



## Martha Anderson Parnell

December 29, 1919 - November 17, 2010

### MARTHA ANDERSON PARNELL

Martha Parnell left this world Wednesday, November 17, 2010. She passed peacefully at her home in Altamonte Springs, after a long battle with breast cancer.

Smart, talented, beautiful and, as her children will tell you, "the strongest woman we've ever known". She showed all who knew her, through example, that anything is possible through courage, intelligence, discipline and perseverance.

Martha Rebecca Anderson was born December 29, 1919 in Doerun, Georgia. The Anderson Family moved to Sarasota in the early 1920s and later to Fort Myers.

Martha graduated from Fort Myers High School in 1937. (See letter and photo below.)

Yes, Martha made her dreams a reality. She attended Florida State College for Women in Tallahassee, Florida 1937-39. She received a Bachelor of Science degree from Rollins College, Winter Park in 1977. She also took graduate courses at Crummer of Rollins, Winter Park in 1978.

In the 1950s, Martha, a divorced mother of two little girls, found it difficult to support her family in Fort Myers on secretary's wages. But she had a plan. She applied for a secretarial job in the Pentagon and was hired. So she packed the girls into her old Buick and moved to the Washington, D.C. area where she worked for about year, saving her money. On returning to Fort Myers, she started her own business, Glamour Glads, Inc., a wholesale cut-flower brokerage. To grow her business, Martha borrowed money and sent her girls to camp each summer, while she hit the road to take orders from florists throughout the southern states. She supplemented her income by substitute teaching physical education at Fort Myers High School. There, she met and married the football coach, Troy Parnell. They had two boys before their divorce in the early 1960s.

Always active and athletic, Martha was an avid swimmer and water-skier, and taught her children to do both. She played tennis and golf, and enjoyed scuba-diving. She continued to swim into her 70's, and competed in the Senior Olympics.

Martha sold real estate in Ft Myers, Altamonte Springs and Winter Park. She was a published author, a student of Christian Science, a member of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, and Daughters of the American Revolution.

Martha is survived by her sister, Marvine Hawkins of Tampa; and her four children, Sandy Parnell Johnson and husband Jim of Fort Myers; Deva Genie

Parnell and husband Hugh White of Saint Augustine; Clay Parnell and wife Kristen of Longwood; and Jeff Parnell and wife Lisa of Fort Myers. Surviving grandchildren include: Dawn Geraci, Scott Johnson, Mandy Stillwagon and husband Dale, Leslie Monteiro and husband Ben, Jackson Parnell, Gabriel Parnell, Cole Parnell, Will Parnell, Connor Parnell and Blake Parnell. Great-grandchildren include: Mallory Geraci, BailyGeraci, Lindsey Monteiro, Madison, Monteiro, Christopher Gandy and wife Emily, and Kelly Stillwagon.

Martha is predeceased by her parents, Henry Clifford Anderson and Weldon Brown Anderson; her brothers Clifford Anderson and John Brown Anderson; and her granddaughter, Wendi Gayle Johnson.

Special thanks to Martha's niece, JoAnn Hawkins, who cared for her with amazing love, tenderness and respect during the final month of her life.

A memorial service and celebration will be held with the family to honor the passionate life of this amazing woman at 3 p.m. on Saturday, November 20, at DeGusipe Funeral Home, 9001 N Orlando Ave, Maitland, FL 32751.

Arrangements entrusted to DeGusipe Funeral Home & Crematory 9001 N. Orlando Ave. Maitland Florida 32751. phone 407-695-2273. [www.degusipefuneralhome.com](http://www.degusipefuneralhome.com)

# Tribute Wall



“ We will always remember the many holiday and birthday celebrations we shared with Martha. She was always good for a lively conversation and had so many interests. We will miss her. May she rest in Peace!###imported-begin##Gene & Janet Pauley###imported-end##

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November 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ What an amazing and interesting woman. Altho i never knew her well, i was always interested in what she had to say. She told the most wonderful stories and we had a few toasts at holiday time when i would come to fl to visit my daughter, grandchildren and son-in-law. I WILL NOT FORGET HER POLE BEANS OR HER KEY-LIME PIE. M ay you rest in peace Martha###imported-begin##sharon/larry hoffman###imported-end##

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November 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM