

Ernestine “Margo” Gerdes



Ernestine “Margo” Gerdes, 79, passed away on February 10, 2025 surrounded by her children, grandchildren, and sisters at her home in Denham Springs, Louisiana.

Margo was born on May 10, 1945, in Kiel, Germany, to the late Rudolph Goschl and Walburga Young. She was a loving daughter, sister, wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, friend, and exceptional listener. Margo dedicated her life to her family, instilling love, kindness, and joy to all who knew her.

In 1952, Margo and her mother immigrated to the United States from Vienna, Austria. After being entered into the manifest of immigrants on Ellis Island, they settled in Kansas City, Kansas where she graduated from Wyandotte High School in 1963 where she lettered in debate. In the mid-1970s, Margo moved to Louisiana with her husband and young family where she decided to raise her family and spend the rest of her years, which included among other things memorable beach vacations with her children, step-children, and their families.

Margo’s career as a licensed esthetician allowed her to connect with many people throughout her life, but it was her enterprising spirit that led her to found MG Talent Agency in the 1980s. Through her agency, Margo placed local actors and models in film, television, and print throughout the U.S. Southeast. She was also a key contributor to several Oktoberfest events in the region, where her passion for German culture and community could be celebrated. Over the course of her life, Margo was a lifelong learner and enjoyed many eclectic hobbies including an array of cooking especially her authentic German Cuisine, horseback riding, competitive ballroom dancing, and traveling to her beloved Vienna to visit family and dear friends.

Margo was preceded in death by her husband of 45 years, Dr. Joseph R. Gerdes, and her parents. She is survived by her children, Beth Bryant (Clayton), Erika Fortenberry, and Christopher Gerdes (Irina); her stepchildren Pamela Adamson, John Gerdes (Sandra), Leslie Laviana (Joe), Kristin Hyde (Tone) and the late Joseph Gerdes; her grandchildren, Brennan Achord (Tori), Caroline Cochran, Kate Cochran, Quinn Gerdes, Max Fortenberry, and Emily Fortenberry; her great-grandchildren, Adelynn, Brynlee, and Caroline; and her sisters, Diana Henry and Velina Mais of Overland Park, Kansas. Margo is also survived by extended family members throughout the United States and Europe.

A visitation and celebration of life will be held on Thursday, February 13, 2025, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Seale Funeral Home in Denham Springs. The family would like to extend their heartfelt thanks to Clarity Hospice for the exceptional care they provided to Margo during her hospice journey, and a special thank you to her amazing caregivers Jamie, Wendi, Joyce, Carla, and the entire Clarity staff for their dedication, love, and kindness.