



Karen J. Ellis

September 30, 1953 - May 29, 2009

Karen J. Ellis: Karen died Friday at her home in Oskaloosa.

Karen's family includes her father, Willard of Oskaloosa; her brother, Kevin, also of Oskaloosa; a niece, Jennifer Ellis of Des Moines; a nephew, Craig (Emily) Bahnsen of Des Moines; a great niece, Greta Naomi Bahnsen and close friends, Connie and Gary Alexander of Oskaloosa.

Karen J. Ellis, daughter of Willard and Naomi Faulkner Ellis, was born September 30, 1953, in Oskaloosa, Iowa. She was an Oskaloosa High School graduate and went on to further her education at William Penn College, where she received a B.A. in Human Relations and Psychology in 1975 and then at Drake University, where she received a M.S. in Education ? Counseling and Personnel Services in 1989. In 2003, she was awarded an Honorary Ph.D. from Shepperton University, United Kingdom. Karen started her career while still in college as a VISTA Volunteer with the Area XVI Drug Abuse Council and the Lee County Mental Health Center in Keokuk and Fort Madison. She went on to manage a residential program for girls in Farmington, MO and then a women's residential facility with the Southeast Iowa Council for Alcohol and Drug Problems. From 1978 to 1980, she was the Executive Director of the Fort Madison Housing Authority and from 1981 to 1989, she was part of the mental health services team at Broadlawns Medical Center in Des Moines.

During and after her graduate studies at Drake, she worked for WorkMed Midwest. There she assessed rehabilitation needs of injured workers, and analyzed work place safety and ergonomics. From 1990 to 1991, she served as the Regional Director/Senior Consultant for two state offices for ERS Rehabilitation Services, a six state private rehabilitation company. Karen worked as an Independent Consultant and worked for the Iowa Council for International Understanding, Des Moines. There she directed local activities of the International Visitor Leadership Program of the U.S. Department of State; this program was nominated for the 2001 Nobel Peace Prize. Karen also provided private mental health counseling and was part of the Mental Health Professional Mobile Crisis Response Team. Karen taught courses at Drake University and most recently was the Director of Human Resource Management Certificate Program at William Penn University ? College for Working Adults. She was also founder and president of KNEW Day, which provided consulting, advocacy and training services to domestic and international entities. Karen moved back to Oskaloosa in January of 2008 to be near her family. Karen was an avid reader and collector of Lighthouses; she also enjoyed cross stitch and was a member of the Rainbow Division ? Order of the Eastern Star. Karen was a member of the Central United Methodist Church. Besides her work, Karen's real passion was politics ? she devoted countless hours to the Republican Party.

Karen was preceded in death by her mother and a brother, Keith Ellis.

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Tribute Wall



“ *Karen J. Ellis*

October 05, 2023 at 11:57 PM



“ *Happy birthday to my old friend, Karen. The worldlost a wonderful person when you passed.*

Maureen - September 30, 2015 at 12:00 AM