



## Karol A. Maruska

February 28, 2025

Karol Anne (Norman) Maruska—devoted wife, doting mother and grandmother, intrepid traveler, skillful baker, and steadfast friend to many—completed her journey on earth on February 28, 2025, after developing complications from pneumonia. She was 78.

Karol was born on August 23, 1946, to L.C. and Retta Maude (Roberts) Norman in Joplin, Missouri. She made her way to Omaha, Nebraska, where she graduated from Benson High School. In her girlhood she dreamed of seeing the world as a PanAm stewardess, but her plan was scuttled when she met and wed Darrell Maruska at age 19—in conflict with the airline’s no-marriage policy for flight attendants.

After working to put her husband through engineering school and having two daughters, she relocated to Fort Collins, Colorado, where she began a career as a travel agent. She led groups as far as China (back when no Westerners were touring China) and throughout Mexico (where she enjoyed a reputation as a Mexico destination specialist) and experienced much of the rest of the world vicariously through her clients.

As access to the Internet expanded, and demand for professional travel planning slackened, she put her administrative skills to use in positions with the Fort Collins Police Department and Colorado State University, where she

especially enjoyed looking after graduate students and taking classes toward her bachelor's degree in human development.

In her retirement, she continued traveling, passing through Italy, Ireland, and Israel, among other locales. She was deeply committed to Timberline Church, where she volunteered for the Primetimers group and directed her energy to planning adventures near and far for the congregation's seniors. She maintained an active social life, regularly meeting close friends and neighbors to play cards or Rummikub, cheer on the Denver Broncos or try a new lunch spot.

Karol expressed great pride in her daughters, Stephanie (Michael) Borunda and Sara (Eric Poliakon) Maruska; granddaughters, Lucy and Pilar Borunda and Savannah (Seth) Naffziger; and great-grandson Noah Naffziger. As her mobility became limited, she made a concerted effort to travel home to Missouri and Nebraska for family events and to remain in touch with cousins, nieces, nephews and sisters in law. She valued family and friends, including her companion Yorkie-mix, Jasper, above all else.

She was preceded in death by her husband Darrell; her parents; her younger brother Charlie; grandmother Etta; favorite aunts Elsie, Etta Mae and Lorene; and Uncle Jimmy—all of whom were surely waiting at the gate to welcome her to the other side.

A Celebration of Karol's Life will be held on Saturday, March 22 at 10 a.m. at Timberline Church in Fort Collins, followed by a light luncheon. All are welcome to attend. If you knew Karol, you likely know that she loved bright colors and flowers and warm weather. Guests are encouraged to select attire that says spring is imminent and sunnier days are on the way. A Broncos or Cornhuskers jersey wouldn't be out of place.

You may also know that Karol had a heart for learning about, meeting, and caring for people from all corners of the world. In light of this, and in lieu of flowers, please consider making a donation in Karol's name to the United Nations Refugee Agency at <https://dev.unrefugees.org/gifts/all-gifts/>.

# Previous Events

## Celebration of Life

MAR **22**. 10:00 AM (MT)

Timberline Church - Fort Collins Main Campus  
2908 S Timberline Road  
Fort Collins, CO 80525

# Tribute Wall

DS

“ My Aunt Karol was one of the nicest and most generous people I have ever met. I remember traveling from Omaha to Ft Collins as a kid and staying with her, and watching Valley Girl with my cousins. Always smiling and kind to everyone. You will be truly missed Aunt Karol. You were one of a kind. We love you ❤️ Duane Schaber

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**Duane Schaber** - March 21, 2025 at 09:06 AM

LH

Karol, Darrell and my husband Larry and I were great friends over 40 years. We enjoyed many trips together as our children were growing up. An especially wonderful trip that she and I took was aptly called “Our Bosom Buddy Trip” after she had completed surgery and chemotherapy for breast cancer. We also both loved Elvis and had a wonderful time visiting Memphis and touring Graceland. To mention all the great adventures we had would take a long time and to say Karol will be missed would truly be an understatement. She was the best friend anyone could wish for, and I will always remember and treasure the times we spent together. I hope Karol and Darrell are together and smiling down on everyone. Larry and Karen Hoying

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**Larry and Karen Hoying** - March 21, 2025 at 04:16 PM