The Borne family - May 11 at 01:38 PM

TF

“ *The Borne family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Karen Severson.*

The Borne family - May 11 at 01:38 PM