



Barbara Ellen Gagnon

January 12, 1930 - March 14, 2015

Barbara Ellen Gagnon passed to be with her Lord on March 14, 2015 following a year long illness. Her husband was at her side. She resided in Naples, FL and was 85 years old.

Barbara was born on January 12, 1930 and grew up in West Haven, CT, the daughter of John Henry Allen Sr. and Mary Lane Allen. She is survived by her husband, William L. Gagnon, Jr., a sister, Mary Hogan of North Haven, CT and several nieces and nephews. She was predeceased by two brothers, John Henry Allen Jr. of Southbury, CT and Russell Allen of West Haven, CT.

Barbara and Bill celebrated their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary on July 22, 2014 and the ten years prior to that were very special as well. They previously resided in Westbury, NY, Deep River, CT and Madison, CT before moving to Naples, FL in 2003. They shared a loving and devoted marriage enjoying so many things they had in common including travel, music, dining, dancing, as well as attending concerts and shows.

Barbara attended public schools and graduated from St. Mary's High School in New Haven. She earned her Bachelor of Arts degree from Southern Connecticut State University where she also completed her graduate studies. Barbara began her thirty-seven year teaching career at the Forest Street School in West Haven, the same school she attended as a child. She spent

over thirty years teaching second and third grades in the Clinton (CT) Public Schools, first at the Abraham Pierson School and later at the Lewin G. Joel Elementary School. She retired from teaching in 1989, the year she married Bill. While they resided in Long Island she was a much requested substitute teacher at the St. Bridget Elementary School in Westbury and was offered a new teaching position that was created for her. The offer came one week before she learned that they would be moving back to Connecticut. She was a devoted teacher and loved working with children. She wrote and received grants that provided books for her classroom and she served on a State of Connecticut committee for elementary education. She also taught creative writing and worked with non-English speaking students in several summer programs. Helping children privately and without fanfare was not uncommon for Barbara. She always enjoyed telling the young teachers of today that when she began her profession, elementary classrooms numbering students in the thirties were very common and teachers taught all of the subjects including music, art, and physical education. As an example of her dedication, one of her former elementary students, who is now a minister, sent her a tape of a Sunday sermon describing what Barbara had done for him that changed his entire life's focus.

Barbara's had a passion to cook and bake. She truly enjoyed preparing a dinner party and her guests can attest to her success. In Naples she will always be known for her "Cocktails and Dessert" parties.

Barbara was instrumental in the founding of the Clinton Federation of Teachers (CFT). She served as the CFT President for nine years. During that time many advancements were made in contract language beneficial to both teachers and students. Additionally, many teachers, known only to themselves and Barbara, are grateful for her willingness to represent them and resolve critical employment issues. It was a time when she developed close and lasting relationships with many of her fellow CFT board members in grades K-

12.

Barbara also served as President of the Town of Clinton Board of Visiting Nurses.

In 1976 Barbara established the Bogdan D. Melnik Theater Award at Clinton's The Morgan School in memory of her late first husband who enjoyed attending the music and theater programs at the school. The endowed award has been presented annually for thirty-eight years to two underclassmen who have exemplified skill and leadership, one for on-stage and one for off-stage work. Several winners of this award have pursued a career in the arts following high school.

Music played an important part of Barbara's life. As a high school and college student she sang solo performances for many civic, community and church organizations in the greater West Haven area. She sang in her high school and college choral groups. She sang soprano for over twenty years with the Choral Club of Clinton and Cappella Cantorum, including Cappella's performance of the Mozart "Requiem" in Carnegie Hall. She sang with the North Shore Chorus in Long Island. While living in Naples she was a member of the choirs of the St. John the Evangelist, Blessed Pope John XXIII and St. Elizabeth Seton Churches.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated on Saturday, March 21, at 11:00 a.m. at St. John the Evangelist R.C. Church, Naples, FL. Burial will follow at the church's Memorial Garden.

In recognition of the exceptional staff who cared for Barbara, memorial contributions may be made in lieu of flowers to Avow Hospice of Naples, 1095 Whippoorwill Lane, Naples, FL 34105.

Arrangements are being handled by Shikany's Bonita Funeral Home.

Cemetery Details

St. John the Evangelist Memorial Garden

625 111th Ave. No.
Naples, FL 34108

Previous Events

Mass of Christian Burial

MAR 21. 11:00 AM (ET)

St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church
625 111th Avenue North
Naples, FL 34108

Tribute Wall

DS

“ Mrs. Gagnon was that bright spot in the difficult life of a third grader in Clinton, Connecticut. My painful shyness hindered me until the talent show when Mrs. Gagnon encouraged me to use my mistakes in a failed magic trick as humor (and the people did laugh) and she literally brought me out of my shyness. I have been in ministry for over 40 years and have spoken to thousands of people and I owe a significant part of that to her belief in me and the friendship we developed through the years. Amazing person! DENNIS SHEARER, OCALA, FLORIDA

Dennis Shearer - November 17, 2023 at 04:42 PM



“ Barbara Ellen Gagnon

October 09, 2023 at 03:40 AM



“ Pink Tribute Spray was purchased for the family of Barbara Ellen Gagnon.



March 19, 2015 at 10:44 AM



“ Gracious Lavender Basket was purchased for the family of Barbara Ellen Gagnon.



March 19, 2015 at 10:35 AM

JC

“ Bill,

Please accept my condolences on Barbara's death. The two of you had a beautiful relationship based on lives that impacted positively hundreds if not thousands of people at a time in their lives when a positive impact has a lasting result. I remember my Clinton years positively for many reasons but chief among them are my interactions with Barbara in her teacher leadership role and with you as you brightened The Morgan School stage and the lives of the students who performed their.

I know that this is a tough time for you but I hope that the thoughts and prayers of your friends and colleagues is of some comfort.

Once again, my condolences.

Joe Cirasuolo

Joe Cirasuolo - March 18, 2015 at 07:12 PM

PE

“ Bill,

Very sorry to hear about Barbara. Carol and I always enjoyed the visits in Florida. My thoughts are with you at this difficult time. Bud Vece

patty esposito - March 17, 2015 at 05:41 PM