



Dr. Kay Hale

April 3, 1943 - August 15, 2025

"It seemed like a good idea at the time."

Dr. Kay Hale peacefully departed this world on the evening of August 15th in Austin, Texas, with her loved ones by her side. The colorful tapestry of her life-woven with love, lessons, and adventure-remains an inspiration to all who knew her.

Born Glenda Kay Clifton on April 3, 1943, in Corpus Christi, Texas, to Oneida Kay and Harry Glen Clifton, she spent her formative years in Commerce and Dallas, Texas. She is preceded in death by her parents, as well as Captain Tom Dorsett and Dr. James Hale, fathers to her beloved children.

Kay is survived by her three children, Tami Kay Dorsett (Robert) Summers of Laredo, Anthony Clifton "Tony" (Jeanne) Dorsett of Kingsland, and Angie Hale (Bradley) Harrison of Austin. She also leaves behind five grandchildren-Brittney Dorsett Mabry (Chris), Carroll E. Summers IV (Celina), Bailey Hill Summers, Elvis James Harrison, and Scout Rose Harrison-and one great-grandson, Marshall Mabry.

Continuing to celebrate Kay's memory are her two sisters, Martha Jean Simms of McKinney and Dixie Ann Watson of Costa Rica. She will also be deeply missed by her nieces, nephews, extended family, and the countless cherished friends who adored her beauty, style, wit, and wise perspectives on life.

Time spent with Kay-whether you knew her as Kay, Aunt Kay, or Mama K-was always intriguing. Kay trusted her heart and followed where it led. Love took her from Dallas to Kilgore to Commerce, then brought her to Laredo, Texas, where she raised her growing family. She excelled as a Counselor at Laredo College (then Laredo Junior College), often challenging students with her trademark question: "What don't you want to be?"-a nudge that guided many toward fulfilling paths. While at Laredo College, she met her fun-loving partner of many years, Dr. Carlos Valle.

After earning her PhD at Texas A&M Commerce (formerly East Texas State University), she moved to Austin, where she became a Director with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. Never afraid of reinvention, she later embraced new adventures in Pagosa Springs, Colorado-skiing, hiking, snowmobiling, selling time-shares, and even working as a "sorter" at a dispensary. She delighted in telling people she planned to open a therapy practice one day and call it, "Sux to be you."

Kay's life was as colorful as her spirit. She loved speeding around in her Mustang convertible or red Mini Cooper, traveling to New York City to see Jersey Boys on Broadway, and taking her RV on the open road. A fan of The Golden Girls, she often quoted Sophia's wisdom: "People waste their time pondering whether a glass is half empty or half full. Me, I drink whatever's in the glass." That philosophy captured her lighthearted, practical approach to life perfectly.

She was proudest of her children and extended family, always quick to brag on them and eager to celebrate their successes. To many of her children's friends, she was the "fun mom"-the one who always had time to listen, encourage, and offer a warm hug. She was also the proud mom of two mischievous doggies, Nate and Stumpy (now both passed), who loved climbing trees, "driving" the car, and-on occasion-biting and terrorizing people, much to her amusement and her children's dismay. Her bold spirit shone not only in her humor and energy but also in her style -she often sported bright pink or blue hair that matched her playful outlook on life.

Her legacy of love, laughter, and adventure will live on in all who carry her memory.

The family would like to extend their heartfelt gratitude to Adam Juarez and his team at Live Oak Estates, as well as the staff at SoCo Village, for their compassionate care and support.

A celebration of life will be held on Saturday, September 27, 2025, at 10 AM at The Cathedral, located at 2403 E. 16th in Austin. All are welcome. In honor of Kay's vibrant spirit, we invite you to wear bright colors that reflect her joy and energy.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

SEP 27. 10:00 AM (CT)

The Cathedral
2403 E. 16th
Austin, TX 78702

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Tribute Wall



“ Kay was a beautiful soul and a great friend and colleague at the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. May she rest in peace.

Charles Cook - August 20, 2025 at 09:46 PM



I can't remember exactly when I met Kay. Late 1980's - early 1990's sometime? She was working for the THECB and I was a video producer working for STARLink via Austin Community College. She was always a joy to work with even though she disliked being on-camera as a host for the live events. She always carried herself with poise and grace. After I left STARLink we still met occasionally at the original Kirby Lane Cafe for migas and pancakes. She talked about retiring, buying a catamaran and sailing around the world. I'm sure she's nicely making way.

Dan Caldwell

Dan Caldwell - August 22, 2025 at 06:26 AM