



When tomorrow starts without me and I'm not there to see,
 If the *sun should rise* and find your eyes all
 filled with tears for me.
 I wish so much you wouldn't cry the way you did today.
 While I'm thinking of the many things we didn't get to say,
 I know how much you love me,
 as much as I love you,
 and each time you think of me I know you'll miss me too.
 But when tomorrow starts without me please try to understand,
 that an *Angel* came and called my name
 and took me by the hand.
 She said my place was ready in heaven far above,
 and that I'd have to leave behind
 all those **I DEARLY LOVE.**
 But as I turned and walked away, a tear fell from my eye,
 for all my life I always thought I didn't want to die.
 I had so much to live for, I had so much to do.
 It seemed almost impossible that I was leaving you.
 I thought of all the yesterdays, the good ones and the bad,
 I thought of all the love we shared and all the *fun* we had.
 If I could re-live yesterday,
 I thought just for a while,
 I'd say goodbye and kiss you and maybe see you smile.
 So when tomorrow starts without me, don't think we're far apart,
 For every time you think of me, I'm right here in your **HEART.**



Linda Baker

Born to Philip and Delia (Montclair) Baker

August 8, 1942 ~ Independence, ND

Returned To Creator

September 10, 2022 ~ McKenzie County, ND

Wake Service

Tuesday, September 13, 2022, 5:00 PM

Water Chief Hall ~ Mandaree, North Dakota

Funeral Service

Wednesday, September 14, 2022, 11:00 AM

Water Chief Hall ~ Mandaree, North Dakota

Pallbearers

Adam Johnson	Scott Kleemann
Kasen Johnson	Lloyd Vigen
Lane Standish	Walter De Ville
Robbie Lindley	Tony lu

Senior Pallbearer

Kelly Bradfield

Honorary Pallbearers

Her many students past and present
 Her fellow educators
 Her fellow gamblers
 Her many friends

Final Resting Place

Baker Family Cemetery
 Mandaree, North Dakota

Arrangements By

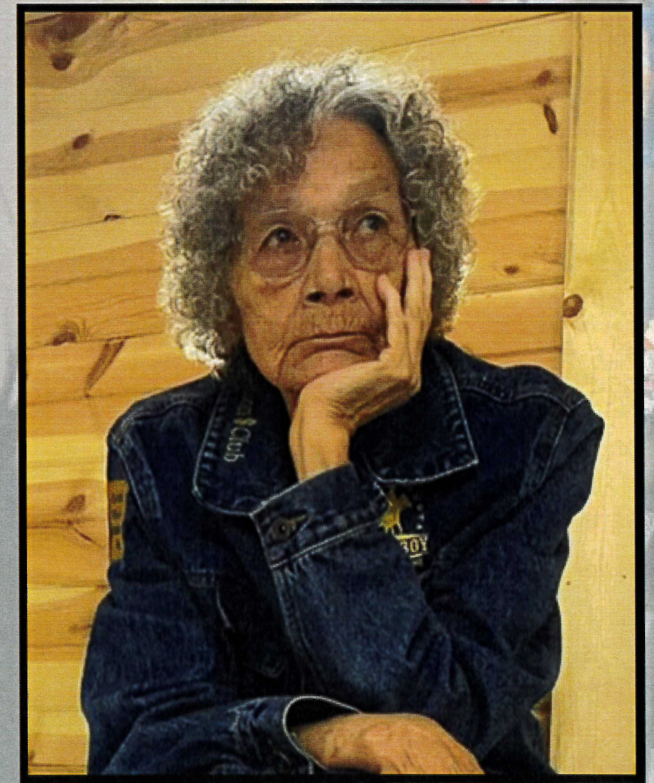
Fulkerson Stevenson Funeral Home
 Watford City, North Dakota

In Loving
 M E M O R Y

Awa-Xxidi Mea

Linda Baker

August 8, 1942 - September 10, 2022



Linda Baker, Awa-Xxidi Mea (Light Woman); was born August 8, 1942 at home near Elbwoods on the Fort Berthold Indian reservation. She attended grade school and high school at boarding schools, since the policy of the federal government at that time was to get Indians off of the reservation and integrate them into white society. While that was the apparent goal, the legacy of this period of colonialism was a fracturing of tribal relations that to this day we are still dealing with. When speaking of her boarding school servitude, Linda was never proud. In fact it was part of what drove her to eventually go to college so that she could teach Indian kids on the reservation, rather than away from their families. She graduated from Flandreau Indian school in 1960, then had a period of time where she worked in clerical roles for the Indian health service and the three affiliated tribes. When she was an Indian health service employee, she lived in Rockville Maryland where her two sisters lived, they also worked for the Indian health service.

In 1980, she decided that she wasn't really going to get anywhere in life unless she got herself an education. She attended college at Dickinson State College in Dickinson, North Dakota, with a major in English and a minor in German. She would talk of someday going to Germany, but she never actually got to make that trip. She graduated in 1984, after having done her student teaching in the spring semester of 1984 at Dickinson's Trinity high school. Teaching English would become her passion for the next 30 years. Her students were always very important to her, and their success and learning was the driving force behind her instruction. It always caused her no end of grief when one of her students passed away. To the extent that she was able to, she attended all of their services until her later years of life when she said that it was just too difficult to continue to attend those services. She loved all of her students, even the bad seeds (they know who they are), and she was always happy for them and proud of them.

She always enjoyed her family, including all of her siblings. She was very close to her brother Lyle, they were only two years apart in age. She had two sisters still living in Maryland so naturally she spent most of her time with her two brothers and their families here on fort Berthold. Since she was the youngest in the family, they referred to her as "baby", and they called her that for the rest of their lives.

When she finished college, she lived in Mandaree for several years until her parents needed help on the ranch, particularly her father. While she wasn't a conventional ranchhand, she never backed away from it either. During the week she would cut hay with the swather, and then her brothers would come and bale it on the weekends. She was also accomplished at fixing fence, and she earned her PhD (post hole digger) at a young age. Linda and her brothers helped on the ranch for many years, until her brother Lyle passed away in 1990, and her father passed away just a few years later. Her brother Milton passed away in 1998. At that point it was just Linda and her mother living on the ranch, and they kept she could not part with them after Philip passed away. These cattle would stay on the ranch until her mother passed away in 2002. Linda and her brothers would joke all the time about how difficult it was to be ranchers and Cowboys. This was especially true when they fed cattle in the winter. One of the things that always vexed her about being a rancher was when other ranchers could not fix fence and take care of their animals. These animals then would invariably end up on the ranch, and she would have to find out who they belonged to or she would have to drive them out. Just a few days before her death, she was a passenger in a pick up moving at high speed across the Prairie, chasing six horses. While the people in the backseat were justifiably terrified, she enjoyed herself and was even laughing. She once had her picture taken while she was cutting hay, by a Mashii-wea photographer from some university in Canada. This picture is hanging on the wall at this university in Canada because it was emblematic of the kind of work Indian women never shied away from. While she was a rancher, she was also named English teacher of the year for the state of North Dakota, and she collaborated with the North Dakota Indian affairs commissioner Cheryl Kulas to write curriculum. She was proud of this, but she would not brag about it. She continued with education throughout her life, eventually earning enough credits for a master's degree in education. While she was then qualified to be an administrator, she had no desire to do so, holding most administrators in a particular sort of disdain. For her, it was all about the students.

In her later years, she was heard to describe her job as

the best kind of job anyone could have. When it was pointed out that she was retired, she would then describe her "job". She would describe a day with her cat Diego, her trips to the casino, then having supper with her cat when they would read together or watch TV together or play. When she was told that wasn't really a job, then she would say that was why it was the best job anyone could ever have. She enjoyed going to pow wows, traveling to Las Vegas (or other destinations), and spending time with her family members. One of the events in her life that she was the most proud of was when she was able to see her father inducted into the North Dakota cowboy Hall of Fame, modern era ranching division.

Linda is survived by her sister Ethel (Sonny), her son Biron (Sheri), and her daughter Trena (Al). She is also survived by four grandchildren; Nickolas, Jordan, Arlin, and Skylar, and three great grandchildren Ezla, Sansa and Hendrik.

