

Karen Hackleman Dahlen

July 3, 1941 ~ October 4, 2025

Karen Hackleman Dahlen, B.S., MLS

It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of Karen Hackleman Dahlen, who left this world on October 4th, 2025, at the age of 84. Our beloved wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, sister, and friend was a beacon of love and strength, whose energy touched everyone fortunate enough to know her.

Born on July 3rd, 1941, in Mt. Pleasant, UT. Karen was a treasured daughter of Beth Wilcox and Wells Thursby. She grew up with a deep appreciation for family and education. Her boundless curiosity and passion for learning began with Wasatch Academy in Mt. Pleasant. This led her to the Utah Historical Society and to receive a Bachelor of Science, Political Science degree from the University of Utah, as well as her Master of Library Science degree from Oklahoma University (OU), where she cultivated the skills and vision that would guide her throughout her life.

Karen married the love of her life, Roger Dahlen, in May of 1986, and together they built a life filled with work, travel, and devotion. As a mother to two children, Karen was a source of endless love, encouragement and motivation. Her family was her greatest joy, and she took immense pride in their accomplishments and happiness.

Karen's generosity and compassion extended far beyond her family. She was a dedicated health sciences library director, known for her achievements at Nebraska Medicine and the Mid-Continental Regional Medical Library, as Associate Director, University of Maryland at Baltimore Health Sciences Library and the Mid-Atlantic Regional Health Sciences Library, Associate Director at the University of Illinois at Chicago Health Sciences Library, Director of the Health Sciences Library at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, Fellowships at Vanderbilt University and the Centers for Disease Control. Her commitment to many, many charities was a testament to her selfless spirit and desire to make the world a better place.

In her free time, Karen found joy in travelling with family, flowers and yard work. Whether she was planting trees for each of her four grandsons or six great-grandchildren, Karen was always focused on family.

Karen is survived by her sister, Trent Alvey (Dennis Sizemore); her children, Jeff Hackleman (Freddie Alvarado), Tim Hackleman (Amy); her grandchildren, Jaren Hackleman (Chelsey), Seth Hackleman (Hannah), Nathan Hackleman (Hannah) and Grant Hackleman (Sidney); Neice, Shannon Alvey (Bodhi George Whitecloud Schroeder); Nephew, Chris Alvey (Amy) and countless friends and extended family members who will forever cherish her memory. She is preceded in death by her husband, Roger Dahlen; mother, Beth Wilcox and father, Wells Thursby.

An informal celebration of Karen's life will be held on October 15th from 3:00pm to 5:00pm at Larkin Mortuary, 260 E. South Temple Street, Salt Lake City, UT 84111where family and friends will gather to honor her legacy and share the stories that made her so special

Karen Hackleman Dahlen’s light will continue to shine in the hearts of all who loved her. Though she is no longer with us, her legacy of love, kindness, and resilience will live on, inspiring us to carry her spirit forward in our own lives.