

Elizabeth Marie Little Elk was a Lakota woman from the Aske Gluwipi Tiyospaye who knew her language and culture. She left the earthly world on September 12, 2023 having reached her staff of life and fulfilled her life calling to serve children and families.

Elizabeth carried two Lakota names in life. The first was, Topaki Najinwin, which she passed on to her granddaughter. She was given a new name, Hoksicekpa Wanahca Win, which translates as pasque flower, and references the grandmother flower, the first flower of the spring, which was one of the first medicines brought by the White Buffalo Calf women.

Elizabeth was born in 1950 and grew up in the country. She had many pets and rode horses every day. She often talked about going into town in a horse drawn wagon. When she started school, she already knew how to read and write. She excelled academically and graduated from Flandreau Indian Boarding School, and eventually earned a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from Southwest State University and her Master's Degree in Social Work from Howard University.

In 1982, Elizabeth started her career in social work where she founded the Rosebud Sioux Tribe's child welfare program and authored the Rosebud Sioux Tribe's first adoption, foster care code and group care codes. She secured the Tribe's control over the federal functions surrounding child welfare, and instituted several existing working groups such as the Indian child welfare programs statewide, and the regular convening of judges from both the state and tribal court systems. While her practice was focused on the Sicangu Wakanyeja, Elizabeth also served on numerous national advisory boards and spoke at national conferences as a stalwart advocate for the children and families who continue to face challenges related to colonial oppression. She occasionally served as a professor of social work at several colleges.

Faith was an important part of Elizabeth's life. She was a both a devout Christian and had woicela (deep faith) in Lakota spirituality. She lived her life in a manner that was guided by the woope (laws) of the Lakota people, and understood what it meant to walk with wowahwala (gentleness and peace) while standing for the rights of children and families.

Elizabeth is preceded in death by her mother Edna Marie Little Elk, hunka son Dakota Hollow Horn Bear, daughter Tate Win Little Elk, and hasani Clinton LaForge.

Elizabeth is survived by her takojas Pejuta Little Elk, Keya Little, Tokala Little Elk, Wase Little Elk, Nettie Little Elk, son Wizipan Little Elk, daughter-in-law Madonna Sitting Bear, and son-in-law Chad Sully, and her many hunka relatives.



In Loving Memory Of

Elizabeth

Feb 16, 1950 ~ Sept 12, 2023

i carry your heart with me
e.e. cummings

i carry your heart with me
(i carry it in my heart)
i am never without it (anywhere i go
you go, my dear; and whatever is done
by only me is your doing, my darling)
i fear no fate
(for you are my fate, my sweet)
i want no world (for beautiful
you are my world, my true)
and it's you are whatever a moon
has always meant and whatever a
sun will always sing is you

here is the deepest secret nobody knows
(here is the root of the root and
the bud of the bud and the sky of
the sky of a tree called life;
which grows higher than the soul
can hope or mind can hide)
and this is the wonder
that's keeping the stars apart

i carry your heart
(i carry it in my heart)

In Celebration of the Life of *Elizabeth Marie Little Elk*

Services

SGU Multipurpose Building in Mission, SD

Wakes: Monday & Tuesday - September 18 & 19, 2023

Funeral: Wednesday - September 20, 2023 @ 11am

Burial: Sacred Heart Cemetery - Upper Cut Meat, SD

Rosary & Prayer Service led by Fr. Jim Lafontaine, S.J.

Traditional Prayers

Pallbearers

Sage Fast Dog

Andrew Sunshine

Cameron Bordeaux

Marvel Mexican

Colby Black Bear

Daniel Stephens

Honorary Bearers

Hunka & Goddaughters: Leona White Hat, Troi Waln & Jodi Archambault; Godson JR White Hat; Sicangu Child & Family Services Board, Staff, Families, Children & Youth; ICWA Office Staff; Casey Family Programs; Tamra Long Warrior; Jessi Whiting; Genevieve DeMent-Osborn; Angelina Callis; Leigh Ecke; Lucille Echohawk; Sherry Red Owl & Family; Thomasine LaPointe; Bernie Waln & Family; Donna DuBray; Lila Kills In Sight; Emily & Mark White Hat; Connie Pourier; Rosella Marshall & Family; Vanessa Red Hawk; Robert Oliver; Brittney Gunhammer; and Woptura Tiospaye

Arrangements By

Holmes Funeral Home ~ Valentine, NE

www.HolmesFH.com