



## Gerda Guarnero-Menard

October 4, 1942 - September 3, 2025

Gerda Guarnero-Menard, age 82, of Hobart, Indiana (formerly of El Paso and Bryan, Texas), passed away peacefully on Wednesday, September 3, 2025.

Born on October 4, 1942, in Mannheim, Germany, to the late Sofie and Emil Gangnus, Gerda quickly learned that life was not only about survival—but about having a laugh, a full plate of food, and a dachshund by your side.

For nearly 40 years, Gerda worked in retail and customer service, proving that patience is not only a virtue but also a devoted skill honed over 25 years at JCPenney, 11 years at Toys “R” Us (RIP Geoffrey the Giraffe), and 8 years with the School City of Hobart, where she was affectionately known as ‘Mama Gerda’ by many students and staff, a testament to the size of her heart.

Gerda enjoyed traveling, long drives in the countryside (which she treated like the German autobahn, much to the terror of her passengers), and opening her home to friends and family. She loved a good meal, a trip to the movies, and dachshunds, though not necessarily in that order. She also had a healthy appetite (like a truck driver), always cleaning her plate and ensuring everyone else around her was fed, whether they were hungry or not.

Known for her wit, Gerda left behind a treasure trove of legendary moments:

- She lovingly called all of Tony’s girlfriends “Tomatoes” (except Gina, who proudly got a pass).
- She once threatened Gio and Angelo’s girlfriends with bodily harm if they dared hurt her grandsons—those poor girls didn’t know German grandmas don’t bluff.

- She never quite understood American football and was convinced the players were naturally that muscular.
- When Tony proudly announced he was studying engineering, she congratulated him on his future career as a train conductor.
- Dancing around at home in her skinny “Stir-Up” pants and huge hair curlers, listening to Elvis Presley songs. She had a thing for Elvis.
- Always singing “Have I Told You Lately that I Love You” by Rod Stewart.
- Finally, before leaving she would always say, “Come here and give me a “Kusse” (German for Kiss).” There was no fighting it, Gerda getting her goodbye kiss was non-negotiable.

Above all, Gerda was a loving wife, a devoted mother, and a fiercely loyal friend. She leaves behind her devoted husband of 25 years, Ron Menard; three children, Tammy Day (Warren), Kelly Sykes (Karin), and Anthony Guarnero (Regina); two brothers, Dieter Gangnus (Hannelore) and the late Emil Gangnus; her sister, Ute Gangnus; eight grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren; three nephews, and one niece, all of whom will miss her sharp humor, her cooking, and her willingness to threaten anyone who dared cross them.

A private Celebration of Life will be held at a later date, where stories, laughter, and possibly speeding tickets in her honor will be shared.

Gerda’s legacy? Drive fast, eat well, protect your family, and never underestimate a German woman with a dachshund and a sense of humor.

Burns Funeral Home & Crematory entrusted with arrangements. [www.BurnsFuneral.com](http://www.BurnsFuneral.com)

# Tribute Wall

DT

“ Tony & family, I am so sorry to hear the news of your loss. Gerda was a special person whose legacy will not be forgotten. I will always remember all the PW games that she attended and demanded our boys get a victory. She was a grandparent to the entire team...

*She will hold a special place in our hearts and will be remembered in our prayers. I look forward to celebrating her life with lots of great memories with your family in the near future. May she rest in peace and may you and the family have strength in this sorrowful time.  
Love - Dave & Janet*

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**Dave Tipold** - September 12, 2025 at 11:19 AM

AA

“ Gerda was one of the sweetest women I've ever known. She was loved by ALL of her students, and was especially loved by all of my family. She was a ray of positivity and sunshine. We loved and looked forward to our visits and conversations with Ron and Gerda. My daughter shared with me that Gerda was right there for her during a most difficult time (the loss of my sister). She always offered her caring heart or helping hand.  
She will be deeply missed by all who knew her. We're holding her friends, family, and loved ones close and in our prayers.  
AnnMarie, Jesse, Christian, and Adrianna



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**AnnMarie Andros-Serrano** - September 11, 2025 at 07:09 PM

MG

“ *Milo Guarnero purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Gerda Guarnero-Menard.*



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**Milo Guarnero** - September 10, 2025 at 02:10 PM

PV

“ *I ALWAYS enjoyed Gerda at the hospital & she always made me laugh! A beautiful lady both in & out! May she fly with the angels now! Hugs to all on your loss of an awesome lady*

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**paula Valentine** - September 10, 2025 at 10:02 AM

BF

*Ron and Family,  
Our sincerest condolences on the loss of sweet Gerda. She was such a beautiful and elegant lady. May knowing others are holding you in thoughts and prayers help buoy you through these difficult days.  
Betty and Jim Franz*

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**Betty Franz** - September 11, 2025 at 03:51 PM