

Gretchen Elizabeth Darby

September 9, 1996 ~ July 7, 2025

I had the privilege of knowing Gretchen through her time at Anthropologie. She was the first to say hello and make me feel welcome. She radiated light and made everyone feel special. My kids loved to visit me at work just so they could see Gretchen. I loved working with her and hearing her stories.

- Sam deVries

My daughter Mia met Gretchen at Anthropologie. Gretchen literally dropped everything, fell to the ground, and spent every second she could spare on her level talking about princesses, Mia's favorite Taylor Swift song, and jewelry. Gretchen was so kind and thoughtful. She will hold a special place in our hearts forever.

- Addison DeVries

Our hearts are so heavy for your family at this hard time Christian and Linda! Our prayers are with you! Sending our love…..

- Rich and Chris Marsee

I had the pleasure of working with Gretchen a few years ago at Hillsdale Elementary School in West Valley. She was a Bright Light and always had a smile on her face. The children adored her! They loved learning reading and art from her. My heart hurts thinking the world has lost a beautiful loving soul. My deepest condolences to her family and loved ones. I will keep you all in my prayers. Gretchen will be truly missed. Heaven gained a Beautiful Angel. ■■■

- Germaine Chamberlain

In loving memory of Ms. Gretchen, Our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family during this difficult time. Rest in peace.

- The Saylor family

We first met Gretchen at Palisades Elementary. She was so cheerful, fun and creative with her bright smile. We then got to know all of the Darby's and have loved them since then. Our hearts are so heavy, we will miss Gretchen greatly, the girl with the bright smile, kindness, and sweet heart ❤■

- Sunny, Remy and Reed

I had the privilege of knowing Gretchen her entire life. She was fun and spunky and brought a light to every room she entered. She was such a talented artist and a true creative genius. I will miss her so much but am so proud to be her cousin and part of her legacy.

- Sarah Potter

I had the privilege of working alongside Gretchen as a fellow teacher, and I will always remember her warmth, kindness, and unwavering dedication to her students. Gretchen brought a unique light to the school community. Her passion for teaching and her gentle spirit left a lasting impact on everyone fortunate enough to know her. Sending my love and condolences!

- Kacey Madsen

Gretchen was and is the brightest light and most angelic person I ever met. I am forever thankful for the things she taught and did for me and my son. She made everything better. I was laughing and smiling every single time I was ever around her. I love you so much Gretchen, rest in peace ■■

- Kendel Kerbs

I was lucky enough to have Gretchen help me with display at Anthropologie for a couple of years. Some of my favorite times at Anthropologie were spent with her laughing in the art room . She was such a magic ,real, funny, genuine person. She went out of her way to make everyone feel special and loved . I am so happy I got to spend part of my life with her in that little art room .

- Sarah Reeder

Gretchen and I grew up as neighbors in Lake Oswego. It was impossible for me not to laugh when she did. I'll always carry the creativity and imagination she brought into my life.

- Alex Dassise

When Gretchen was in high school I had the privilege of having her in my Sunday School class. I so looked forward to seeing her each Sunday as she added a special spark that just didn't seem to be there if she was absent. She was positive and I loved her infectious enthusiasm. After the family moved to Utah I was so happy to hear that her special zest for life continued as she worked at Anththropology and shared her creative talents with her associates and customers at the store. And then most recently to hear how much she was loved as a first grade teacher. Having taught school I can imagine how much those young students loved the energy and creative touch that she

would bring to the classroom each day. May the Darby family know how much they are loved as we share in their loss.

- Patricia Rust

Gretchen was my best friend in elementary school and I was absolutely heartbroken when she moved to Oregon. I have so many wonderful childhood memories of her, she was such a warm, fun, and wonderful friend. I was such a shy little kid, and she took the time to get to know me and take me under her wing and I am so lucky to have grown up with her and love her as a friend. I'm currently living on 96th street on the upper west side, and thinking and praying for Gretchen and her family ■

- Anika VanDenBerghe

Gretchen Loved fiercely and expressed fully . Artistic and creative. Lived life intentionally. Laughed and danced through life with passion and optimism. Shared freely. Created and shared with love and intention. Her childlike nature was evident and unique. She had an affinity for kids and kids adored her and connected to her deeply. Gretchen lived and played in life fully and authentically managed her challenges while simultaneously glittering all those with whom she connecred with the golden touch of her love and gifts of art. In this Marathon of life she tackled every last mile with full effort and determination to the very end. As she returns her soul and full essence to her creator I have gratitude, love and honor for her embedded footprint she left on this school playground for fun , learning, and love, and for the imprint left on the souls of whom she touched. She thought us to live fully, love freely and fiercely as she shined brightly midst the challenges of life navigating the taxing but rich environment for soul growth, and karmic lessons to the very end I am forever grateful for the glitter she left on my soul, and on the souls of those I love. Forever AJK

- Alan Kerbs

Gretchen helped to make my childhood magical. I will always remember the hours of playing American Girl dolls, and countless other games. She always made me smile, and I loved spending time with her and her sisters. I always wanted to be just like her and emulate her. I'm so grateful for those memories and the joy she brought to my childhood. ■■■

- Kaya Winn

Gretchen's smile could light up a room. Her warmth drew people in and made them feel seen and valued. There was a particular gentleness in the way she greeted everyone; her eyes shining with genuine care and interest. Even on days when she was tired or weighed down, that smile remained, as if reminding us all that kindness costs nothing and makes all the difference. Her warmth wasn't just a surface trait; it ran deep, infusing every interaction. She listened with patience and never dismissed a question as silly or a worry as trivial, no matter who it came from. There was a comfort in her presence, a steadiness that made people trust her with their stories, their struggles, and their hopes. Most of all, it was in her work with children that her warmth and desire to help truly shone. Teaching for her was not simply a job, but a calling. It was a way to reach hearts as well as minds. She believed deeply in the potential of every child. No setback was final, no failure shameful; to her, every student was a collection of possibilities waiting to be discovered and nurtured. She celebrated their victories, no matter how small, and worked tirelessly to lift those who struggled. Her pride in their achievements was evident in her eyes and in the happy energy she brought to the classroom. Many students remember her as the teacher who believed in them when it felt like no one else did, who saw not just their grades but their character, their dreams, their effort. Even beyond

lessons, she sought to give her students tools for life, encouraging them to be curious, creative, kind, and resilient. She understood that success was more than academic; it was about growing into someone confident and compassionate. Her faith in her students and in people in general reminded us all of the power of being seen, believed in, and cared for. The world is diminished without her.

- Chris and Christina

My heart is just broken. I am so so sorry. That Gretchen was just a darling. She will be so missed. Sending all my love and more.

- Reilly Carpenter

I own a local store in Salt Lake and while it's impossible to remember every customer, I remember the first day I met Gretchen like it was yesterday. She was so bright, bubbly, friendly, and not to mention fashionable. She has since come into my store many times over the years and I always loved getting to chat with her and catch up. She was an amazing artist and I was even lucky enough to carry some of her beautiful vegetable prints in the shop. I want to offer my sincere condolences to the family. She was truly a bright spot in the community and will be missed dearly.

- Erica Hoggan

I met Gretchen at a family thanksgiving gathering , she was a memorable and lovely person . My deepest condolences to her family and friends .

- Eric Kerbs

Miss Gretchen was the most beautiful, magical, gift of a teacher and human. She loved my daughter so brightly and made her feel so special and cared for. They were like soul mates and I know she made everyone she met feel loved and special. She was so artistic and talented and kind. She was a light moving through this world. I loved her and there's something special about seeing your child so cared for. My deepest deepest condolences. We will never forget Miss Gretchen and she will live in our hearts forever.

- Lindsey McDermott

It is an Incredibly sad day at our house. My kids adored Miss Gretchen. My daughter spent some afternoons with her after school in art class. We will remember her kindness, passion, love for art and creating, the many people she touched and her warm smile. Sending so much love to her family and community. -The Rozehnal Fam

- Angela Rozehnal

When my daughter first met Gretchen she was so out of her comfort zone and nervous. Gretchen got down on my daughter's level and told how she would just LOVE to have her in her class and gave her a big hug. I saw an immediate shift in my little girl. There are people in this world, teachers especially, who can change the course of a child's life. Gretchen was one of those people, and for my daughter, one of those teachers. She instilled confidence and inspired awe and saw the world through the most artistic and loving eye. While she was only a part of our school experience for a short amount of time she'll remain a huge part of our lives forever. The world is a little

darker without her light and we are heartbroken she's gone. We are sending her family so much love during this unthinkably hard time.

- Charlotte Baker

Miss Gretchen was my son's first grade teacher. She was a bright light to him each day at school and he loved being her student! Our hearts are heavy but full of love for Miss Gretchen.

- Chantell Johnston

We're heartbroken to hear about Miss Gretchen's passing… she was a rare and special soul. Mia was in her after school art class and adored spending time with her… making art, talking, and listening to Taylor Swift. Miss Gretchen was incredibly caring, kind, and supportive, and nurtured a love of creativity in Mia that she will carry with her forever. Our hearts are with Miss Gretchen's family and friends, sending love, peace and prayers.

- The Hedmans (Mia, Bo, Leslie, and Hjalmar)

Sending our deepest condolences for the loss of your beautiful daughter. May you be lifted up and carried during this difficult time.

- Dave & Lindsey Randle

Dear Miss Gretchen parents, my name is Ilyana. I was one of her students from WSD!! You have a great daughter who is lucky to have great parents just like you, and we all loved her!! ** We are incredibly sorry for your loss! We have twins, and our son was in Miss Gretchen's class at Weilenmann. He loved her. He would tell us, without hesitation, that Miss Gretchen was his favorite teacher. That said, as a parent of twins, I can't express enough how much influence she had on our daughter. Our daughter looooved her! Even though she is still young, our daughter has already faced her own struggles with mental health. She was not in Miss Gretchen classroom, but she was given permission to sit in Miss Gretchen's class if she was having a hard day, to "spend time with her twin brother". We know she took advantage of that opportunity. She and her twin brother also took her after-school art classes. Ilyana would always beg my husband and me to "go on a date" so that we could ask Miss Gretchen to babysit them. When I heard that Miss Gretchen was no longer teaching at Weilenmann, I reached out to let her know there were many students who were going to miss her. I sent her videos of my daughter roller-skating in the kitchen. Gretchen she told me, "Ilyana is perfect." I will always be grateful that I was able to send Gretchen this message on Instagram before she passed away: I want you to know you're missed. Ilyana was googling 'babysitting apps that have a Miss Gretchen.' It was super cute. She misses you a lot and you made an impact on her life! I truly hope she knew, before she left this world, the difference she made, not just in my children's lives, but in so many others. Especially for those bright, creative, and sometimes spicy little girls who are too often made to feel like they're not enough. Miss Gretchen made them feel like they were enough, like they were everything. With a heavy heart, Mindy Wade

- Whistler, Mindy, Angelo, Ilyana Wade

Gretchen was such a sweet person and a really great friend for me in elementary school, at a time where I really needed a friend. Her joy and humor brought light to everyone who knew her. Let her memory be a reminder that the world can be a better place if we all treat each other with the love and kindness that Gretchen showed to everyone around her

- Luap Dawson

We are heartbroken to hear of Gretchen’s passing. Our families shared many sweet moments—she and her sisters were such a joyful part of our children’s early years. We remember Gretchen's laughter, her kindness, and her creativity. Our prayers are with you.

- The Hurdstroms

Miss Gretchen was angel sent from heaven, I know her her when she worked at WSD and me and her have memories she made me have a passion for Taylor swift and art, when I found out she died I couldn’t believe it and still have not processed it. I hope her entire family is doing well and I’m so sorry

- Ella Rozehnal

Sorry for your losss.

- Tyegh Home

Gretchen was such a fabulous person. I knew her in elementary and middle school as the best artist in my class, and the funniest and most imaginative girl you could think of. She had a rare talent for lighting up a room, for real, and her laugh was infectious. We were in a play together in middle school and she was such a joy to be around, so full of life and goofy and fun. We bonded over being older sisters and joked around nonstop in class together and I thought she was the coolest (and silliest) girl ever. I've thought about her over the years, and have followed some of her art projects online. Sending so much love to her family and sisters.

- Brontë B

I met the wonderful Gretchen Darby at our Anthropologie orientation. She was curious about me and I was curious about her too. I'm very shy and it's hard for me to make friends, but I am so incredibly blessed that Gretch cracked my shell and we soon began a wonderful friendship that took me on a ride that changed me as person. Gretchen literally emitted a light to me that almost no one ever has - she is the most magical soul. I've felt such heaviness in my soul this past week because I cannot fathom her not being here anymore. But I know her light is still all around us and I'll remember her every time I see a butterfly, a dandelion, a beautiful flower or bird. I felt very bonded to Gretch because we both shared similar internal struggles from a young age. We wore stone hard masks, her's a lot happier, friendlier, and brighter than mine. She would sometimes tell me that I was one of the few people she could openly discuss her true struggles with. We both yearned to be truly loved unconditionally and to stop that ever-nagging feeling that we were too much. I remember the countless sleepovers at her grandparents whom I grew to love, running to smith's in our pajamas for snacks, doing the most hilarious pranks, watching every movie and reading, attending her art events, gossiping about boys, laughing for hours nonstop, adventures in Twiggy. Her impeccable and unmatched sense of style, creativity, and her incredible art that just kept getting better and better. She pushed me out of my comfort zone and gave me many of my happiest memories. We planned a trip to backpack around Europe, to see her favorite museums. The regret I feel that we didn't go through with it, that we weren't able to make those memories. Gretchen's brain and its power I could understand - she felt everything so strongly and I could immediately sense if she was hurt. She also showered me and many with such warm love, I've never met anyone who loves that deeply. I haven't seen her in 4 years but I would think about her every few weeks and check in to see how she was doing virtually. I wish I could have been there for her, to tell how much I love her

one last time. I'll always love her and I'll always miss her. I've been battling a disabling disease for a bit that has affected me a lot mentally, but I recently received a message in my soul that I feel is so clearly from her: to keep going, to keep fighting. She's giving me strength. I love her so much and I can't stop the tears drowning my vision. Gretchie, I know you're having so much fun up there, you're probably exploring every inch. You are a super bright light in the universe. I'll love you forever and I can't wait to see you again. Forever yours, Val <3

- Valerie Sanchez

Linda, I was so sorry to hear of Gretchen's passing. My heart breaks for you and the great loss you are enduring. Please know you are in our thoughts and prayers. You and Christian are incredible examples of faith. I know I haven't seen or talked to you in decades, but I love you dearly. I pray that comfort and peace will find you and that you will feel Gretchen with you all along the way. Love, Erin (& Michael) Madsen

- Erin James Madsen

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im so sorry Linda and Christian, I miss her more and more everyday, I hope all is well and I’m sending all my loves and prayers

- Ella rozehnal