



OBITUARY

Wendy Goepel Brooks

June 23, 1939 — March 26, 2024

Wendy Goepel Brooks passed away March 26, 2024, at the age of 84 at her beachside home in Troncones, Mexico, surrounded by family and friends. She was a cancer survivor from 2005, and lived a vibrant 18 years, until succumbing to the disease in peaceful acceptance.

Wendy was a caring mother, grandmother, sister, leader and friend to many across the globe. She left the world as she lived it: on her own terms.

She was born in Hackensack, New Jersey, on June 23, 1939. Wendy's intelligence and hard work enabled her to be the first in her family to attend college, enabled in part by scholarship from the Leopold Schepp Foundation. After two years at Mount Holyoke, Wendy decided to head west to finish bachelor's and master's degrees at UC Berkeley before pursuing further doctoral graduate work at Stanford.

While a graduate student, Wendy was inspired to work with Cesar Chavez and the UFW advocating for migrant workers. Her work with Chavez led to a lasting relationship first with Robert Kennedy and later with Sargent Shriver, working for the U.S. government's War on Poverty. During her work with Chavez, Robert Kennedy introduced her to her husband, Dr. David Brooks, and together they founded Salud, a donations-only clinic for the under-served in California, which operated until Dr. Brooks' retirement in 2023.

Wendy moved to Telluride in 1976 with her three boys in her VW van. She bought a house on Oak Street that was the launch pad for many future endeavors, including writing grants to establish the Telluride and Norwood medical centers, the Telluride Freestyle Ski Team, and the Telluride Science Research Center. Her most lasting legacy is the Telluride Academy, which she founded and directed from 1980 until her retirement in 2007, which continues to offer outdoor education to hundreds of children every year.

Wendy was honored in 2017 as the Citizen of the Year by the Telluride Foundation.

Wendy endeavored to pass on values, which she personified: 1. Every child has infinite potential. 2. Travel cures ignorance and fosters global friendship. 3. Choose your own path, choose your own life.

She is survived by her brothers, Steven and Bruce Goepel, and her sons Demian and Dylan Brooks, and grandchildren Julien, Philip, Amelia, Theo, Elin and Erik. She was preceded in death by her son Darius, sister Carol (Cookie) Graff, and her parents Walter and Louise Goepel.

In memory of Wendy, a scholarship fund has been established at the Telluride Academy.

A celebration of life will take place this summer in Telluride; more details to come.