

Alumni Spotlight

Karen Good '68

There is no better way to describe what Karen Good '68 does than the title of the Bob Dylan song "Love minus Zero." Karen was born and raised on a dairy farm, the third of twelve children. She knows what it is to hand milk cows because when she was growing up, her mother and sisters were responsible for hand milking their fifteen cows every day.

Karen's older sisters, Yvonne and Patty '67,

attended the Northwest School of Agriculture (NWSA) and when Karen was a junior, they sent her there. Karen attributes her work and success to some of the guidance she received from Myrtle (Ma) Brown and Mrs. Braaten at the NWSA. "Every Sunday, Ma Brown would get behind the wheel of the car to drive us to church and Mrs. Braaten would ride shotgun," Karen explains, "I remember the ride in the backseat. Those two women really looked after me and cared for my physical, spiritual, and social needs."

Working for Ma Brown in the kitchen, and having Mrs. Braaten as a dorm mother, provided each of these women with ample opportunities to watch Karen grow. She also remembers taking chemistry from Principal Reiersgord and English from Mr. Heckman. Becoming a teacher was something Karen wanted to do early on, she even taught her younger siblings to read using her own curriculum.

When she graduated from the Northwest School in 1968, she went to work for a year in a clinic on the reservation after some encourage-

ment by the doctors on staff; she decided to attend Macalester College, a private undergraduate liberal arts college located in St. Paul, Minnesota. Karen, who is a mixture of Chippewa, Norwegian and Swedish, was the recipient of one of the first diversity scholarships offered at the school. As a young woman, Karen found life in college challenging, and after a year, she left Macalester and returned to work. However, after years of work and a search for what she wanted to do with her life, Karen went to Moorhead State College in Moorhead, Minnesota and graduated in 1984 with a teacher's degree in science at the secondary level.

From 1976 - 1985 Karen served as co-founder and administrator at the Circle of Life School at White Earth, Minnesota. From 1986 - 1988 she was a Teacher on Special Assignment for the Minneapolis School District developing science curriculum which was gender fair and racially nonbiased. From 1988 - 1995 she taught middle school students at the Red Lake School. Then, in 1995, she was



Karen Good was a member of the 1968 graduating class. Today, she is the lead teacher at the Alternative Learning Center in Red Lake.

hired as a teacher in the Alternative Learning Center (ALC) where she still works today. She wrote the grant that began the funding of the ALC and serves as its lead teacher. This learning center is where she wants to work until she retires. At one time, she pursued a master's degree in school administration, but realized that her passion was for students and she wanted to remain close to them. Her life keeps her on the road, traveling between the four communities on the Reservation: Little Rock, Red Lake, Ponemah, and Redby.

Karen described herself as an incorrigible young teenager. Incorrigible no longer describes the strik-



Karen has helped over 300 dogs and cats. Learn more at her website: redlakerosie.piczo.com



Love Minus Zero

ing brunette with sparkling brown eyes. The word that comes to mind is compassionate. She loves her students, but extends her love in another avenue these days as well.

In 2004, on the day of the school shooting in the Red Lake School, Karen was driving home from work when she saw a stray dog at a dumpster. She drove by, and then decided that she had driven by this kind of scene too many times. She returned to the dumpster and picked up the dog. This simple act began what would become Red Lake Rosie's Rescue for animals.

While Karen says that the attention focused on the Red Lake School drew attention to her

mission to rescue animals, she has met and worked with hundreds of people to make her animal rescue a reality. She has placed dogs in Wisconsin, Minnesota, and other states as well. Since the day she picked up the dogs at the dumpster Karen has helped over 300 dogs and cats. One of her students helped her create a Web site where you can learn more about her work. Visit www.redlakerosie.piczo.com, see the animals, and read their stories. Karen has countless stories of the animals, just like Rosie, that she has helped and placed in homes.

Karen and her friend, Kevin Wolden, along with five or six volunteers, have cared for these ani-



Karen and her friend, Kevin Wolden, stand beside the rescue van recently donated to their work.

mals, nursing them back to health, and saved them from neglect. "I knew that I wanted to make a difference. I also felt there were three groups that needed help, the children, the elders, and the animals," Karen explains. "These three groups are vulnerable. I feel I am having an impact by teaching the children, and caring for the animals."

Karen's elderly father lives near by, and she checks on him daily. Her life is filled with responsibilities for vulnerable populations and her compassion carries her forward. Her work fills her life with significance and serves as a means for her to share her faith and commitment to making a

difference in the world. Karen and Kevin play guitar and sing songs together like *Love Minus Zero*, *Blowin' in the Wind*, and original songs Kevin has written. Together their guitars and voices unite, creating a powerful, moving testimony to who they are on the inside.

"My students see me doctoring dogs and cats, and if they are interested, they help me in the shelter," Karen says, "I am hoping this will open their hearts and lives to sharing compassion with everyone around them." It is a powerful message. When you subtract zero from love... all you have left is the love.



Karen Good started Red Lake Rosie's Rescue to help provide shelter and find homes for animals.