



## Marguerite "Maggie" Soff

March 18, 1949 - March 29, 2023

Maggie Soff, avid animal lover and mentor to international students, left this world on March 29, 2023, at the age of 74 after a five-year-long battle with cancer. She was the middle child of Charles and Eileen Derler of Ludington, Michigan. After high school this flower child of the sixties travelled by backpack through Europe learning languages and to Mexico where she took art classes at the Universidad de San Francisco in Guadalajara in 1967.

Upon returning from her world travels, she had a long career in the insurance industry as an administrative assistant in Chicago. After moving to Tallahassee, she resumed her formal education as an adult student at Tallahassee Community College in 1999. She received her Associate of Arts from TCC in May 2000, her Bachelor of Arts in English from Florida State University in December 2002 and her Master of Science in English Education, also from FSU, in April 2006.

Her professional career was spent as an Adjunct Professor of English and Developmental Reading at TCC. There she specialized in assisting foreign students from South Korea, Mexico, Cambodia, China, and Benin with their English language skills and with literacy issues for older adults. Following her career with TCC she worked as an Adjunct Professor in Career Development at the Tallahassee campus of Flagler College. Illness finally forced her to give up the career in education that she so dearly loved. Many lives were made

better by their paths having crossed with Maggie's.

She is survived by her husband of 41 years Jeff Soff; her brothers Raymond Derler of Ballwin, Missouri and John Derler of Port Huron, Michigan, as well as many cousins in and from California.

The family will be receiving guests for a visitation at Bevis Funeral Home on Friday, April 7, 2023 from 12:00 - 2:00 pm. A Celebration of Life will immediately follow at 2:00 pm.

In lieu of flowers, it is requested that memorial contributions be made to St. Francis Wildlife Association of Quincy, Florida.

Breanna Green of Bevis Funeral Home (850-385-2193 or [www.bevisfh.com](http://www.bevisfh.com)) is assisting the family with their arrangements.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

APR 7. 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM (ET)

Bevis Funeral Home & Crematory  
200 John Knox Rd  
Tallahassee, FL 32303  
(850) 385-2193

## Celebration of Life

APR 7. 2:00 PM (ET)

Bevis Funeral Home & Crematory  
200 John Knox Rd  
Tallahassee, FL 32303  
(850) 385-2193

# Tribute Wall



“ 1 file added to the album Service Footage



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**Bevis Funeral Home** - April 07, 2023 at 04:29 PM

RL

*Wonderful tribute to my longest lifetime friend. I know she is pain free and enjoying heaven and seeing her sweet mom and dad and all the other people who have gone ahead of her. Praying God's comfort for Jeff and John and Ray who feel this loss of my sweet friend. So thankful for this lovely video as I could not attend.*  
*Rita Hathaway Leigh*

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**Rita Leigh** - April 08, 2023 at 11:57 PM

DS

“ Jeff and I were 1st Lt., Infantry, 101 st Airborne, in Vietnam and formed a friendship. Eventually, my wife and I formed a great friendship with Maggie and Jeff. I lost my son at age 38 to cancer, so I know I have an idea of potent circumstances both Maggie and Jeff had to endure before she died.

Maggie was a delight, caring, vivacious, loving of others, could leave one laughing, and become the dreaded “Grammar Rammer” if Jeff or I dared to garble a word. For example, she drilled me, in her numerous ways, because I spelt gator as “gater” once. Maggie loved life and Jeff and was dedicated to helping others.

I think/feel that King Authur, in the musical “Camelot” expressed who Maggie was best. Following being defeated by Mordred, and Camelot destroyed, Arthur noticed a young boy in the surrounding woods and called him to him. The boy wanted to fight for the already lost cause of Camelot and the round table. Arthur bid him to travel throughout England, spreading the idea of Camelot, “ In the black seas of night, my boy, some people sparkle, Run boy and be a sparkle in life.” I am off one the exact wording, but this concept has always been powerful to me. Maggie was a Sparkle.

Dr. Tom Sims

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Dr. Thomas Sims - April 07, 2023 at 10:51 AM

KS

“ Maggie was a sweetheart. She never met a stranger. Everyone was significant to her. My best memory is making crowns for each other and allowing Jeff and my Thomas to be in our royal presence. She really was a hoot and fun to be around. I have and will continue to miss her smile and antics.

Kathy Sims

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Kathy Sims - April 06, 2023 at 05:56 PM

PL

“Maggie, I was so blessed to have you as my friend and sister in law. I laughed at all the “silly” times we had, crying watching the movie *Lassie Come Home*, only to bust out laughing looking at each other’s tear soaked faces. Singing songs even when we didn’t remember all the words, just filling it in with “Somethin, somethin”. You are truly one of the most wonderful people I’ve ever had in my life. Loving to read all the people that have the same blessing. My brother married one of the most genuine loving person he could have ever met. Wait for me at the Rainbow Bridge. Both of us love the animals the same so I know where to look for you. Forever in my heart and soul, I love you. God blessed us all with you.

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**Pat Latronica** - April 06, 2023 at 03:42 PM

SA

“Maggie was my mentor, inspiration, and more than a friend. She taught me so much about reading comprehension. She loved teaching and finding new and innovative ways to connect with students. Maggie was not only a wonderful teaching, but also more than a close friend. She and Jeff invited me and Janiya into their home for food, fun, fellowship, and comfort. I was able to rely on them when in need. I am truly grateful, and I will truly miss her shining personality, care and concern, and indomitable spirit. I loved her dearly.



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**Shekitta Allen** - April 06, 2023 at 11:06 AM

SH

“ I met Maggie when she lived in Lansing, probably around 1979 or 1980. We worked for the same insurance company. A very kind and bubbly person. I remember all the handmade cards and tiny books she made. And, of course, her love of critters of all kinds. Maggie was such a positive influence on so many people over the years. I know she had a big impact on my life. She will be missed.

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**Sue Hayes** - April 06, 2023 at 09:52 AM

BR

“ Maggie was truly a creative, intellectual, and kind soul. I will always treasure the times we had together at Tallahassee Community College, sharing reading strategies we implement in our classes and Maggie sharing her latest craft. I still have a beautiful card with a puppet built inside of it that Maggie designed and crafted and gave to me. She certainly touched many lives. My deepest condolences to her family.

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**Brenda Reid** - April 04, 2023 at 05:43 PM

NC

“ I was very fortunate to meet Maggie while she was working in the Learning Commons at TCC, and I was a new teacher. She helped me learn how to help engage students in the reading process, and her kindness and sense of humor were such a comfort. I keep several treasures she made for me on my desk, daily reminders of her thoughtfulness. I wish her and her family peace and comfort - her sweet spirit lives on.

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**Niki Costantino** - April 04, 2023 at 12:10 PM

HW

“ *When I think of Maggie I think of her cards. Those beautifully handmade uniquely detailed creations she made with the recipient in mind. She thought months about which design to use for Christmas cards each year, starting often at the beginning of Summer.*

*Maggie came to my house each first Saturday of the month armed with a bag full of stamps, colored pens and markers. For many years we both worked on our projects while eating cookies and chatting.*

*My daughter Jasmijn and I saved all of Maggie's cards received over time, we treasure them.*

*Not only did she color cards, she brought color to the lives of all around her.*

*May she rest in peace.*

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**HannekebHoxworth-Pieket Weeserik** - April 04, 2023 at 10:19 AM

KM

“ *Maggie was my dear friend of 40 years. We spent many weekends biking at St. Marks and enjoying the outdoors. We both adored all kinds of animals and would do anything to protect them.*

*My dear little friend, I will miss you very much. I will always have fond memories of the fun we used to have. May the good Lord watch over you, and may you rest in peace.*

*Kay McVay*

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**Kay McVay** - April 02, 2023 at 05:55 PM

KC

“ She was my true “Mama Maggie!” She took me into her home when I was at the worst point in my life. Her husband, “Papa Jeff,” is the most supportive husband I know. He allowed Mama Maggie to raise me in their home and treat me like her own blood daughter. One of the many things I appreciate about Mama Maggie was the fact that she didn’t pamper me. She gave me tough love because she wanted me to grow up and be able to face the hard challenges of life. She even taught me how to speak English, me, coming from a French-speaking country and not knowing hardly any English at all. I could write a book about Mama Maggie. There isn’t sufficient space on this obituary page for me to express everything that this woman did for me. I WILL MISS HER. May her sweet and loving soul rest in peace. And may her good deeds live after her. Kemi Chognika

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**Kemi Chognika** - April 02, 2023 at 03:48 PM

EA

*Mama Maggie, I met you through Kemi. I am a living witness (and beneficiary) of the enormous positive impact you had on her. And for that, I am grateful.*

*You run the race, you made an impact, and left lasting impressions. May your warm spirit live on. Rest in peace.*

*Etor*

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**Etor Agudu** - April 04, 2023 at 01:53 PM

CP

“ When Jeff & Maggie moved to the Chicago area, I had the privilege of meeting Maggie at Traveler's Insurance where we both worked. I will always remember walking into her department at lunch time one day and Maggie peeking up at me over a book she was reading - by Charles Dickens. I was floored because I was a member of the Chicago Dickens Fellowship. Needless to say, we were instant friends. At lunch time during the working week, we would take long walks together into the nearby woods and enjoyed exploring the natural world. Maggie was a truly gifted creative spirit who sewed a number of keepsakes for me once I had children. These creations reside in a cedar chest in our home. We stayed in touch once Jeff & Maggie moved to Florida, and I loved seeing photos of her creative creations, the creatures in their backyard, and her true metamorphosis into a teacher later in life. She was an inspiration to all of us and will be missed beyond measure. Jeff, you were her lighthouse, her shelter, and her partner in mischief and magic. Bless you for providing your love to Maggie that enabled her to flourish and bring joy to so many of us who knew and loved her.

*Christine and Jim Patterson & family  
Naperville, Illinois*

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**Christine Patterson** - April 02, 2023 at 11:26 AM

DA

“ I heard this sad news only yesterday that our Dear Mama Maggie has transitioned into the other world. We call her Mama Maggie because of her kind and loving motherly heart. She and Papa Jeff opened their home to countless strangers who needed a place to stay and grow. She is irreplaceable. May her sweet soul rest in perfect peace. I called and talked with Papa Jeff yesterday. Uncle Joe.

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**Dr. Joseph Amanfu** - April 01, 2023 at 12:13 PM

MS

“Maggie welcomed my wife, daughter, and I with open arms. She was instantly family. She was intelligent, kind, and quick-witted. She brought a light to those she met, and we count ourselves lucky to have met her.

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**Michael Swanberg** - March 31, 2023 at 02:04 PM

DZ

“Losing Maggie is heartbreaking. We were sisters by choice. No one had a bigger heart. She never met a stranger. She will be missed so much. We send our love and comforting prayers to Jeff and her family. She will live in our memories and hearts.

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**Deborah Zagroba** - March 30, 2023 at 09:55 PM