

Caren Rita Sokolan

MARCH 15, 2012

Carstairs resident Caren Rita Sokolan (née Pepler) passed away suddenly at home on March 15, 2012, aged 64 years, due to complications arising from COPD.

Caren was predeceased by her parents, Raymond and Pauline Pepler (née Poppenheim), husband Ken in March 2011, special great-aunt Kay Symon in October 2011, and brothers-in-law Keith Schmaltz and Duncan Wright. She is lovingly remembered by son Trevor (Charity) and daughter Stacey (Dennis), along with twin brother Clint (Rayna), sisters Val Wright and Marva Schmaltz, and brother Randy (Faye), several nieces and nephews, as well as her many special friends and neighbours, including “son” Dave.

Caren was born in Yorkton, Saskatchewan. In her youth, she enjoyed socializing with her many friends, sewing on the treadle machine, waterski club, and special times with family, including coming home every weekday at noon to large home-cooked meals, sneaking into the expensive drive-in movies hidden with her siblings underneath a blanket in the back of the family car, and visiting family in the small German community of Rhein, Saskatchewan. One of her most-recounted memories from this period is the time she and her twin brother snuck into the parked family car and tried to “drive” it at five years old. The car began to roll down a hill with the children inside, and Clint bailed, leaving Caren at the wheel. (Fortunately, no damage was done.)



She completed the Commercial course at Yorkton Collegiate Institute in 1965 and began her career as an admissions clerk at the Yorkton General Hospital. She worked for Avco Finance for over ten years. Her career as Training Representative for Western Canada brought her to many places, including Calgary, London ON, the Vancouver area, and Medicine Hat, where she met her husband Ken. They were married on September 29, 1972 in Calgary, AB. Together, they enjoyed socializing and frequent travels to Hawaii and Arizona.

Caren was thrilled to become a mother to son Trevor in 1979. The young family moved from the Marda Loop area in Calgary to Carstairs, AB in 1980, and daughter Stacey was born in 1984.

Caren made many lifelong friends in Carstairs and was active in the community, including the Carstairs Golf Club, Carstairs Curling Club, volunteering at Hugh Sutherland School (including typing and binding books for her daughter's elementary school classmates), band fundraising for both children, volunteering at nursing homes, and regularly canvassing for the Community Chest. Her hobbies included ceramics, making cloth photo albums, and baking (she was especially known for her Nanaimo Bars and Nuts and Bolts). She kept an immaculate home—despite always being a “mom” to cats and dogs—and always welcomed visitors. She felt fortunate to be a stay-at-home mom, but formed many special friendships with her coworkers and customers when she re-entered the workforce at Ward's Value Drug Mart in Didsbury, where she was a cashier for over ten years.

Her diagnosis with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) in 2005 did little to slow her down or stifle her spirit, as she remained socially active and had an outgoing personality. Her spirit in the face of the heartbreaking loss of her husband Ken was an inspiration. She was determined to maintain her independence and love of life. She could be seen out around the neighbourhood

with her black dog Zeppy about three times per day, and after his death in August 2011, she continued her evening jaunts with her neighbourhood friends. She maintained her many strong friendships, and, to her surprise, loved being a Red Hatter. She loved to chat, and was always interested in others and their lives—even when speaking with children, she made them feel like they were important and that their thoughts and opinions mattered. She had a great sense of humour, and her characteristic laugh will always be remembered.

Caren loved her family, her many long-time friends and neighbours, animals, and children. Some of her favourite things to do included shopping for “new baby” gifts for family, friends, and neighbours, and babysitting her “kids,” Bradley and Jessica. This love shines on through the lives of all she touched. We know she is now at peace, walking with Ken and Zeppy.

At Caren’s request, a small private family ceremony was held. Memorial donations may be made to the Wild Rose Humane Society, Suite 519, 203-304 Main Street Square, Airdrie, AB, T4A 3C3.

Messages of condolence may be left for the family.

Messages of Condolence

I was so sad to learn of your loss. I can only imagine the emotion you're experiencing Stacey. Sending you lots of positive energy and thoughts. I hope you can celebrate your Mom's gorgeous life by reflecting on the amazing memories you created. Live Inspired

— **Robyn Beazley**

Hi Stacey and Trevor,

So sorry to hear about your mom. My sincere condolences on your loss. I lost my mom to lung cancer in November 2010 and am still struggling with it hugely. The many good memories keep us going. We now have 4.5 grandkids to thoroughly enjoy which helps immensely. I hope that family and friends help to fill your void also.

Fond regards,

Ronda Mader

— **Ronda Mader**

To Trevor and Stacey

We are very sorry to hear of the sudden loss of your Mom. I have a lot of great memories of her! She will be missed by us all! Stacey you did an awesome write up about your Mom. You should be proud!!! If either of you are on the island look us up! We would love to see you all!

Love Sheri, Myke and family

— **Sheri Balla**



<https://www.myalternatives.ca/obituaries/sokolan-caren-rita>

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