



Karen Ann Irene Burge

August 18, 1954 - November 1, 2025

Karen Ann Irene (Saari) Burge, 71, of rural Crystal Falls passed away on November 1, 2025, after a long battle with clear-cell carcinoma, a rare and aggressive form of cancer.

Karen was born on August 18, 1954, in Hancock, MI, the second daughter of Carl I. and Irma A. (Holappa) Saari. She was raised in Paavola Location and attended Hancock Public Schools, graduating in 1972. She graduated from Suomi College in 1974.

On March 22, 1975, she married Michael Ray Burge of Dollar Bay, and they celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary this year. After living for a few years in Racine, WI, and Houghton, MI, they raised their three boys, Allan Michael, Steven William, and Jeffrey Peter, in Crystal Falls. When all three boys were in school, Karen went to work for the Forest Park School District, first as a library aide and later as school secretary; she retired in 2016. She was a member of Bethany Lutheran Church in Amasa.

Karen was preceded in death by her parents, Carl and Irma Saari; her brother, Kevin; and Mike's parents, Iris and William Burge.

She is survived by her husband, Mike; her sons, Al, Steve, and Jeff; her grandchildren, Sgt. Lucian Michael Burge, Isolde (Izzy) Marie Burge, and Liam

Dean; her sisters, Karla (Tino) Kitalong and Kristine Saari; and Mike's siblings and siblings-in-law, Tom (Phyllis) Burge, Mary Jean (the late David "Butch") Westcott, and Sherry (the late Bill) Burge. She is further survived by numerous nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends, including her BFF of 40+ years, Kay (Frank) Dedo. Karen was "Gram B" to a host of "bonus" grandchildren, including Carson Schmit; Mykenzie, Madison, and Natalie Monkevich; and the Dedo kids and grandkids.

Visitation will be held from 9:00 am -11:00 am on Monday, November 10, 2025, at United Lutheran Church in Crystal Falls with a funeral service to follow at 11:00 am at the church. Pastor D.J. Rasner will officiate.

In lieu of flowers, a memorial will be established.

Condolences may be expressed to the family of Karen Burge online at www.nashfuneralhome.net.

The family has entrusted Nash Funeral Home and Cremation Services of Crystal Falls with the arrangements.

Previous Events

Visitation

NOV **10**. 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

United Lutheran Church
506 Superior Ave
Crystal Falls, MI 49920

Funeral Service

NOV **10**. 11:00 AM (CT)

United Lutheran Church
506 Superior Ave
Crystal Falls, MI 49920

Tribute Wall

RP

“ Mike and family So sorry for your loss of Karen passing. We remember the good times we had together in Racine. Go lions Barb and Rob Polzin

Rob Polzin - November 11, 2025 at 09:25 PM

BW

“ I am so sorry for your loss. My thoughts and prayers are with you Mike and family. She was such a beautiful caring person..

Barbara Webb - November 11, 2025 at 10:34 AM

DC

“ Mike and family, we send our condolences, thoughts and prayers to you during this time of grief. May Karen rest in peace. She will never leave you, you'll always have many fond memories ❤️!

David E Claus - November 10, 2025 at 01:46 PM

RK

“ Dear Mike, I want you to know that I'm praying for your family. I can't imagine the grief you must be experiencing and my hope is that you find the peace of God throughout your grieving. I wish I could have attended the funeral, but just know that when we do meet again I will give you a proper hug!
God's Peace and Our Love,
Razz and Erin

Richard Kangas - November 08, 2025 at 11:59 AM

SD

“ Mike and Family- my deepest sympathies on the loss of our very special Karen. She was truly such a wonderful, kind, compassionate person who made this world a better place. I will miss sending her chicken gifts and cards. May she be at peace and may you have strength going forward without her light.

Sharon (Davis) Mitchell

Sharon Davis-Mitchell - November 08, 2025 at 09:07 AM

BN

“ Billie Jo and Noah purchased the Fairest of All for the family of Karen Ann Irene Burge.



Billie Jo and Noah - November 07, 2025 at 09:26 AM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Karen Ann Irene Burge.



November 06, 2025 at 08:40 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Karen Ann Irene Burge.



November 06, 2025 at 07:27 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Karen Ann Irene Burge.



November 06, 2025 at 04:22 PM



“ The Burges. Tom, Phyllis & Kids planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Karen Ann Irene Burge.

The Burges. Tom, Phyllis & Kids - November 06, 2025 at 04:22 PM



“ Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Karen Ann Irene Burge.



November 06, 2025 at 03:40 PM



“ Mike and family, you have my deepest sympathy.
Roland Korpi

Roland Korpi - November 06, 2025 at 12:16 PM

AD

“ When I think of Karen the only word that comes to mind is beautiful. Beautiful wife, mother, caregiver, soul, heart, mind and friend. I will forever have her with me reminding me of all our talks and tears together. My deepest thoughts and prayers to the Burge and Dedo family. Karen was overall one of the most beautiful woman that I have ever met. She will be missed by myself and so many that she touched with her love and thoughtfulness.

Adrienne Doerr - November 06, 2025 at 06:50 AM

TT

“ Mrs. Burge was always one of the kindest individuals in all interactions as a student or otherwise. These type of individuals leave a positive impression on people many years afterwards, and I'm sad to hear of her passing. My sincere condolences to Mike, Jeff, Al, Steve, and all her family.

Tucker Thoreson - November 06, 2025 at 12:11 AM

VH

“ Karen was (will always be) a model of kindness, gentleness, and acceptance. Her genuine respect for others was always evident in her interactions with students, parents and the staff at Forest Park. She loved her family so much! Her beacon of light on this earth was Mike and her boys and grandchildren. Now her own light is even brighter as our Light of the World welcomes her into Heaven. May God bless her dear ones and Karen's memory. Sending prayers, love, comfort to her loved ones. Verl Hudson



verl hudson - November 05, 2025 at 09:24 PM

KM

Karen always had a smile for everyone. One of the sweetest people I ever met. She did so very much for those students at Forest Park. My kids were lucky enough to be there when she was too. Rest easy beautiful sole.

Karen Martin - November 06, 2025 at 02:19 PM

DK

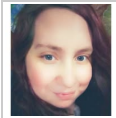
“ We are sending our sincere condolences and blessings to Mike, sons, family, and friends of Karen who was such a nice kind person. Dr. Bonnie L. Koski and Mr. Earl U. Koski

Dr. Bonnie L. and Mr. Earl U. Koski - November 05, 2025 at 07:16 PM

KH

Mike and Family, Karen's passing breaks my heart. She was a big part of my life when growing up in Paavola. And she will always remain a big part of my heart. My prayers go out to you and your family. May God give you strength to endure all the sadness and grief . My love to you and yours. Kathy Oikarinen Haapala

Kathleen Haapala - November 06, 2025 at 05:53 AM



I remember Mrs Burge, she was so nice when I went to school at Forest Park, my condolences go out to her family may she rest in peace 🕊️

Lisa Brazeika - November 06, 2025 at 12:36 PM