



## Sandra Carlson

October 24, 1944 - January 20, 2024

Sandra (Kerr) Carlson, age 79, went to her Heavenly home on January 20, 2024. She was born in Thomasville, Georgia on October 24, 1944 to Lyle and Evelyn (Kilpatrick) Kerr. She lived with her mother and grandmother until she was 18 months old, when her father returned from serving in World War II, to see her for the first time.

The family moved to Hastings, Nebraska, where Sandra grew up. She graduated from Hastings High School in 1962. She attended Nebraska Wesleyan University, graduating in 1966 with a bachelor's degree in Education and a minor in French. There, she met Melvin Carlson, and the two were married on June 25, 1966.

Living first in Kearney and then later in Hastings, Sandra was a Special Education teacher for Educational Service Unit 9, and later at Morton Elementary in Hastings. Sandra had a passion and talent for helping educate all children. Her groundbreaking career included being the first special education teacher in several rural communities, as well as creating and presenting strategies for including special education students in regular classrooms.

The couple moved to Grand Island in 1996. Sandra and Mel traveled the country and world together. They visited nearly every state, attending

educational and cultural experiences. In her life, Sandra traveled to 3 continents and 8 countries, including educational travel and cultural exchanges in Italy, Greece and Japan.

Sandra knew the gift of friendship, and was active in the community. She was a member of Alpha Gamma Delta sorority, Alpha Kappa Delta educational sorority, PEO, Altrusa, her book club, and the birthday club at Kuester Lake. She was a member of Trinity United Methodist Church, as well as the Saddle Club in Grand Island and Lochland Country Club in Hastings.

Sandra was preceded in death by her father and mother, Lyle and Evelyn Kerr as well as her baby sister Mary Jane. She was also preceded in death by her father and mother in-law, Arthur and Lucile Carlson, brothers-in-law Richard and Delaine Carlson, Wade Warnke, Donald Metcalf, Kim Torson and sister-in-law Gloria Carlson.

She is survived by her husband Melvin, her daughter Thea (Jack) Cole of Cozad, NE; her twin sons Clifford (Amy) Carlson of Lincoln, NE, and Darren Carlson and fiancé Pam Haschke of Springfield, NE. She has seven grandchildren – Samuel Cole, Adam Cole and fiancé Ainsley Rickertsen, Paul Cole, Heathcliff Carlson, Hannah Carlson, Clara Carlson and Camille Carlson, as well as numerous nieces and nephews.

She is also survived by her brother James (Barbara) Kerr, brothers-in-law Darrel, Victor (Cindy), Maynard (JoAnn), Lewis (Pam), and Eldon (Jean) Carlson, and sisters-in-law Audrey Warnke, Janice Metcalf, Vivian Torson, and Louise Carlson.

A memorial service for Sandra will be held at Trinity United Methodist Church in Grand Island on January 30th at 10:00 AM. Memorials in Sandra's name may be sent to Hope Harbor or The Willa Cather Foundation.



# Previous Events

## Memorial Service

JAN 30. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Trinity United Methodist Church  
511 N. Elm Street  
Grand Island, NE

# Tribute Wall

MJ

“ Stacy met Sandra at Morton Elementary in Hastings, here first teaching job! Sandra was such an amazing person, kind, thoughtful, caring it was an easy connection for Stacy and they became great friends. Fast forward some years, Mel and Sandra move to Grand Island, we grow closer as they become our favorite couple and wish we could adopt them! :-)

We get married in Dec 1995 in frigid Watertown, SD and they make the long trip to witness our union. In 1999, our daughter was born, and they graciously accepted the title of "GODPARENTS"!! Our lives have been forever changed having Sandra and Mel so close to our family, they are the most wonderful people you could ever wish to be part of your life.

We will miss Sandra very much but celebrate her forever and continue our journey with Mel, Thea, Cliff, Darren and families. We love you Sandra!

*Mike, Stacy, Arabelle & Aidan Jackson*

---

**Michael R. Jackson** - January 30, 2024 at 04:19 PM

MC

“ Back in the 1970's Sandra and I were co-leaders for a Girl Scout Troop in Hastings. She taught me much about leadership and flexibility. When Jim and I left Hastings, we all lost touch. Sandra helped shape my future career with her insights and wisdom.

*I am so sorry for your loss. Mary McCart Cramer, Columbia, MO*

---

**Mary Cramer** - January 29, 2024 at 02:03 PM

RF

“ Randy & Cindy Schneider and Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Sandra Carlson.

Randy & Cindy Schneider and Family - January 29, 2024 at 11:37 AM

RF

“ Randy & Cindy Schneider and Family purchased the Country Basket Blooms for the family of Sandra Carlson.



Randy & Cindy Schneider and Family - January 29, 2024 at 11:37 AM

LR

“ Love, The Rickertsens planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Sandra Carlson.

Love, The Rickertsens - January 29, 2024 at 08:58 AM



“ Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Sandra Carlson.



January 29, 2024 at 08:58 AM

RM

“ I remember Sandra's patient kindness toward her younger cousins, especially when she read to us. My sympathy to the Carlson family.

Ruth Mytty - January 27, 2024 at 01:06 PM

RA

“ *Jim and family,  
Sorry to hear of your loss. Mom and I sending prayers to all of you.  
May God wrap his arms around of you for strength along with  
prayers for healing.  
Bettie and Renee Augustin*

Renee augustin - January 27, 2024 at 01:00 PM

PK

“ *My deepest sympathies to your family. My  
thoughts and prayers are with you. God Bless*



Patty Kroger - January 26, 2024 at 05:54 PM



“ *Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family  
of Sandra Carlson.*



January 26, 2024 at 04:44 PM

NJ

“ *Nancy, Chip, Courtney, Keller and Jimbo  
purchased the Pink Tribute Spray for the family of  
Sandra Carlson.*



Nancy, Chip, Courtney, Keller and Jimbo - January 26, 2024 at  
01:17 PM

JR

“ *Sandra was a kind, caring woman. I appreciated her knowledge and compassion when we worked together at Morton Elementary. My thoughts and prayers are with you all. Julie Ramel*

Julie Ramel - January 26, 2024 at 09:42 AM

DF

“ *Doug & Julie Stagemeyer and Families purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Sandra Carlson.*



Doug & Julie Stagemeyer and Families - January 24, 2024 at 09:55 PM



“ *Small Garden Dish was purchased for the family of Sandra Carlson.*



January 24, 2024 at 07:26 PM

BJ

“ *Barb, Jason, Lauren, and Alex Jones planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Sandra Carlson.*

Barb, Jason, Lauren, and Alex Jones - January 24, 2024 at 07:26 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue* was purchased for the family of *Sandra Carlson*.



---

January 24, 2024 at 02:33 PM



“ *My deepest sympathy to the Carlson family. Jeanne Loch*

---

**jeanne loch** - January 24, 2024 at 01:36 PM