

**Karen Hutchinson**  
**June 6, 1960 — July 19, 2025**



Karen Mills Hutchinson, 65, of Newcastle, passed away at home after a long struggle with the lasting effects of her stroke and heart disease on July 19, 2025. Born in Gillette on June 6, 1960, Karen was the beloved daughter of Reynard and Alice Mills of the Carlike area.

Karen grew up on the River Valley Ranch, where her love for family, nature, and faith took deep root. Being the eldest daughter in a large ranching family was not an easy task but she honed the art of homemaking, ranch work, and peacemaking with an iron will

yet gentle hand. She graduated from Moorcroft High School in 1978 and set out to make her own way but stayed grounded in her love of her family.

She first went out west to attend Northwest University in Washington but came back to the University of Wyoming to attend the Fay W. Whitney School of Nursing. In 1982, she met the love of her life, Jim Hutchinson. They were married on August 1, 1987, a year after she graduated nursing school, in a beautiful ceremony on the front lawn of her family home.

Karen and Jim began their life together in Laramie. While Jim finished his degree, Karen worked at Iverson Memorial Hospital in the Labor and Delivery department. In 1989, they moved to Rock Springs, where they had their sons Orin, Asa, and Elias. In 1994, the family moved to Buffalo, where she gave birth to her youngest child, Abigail. One of Karen's greatest joys came in her role as a mother to their four children. In 1997, Karen and her family settled in Newcastle, where she would spend the rest of her life serving her community. Though she stepped away from nursing to raise her children full-time, Karen remained deeply involved in education and the lives of young people, serving for many years as a volunteer in her children's classrooms and as a substitute teacher with Weston County School District #1.

Karen's relationship with Christ was the foundation of her life. She unashamedly lived out her faith with strength, love, and devotion. She was a dedicated member of every church she attended, always seeking to serve in ways that uplifted others. She taught Sunday School, organized Vacation Bible Schools, led women's studies, and mentored young mothers through the MOPS (Mothers of Preschoolers) group she co-founded in Buffalo. Karen was a source of spiritual encouragement to many, offering prayer, hospitality, and a listening ear to family, friends, and strangers alike.

She found joy in the small things—making a home, keeping the family history alive through research and storytelling, and holding her grandchildren close. But Karen also had the eye of an artist. She saw beauty wherever she went and created beauty when the opportunity arose. On hikes, she gravitated to the leaves and the flowers as her mind swirled with ideas for a craft or dried floral arrangement. At home, she often pulled up a chair next to her children and drew or painted alongside them for their various art projects. Her creativity followed her into the kitchen in her infamous pasta salad, pancakes, cinnamon rolls, and bread.

Karen is survived by her devoted husband of nearly 38 years, Jim Hutchinson; her children Orin and Nora Hutchinson, Asa and Maggie Hutchinson, Elias and Andrea Hutchinson, and Abigail Hutchinson; and her treasured grandchildren Charles, Beckett, Jane, Sawyer, Jones, Ruth, Tel, Miller, and Jedidiah. She is also survived by her siblings: Steve and Ronda Mills, Gary and Gail Mills, Debbi and Troy Harrington, Patricia and David Flowerdew, Doug and Dena Mills, Justin and Myla Mills, and Brian and Heidi Mills.

She was preceded in death by her loving parents, Reynard and Alice Mills.

A celebration of Karen's life will be held at 1:00 p.m. on August 15, 2025, at the Crouch Auditorium in Newcastle. All who were touched by her warmth and faith are welcome to attend.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorial donations be made to the Whitney School of Nursing at the University of Wyoming. Gifts can be made online at [www.uwyo.edu/giveonline](http://www.uwyo.edu/giveonline) or mailed to: Whitney School of Nursing Discretionary Fund c/o UW Foundation 222 South 22nd Street Laramie, WY 82070

Karen's legacy of love, faith, and service lives on in the countless lives she touched. She will be remembered not only for what she did, but for how she lived—with humility, kindness, and a heart anchored in Christ.