



Erland D. Stephens

February 14, 1932 - November 20, 2025

Erland D. Stephens was a man of many “Erlandisms.” Sometimes hand-crafted adage, sometimes unique technique or approach, one “Erlandism” that his family knew well was the adage “No Bells & Whistles.” On Thursday, November 20, 2025, Erland passed peacefully at home, true to these words and wishes.

Born on Valentine’s Day, 1932, in West Texas, Erland’s long life included a 5-year stint in the Coast Guard, 37 years working for the FAA, initially as an air traffic controller, and an impressively long retirement, including a return to college for a BS Degree in the natural sciences.

Erland’s passion for the natural world was matched by his sense of adventure, ultimately landing him in Alaska, where he and his family homesteaded 40 acres in the Goldstream Valley. Erland aptly named this homestead Frustration Ranch. The 40-acres pivoted to a greenhouse and atrium garden when the family moved to Anchorage. After 35 years in Alaska, he spent the next 30 years on his 2-acre Florida “homestead” where he propagated the native species ~ also with a bit of frustration and a lot of ingenuity.

In Florida he amused his three grandsons, charmed the neighbors, and served for 15 years as a devoted Master Gardener Volunteer with the University of Florida’s Cooperative Extension Services. He also served for a

number of years as an election poll worker, greeting voters as they arrived.

Erland was an endless storyteller and he created a legacy of memories, ensuring that his friends and family will tell his story for years to come.

He leaves behind his wife Esther, with whom he shared nearly 65 years of marriage, his daughters (Krista & Kathryn), grandsons (Michael, Jeffrey, Brett), and his younger brother John & his family.

In keeping with his wishes, Erland will be cremated and inurned with military honors at Sarasota National Cemetery.

To celebrate his life and to honor his passion for gardening, donations can be made to the University of Florida's Extension Services Master Gardener Program (<https://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/mastergardener/get-involved/how-to-donate/>) or to Selby Botanical Gardens (<https://selby.org/support/donate-today/>) a destination for plant research, conservation, and environmental education.

Tribute Wall

KS

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Kathryn Stephens - November 26, 2025 at 08:47 PM

KS

When Grandpa's assignment is babysitting.

Kathryn Stephens - November 26, 2025 at 08:48 PM

CA

“ 3 files added to the tribute wall



Christy Andacht - November 26, 2025 at 03:02 PM

KS

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Kathryn Stephens - November 25, 2025 at 11:39 AM

KS

“ 2 files added to the tribute wall



Kathryn Stephens - November 25, 2025 at 11:35 AM

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“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Kathryn Stephens - November 25, 2025 at 11:28 AM

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“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Kathryn Stephens - November 25, 2025 at 11:26 AM

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“ 2 files added to the tribute wall



Kathryn Stephens - November 25, 2025 at 11:18 AM

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“ 7 files added to the tribute wall



Kathryn Stephens - November 25, 2025 at 11:16 AM