



## Sylvia F. Garza

January 10, 1923 - April 18, 2024

Sylvia F. Garza, born January 10, 1923, in St. John's, Newfoundland, to Haiman and Alberta Brown, died on Thursday, April 18, in Houston, Texas, at the grand old age of 101.

Sylvia was preceded in death by her beloved husband, Rufus M. Garza; her parents, Haiman and Alberta Brown; her brother Ralph Brown; her sister, Lillian Brown; her brother, Max Brown, and her sister-in-law, Sadie Brown, who were partners in many adventures.

She is survived by her daughter Carol Garza and her son-in-law James Thompson, her daughter Barbara Zsenyuk and her husband John, and her daughter Joan Stedman. She is also survived by her grandchildren Jimmy Podhorsky, his wife Claudia, and family, granddaughter Sherrie O'Hearn, and her great-granddaughter Savannah O'Hearn. Finally, she is survived by Eddie, Bobby, and Gary, her nephews, and their families in St. Johns.

Sylvia was part of the Greatest Generation. After she graduated from a music conservatory, one of her first jobs was at Pepperrell Air Force Base in St. John's. She lived through the Great Depression and WWII. She met and

married Rufus and lived in Michigan, Alabama, and Florida together before being stationed in Germany. Sylvia and Rufus danced to Big Band music all throughout Europe, went to the World's Fair in Brussels, Belgium, and introduced all three of their daughters to the cultural sights and delights of France and Germany, including Berchtesgaden beer halls and the Champagne region of France. Life was not without perils for the girls, though, as they were made to wear matching dresses in Paris and lederhosen in Germany. The sounds of Benny Goodman and Tommy Dorsey followed them to Cheyenne, Wyoming. Sylvia worked for Boeing in Cheyenne for a brief time. Still, she spent most of her time teaching her youngest how to ice skate and knit, watching both of her oldest girls graduate from high school, attending University of Wyoming football games in Laramie, and watching too many rodeos and parades to recall while still dancing to the music of Glenn Miller, Duke Ellington, and Count Basie.

Those great sounds followed them to Houston, Texas, where Sylvia lived the rest of her life. She made countless trips to Las Vegas, meeting her "Newfie" family there to gamble away their hard-earned coins, embarked on many voyages and cruises with all her Houston pals, some of them lifelong friends of her husbands, and added line dancing to country music to her repertoire. Almost once a month, Sylvia and Rufus would wear formal or cocktail wear and join all their friends at dances at the Shriners or other venues in Houston. She loved the buffet at the Galvez Hotel in Galveston; you would find her there on countless Sundays. Sylvia did not really slow down until she reached 100. Her loving family will miss her forever, and all the memories she helped create will be cherished.

Donations may be made in her honor to the charitable organization of your choice.



# Tribute Wall

CT

“ *Caren Thomas lit a candle I never had the privilege of meeting Sylvia but only knew her through her daughter, Joan! And what a wonderful daughter she raised! In reading about her life, it is clear she had a spark about her and her adventures are admirable. I send condolences to her family in their loss.*  
*Caren Thomas*



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**Caren Thomas** - April 22, 2024 at 12:00 AM

WE

“ *Wendy lit a candle Dear Joan, Barbara and Carol.*  
*I am so very sorry for the loss of your mother. My thoughts and prayers are with you all. Loved and will miss sweet Sylvia. She will never be forgotten.*  
*Love Wendy xo.*



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**Wendy** - April 22, 2024 at 12:00 AM

GB

“ *Whenever I was in the presence of my Aunt Sylvia she was happy, cheerful and had the most wonderful smile and laugh. My late wife Wanda was really fond of my Aunt Sylvia. She lived a full and fulfilling life. May she rest in peace.*  
*Love, Gary Brown*

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**Gary Brown** - April 21, 2024 at 06:31 PM

BZ

“ ”

**Barbi Zsenyuk** - April 21, 2024 at 08:02 AM

JU

“ *Julie lit a candle Carol, Barbara and Joan, So sorry for your loss She had such a full life with Uncle Bubba. Will miss her friendly smile. Please take comfort in knowing that she is in a better place. And please let mom or I know if you need anything. Love,  
Aunt Dorothy and Julie Lehmann*



**Julie** - April 21, 2024 at 12:00 AM

DR

“ *Deborah Rawson lit a candle Honored to have had the chance to meet this lovely lady. May God keep you in his Grace and may you have eternal peace.*



**Deborah Rawson** - April 21, 2024 at 12:00 AM

EB

“ *Our deepest condolences.  
Ed and Mary Brown*

**ED BROWN** - April 20, 2024 at 07:57 PM

BB

“ Carol, Joan and Barb: So sorry for the loss of your dear Mom. After reading her obituary I realized there was a lot of her life that I did not know about. She sure lived life to the fullest. She will be missed.  
Bob and Liz

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**Bob Brown** - April 20, 2024 at 06:29 PM

SG

“ So sorry for the family's loss. I know you will miss her. She was a gracious lady who was stylishly dress and cute as a button. At my 80 birthday she wore a red sequined hat and just looked great. Many times she joined our group of ladies for dinner and I loved to hear her stories. May God bless her, give her big hugs, and enjoy her company in Heaven. God bless all her family. Sandy Gordon

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**Sandra Gordon** - April 20, 2024 at 03:57 PM

JO

“ Mom, may you forever walk in beauty, above, below and all around you.

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**Joan** - April 20, 2024 at 03:38 PM

RS

“ RIP Sylvia and enjoy dancing again with Rufus in heaven❤️❤️

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**Russ Senti** - April 20, 2024 at 02:55 PM

NB

“ *Sad to hear about Aunt Sylvia’s passing. I grew up hearing so much about her and how glamorous she was from my nan and pop - Max and Sadie. I spent a few months in Houston about a decade ago and it was my first time being away from home for an extended time - in hindsight I realize how comforting it was knowing she was there and seeing her for suppers. I hope you find solace in coming together and reminiscing over the coming months.*

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**Nicole Brown** - April 20, 2024 at 09:10 AM