



Karen Kelly

June 4, 1943 - March 15, 2026

Karen Lee Kelly, 82, of Evanston, passed away peacefully on March 15, 2026.

Born in Chicago, raised in the Avondale and Ravenswood Manor neighborhoods, Karen was a graduate of Immaculata High School and earned her RN degree from St. Joseph Hospital School of Nursing.

Her nursing career spanned from the Cook County Department of Health to Lutheran General and St. Joseph Hospitals to the oncology department at Evanston Hospital. Karen left nursing when her daughter Megan entered primary school. She was a volunteer with Community Care at St. Athanasius Church in Evanston and was active in the community. She returned to the workforce several years later joining Allstate Insurance and later Northwestern University as an assistant in the department of Communication Studies.

Karen loved too many things to count, but among her favorites were artwork, movies (old and new), the beaches of the North Shore, great food (especially Lou Malnati's), and traveling whenever it was possible. More than anything, she loved laughing with and spending time with her extensive family that was a part of her life, including her beloved nieces and nephews. She was the "cool" Aunt.

Mother of Megan (Scott) Solis of Chicago's Rogers Park. Grandmother

“Nonnie” of Joseph Henry Solis and Theo Solis.

Close to her always, though all the way down in Memphis, Tennessee, was her brother Charles “Chuck” Pinkowski and his family, including his wife Jenny and their kids Anne Marie and Kevin.

She will also be missed by her honorary son Reginald “Reg” Herde and his family in Austin, Texas.

Karen was preceded in death by her parents Henry Joseph Pinkowski and Lena Pisani Pinkowski.

The family has chosen a private green cremation, and Karen's cremated remains will be scattered on Lake Michigan.

Friends and family are gathering on Saturday, June 20, 1-4pm, for an open house in celebration of Karen's beautiful life. There will be no formal service, just a meaningful time to gather, share memories, and simply be together as family and friends. For details, please contact Megan at 773-497-7391 or megansolis@sbcglobal.net.

Donations may be made in her name to the Care Plan, who offered Karen incredible care management in recent days: https://www.gofundme.com/f/support-the-care-plan-community-care-fund?utm_source=ig&utm_medium=social&utm_content=link_in_bio.

Arrangements by Inclusive Funeral Care, 773-318-1305 or www.InclusiveFuneralCare.com.

Upcoming Events

Open House Reception

JUN **20**. 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM (CT)

Private Residence
Wilmette, IL

Please contact the family directly for details: Megan: 773-497-7391 or megansolis@sbcglobal.net