



## Janet Lucinda Rich Garner

May 17, 1924 - January 21, 2019

Janet Lucinda Rich Garner died peacefully Monday, January 21, 2019 at the Pines of Sarasota in Sarasota, FL, at the age of 94.

She was born May 17, 1924, in Akron, Ohio, to Albert Laslett Rich and Helen Mae Hoch Rich. She began piano lessons at a young age and accompanied her father, a gifted church singer. Her parents moved to Maryville, TN, to be near family, and she graduated from Maryville High School in 1942. She worked at the Alcoa Aluminum Plant for two years during WWII. She graduated from Maryville College in 1948 earning a BA in Music Education. She earned a MA in Music Education from Appalachian State University in Boone, NC, in 1966.

She met Bob Garner at Maryville College. He was a football and basketball star athlete, and she was a quiet and friendly music major on their small campus. They were married in 1948 on the day they graduated. They moved to Sweetwater, TN, for Bob's first teaching position. Bob earned his MS at the University of Tennessee while teaching and coaching at the Tennessee Military Institute and helping Janet raise their two small children. Janet taught piano lessons, and served as the band director at Sweetwater High School. In 1956 they moved along with Janet's parents to Sarasota, drawn by better teaching positions, culture, and beaches. For 30 years Janet taught chorus, general music, and organ at Sarasota Junior High, as well as elementary

general music at Fruitville, and other schools.

Janet and Bob were life-long members of the First Presbyterian Church of Sarasota. Over the years Janet sang alto in the choir, directed a youth choir, and many more activities. During retirement, she and Bob traveled to Israel with ministers and friends from the church.

Janet enjoyed the cultural offerings of Sarasota. Her children had access to piano lessons, sports, museums, and more. Since she and Bob were avid readers, weekly trips to the library were a family tradition. She also cared for and supported her parents who lived with the Janet's family or nearby.

Janet loved her friends – those she made through church and Bob's coaching friends, as well as those she met through her own interests. She participated in ADK and DKG – international honor societies of women educators, the Sarasota Chapter of the Embroidery Guild of America, the Sarasota Retired Educators Association, and the DAR. She loved sewing, embroidery, tatting, and cross-stitch, and developed an interest in genealogy to research her and Bob's ancestors back to the 1600s in early America.

She and Bob were devoted to Maryville College and its alumni, and returned to the campus for reunions and homecoming activities for 50 years. They loved history and traveling. They made annual summer trips to TN and NC to visit friends and family, as well as trips throughout the United States, and Europe.

Janet was preceded in death by her parents, and husband of 51 years, Robert Haines Garner, Jr. (1999). She is survived by her daughter, Lucinda Jane Garner Balistreri (Cindy) and husband Lenny Balistreri of Sarasota, and son, Robert Rich Garner (Rob) and wife Jeannie Braswell Garner of Tallahassee, FL. Grandchildren include Mark Gregory Lippert and wife Amy Chiaverini

(Seattle, WA), Matthew Ellis Garner (Clermont, FL), Robert Paul Lippert (Mountain View, CA), and Jackson Bryan Garner (Winter Park, FL).

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the First Presbyterian Church, 2050 Oak Street, Sarasota, FL 34237 or the Pines of Sarasota Foundation, 1501 N. Orange Ave., Sarasota, FL 34236. A service will be privately held by the family at a later date. Condolences may be expressed to the family online at [www.toalebrothers.com/obituaries](http://www.toalebrothers.com/obituaries).