



# Ann Blanton Edwards

SEP 13, 1935 - JUL 30, 2023



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# **Ann Blanton Edwards**

SEP 13, 1935 - JUL 30, 2023

**A**nn Blanton Edwards passed away peacefully at home on July 30, 2023.

Ann was born in Thomasville, Georgia on September 13, 1935. Her family moved to Lake Wales, Florida in 1945 and soon after to Lakeland, where she lived her remaining years. She was preceded in death by her parents, Joe and Alberta Blanton, her two brothers, Bo Blanton and Eddie Blanton, her sister, Kay Wentworth, and her husband, Ward Edwards.

She is survived by her daughter, Kim Wilbanks (Jim) of Lakeland, and son, Andy Edwards (Kristie) of Niceville, Florida, five grandchildren; Jay Wilbanks (Gracyn) of Nashville, Katelyn Foote (Tim) of Birmingham, Andrew Edwards of Orlando, Cecelia and Sophia Edwards of Niceville and one great-grandchild, Leo Wilbanks of Nashville.

Ann graduated from Lakeland High School in 1953, the first class to graduate from the new campus on the Bartow Highway. She attended the University of Louisville for one year in the dental hygienist program but transferred to Florida State University where she graduated with a degree in nursing.

Ann started her career as a nurse at the Polk County Health Department. Ten years later, she became a nursing instructor at Polk Junior College in Winter Haven, Florida. In the late 1970s, she purchased the Lakeland Farmers Market and operated it for a number of years.

After moving to Lone Palm on her 40th birthday, she became an avid golfer. She was a member of Lone Palm Golf Club, where she was Member of the Year in 2003, Polk County Women's Golf Association, and West Coast Women's Golf Association. She enjoyed going on golf trips with her friends, particularly a foursome known as "the Boomers".



## Obituary

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Ann loved to travel — ski trips, golf trips, cruises — in the US or abroad. She enjoyed traveling with friends, with her husband, and with family. A highlight of each year was a family trip with the children and grandchildren. More recently, she enjoyed weekly dinners with family and friends she has known for many years.

She also loved any event where she could dress up in costume; from special events at Lone Palm, to royal wedding watching parties to our family's annual Christmas photo.

Ann was a philanthropist, supporting St. Joseph's School, Lakeland Christian School, Florida Southern College School of Nursing, The Salvation Army, Florida Baptist Children's Home/One More Child, Lakeland Regional Health, and Bonnet Springs Park. Ann also served on the Board of Trustees of Florida Southern College. In 2021, she and her late husband, Ward, were awarded Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters Degrees from Florida Southern College.

A celebration of life service will be held on September 23, at 10:00 a.m. with visitation at 9:00 a.m.

In lieu of flowers, please consider making a donation to FBCH/OMC, Lakeland Christian School, Florida Southern College School of Nursing, The Salvation Army, or Bonnet Springs Park in Ann's honor.



# Events

**Ann Blanton Edwards**

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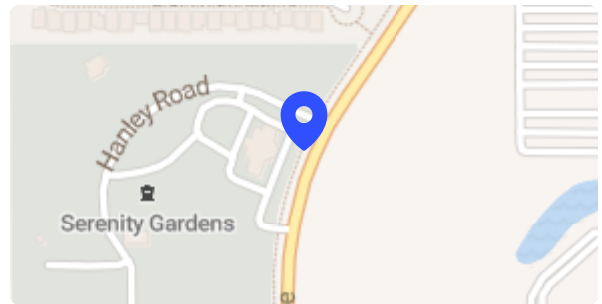
## Receive Friends

 **Saturday**, September 23, 2023

 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM ET


 **Gentry-Morrison Funeral Homes - Serenity Gardens Chapel**

3350 Mall Hill Drive, Lakeland FL 33810



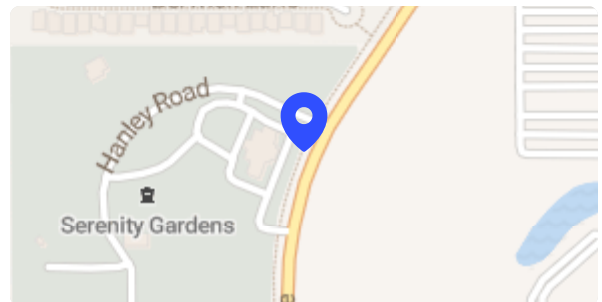
## Celebration of Life Service

 **Saturday**, September 23, 2023

 10:00 AM ET

 **Gentry-Morrison Funeral Homes - Serenity Gardens Chapel**

3350 Mall Hill Drive, Lakeland FL 33810





# Tribute Wall

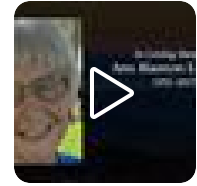
**Ann Blanton Edwards**

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**Gentry-Morrison Funeral Homes** shared a **Video**.

September 18 at 8:06 AM



**Gentry-Morrison Funeral Homes** shared a **Webcast Video**.

September 22 at 4:05 AM



**Rachel Wilbanks Brown** posted:

Ann Blanton Edwards was an amazing giver just like her Dad, Joe Blanton. She loved her family and friends like no other. She has left a legacy with all her giving to so many charities that she loved and supported. I always admired her leadership skills and loved how she filled a room with love, laughter and good conversation. She will be missed by many but she would not want us to be sad. I will always remember the last time I was with her and the last words she said to me and many others... "Happy, happy, happy!"

September 4 at 2:54 AM



**Phyllis Rains** posted:

Ann was a very positive person in life, I loved her smile and sense of humor and she left some great memories to those who shared her life.. She will be missed by many...

September 3 at 5:19 AM



**Dale E Collins** posted:

She was a very sweet woman

September 2 at 8:49 PM



**Christi** posted:

What an amazing woman! We all loved Ann and appreciated her humor, love and generosity to help so many.

September 2 at 6:49 PM



# Media

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## **Memories only last if you share them**

Join us in honoring Ann by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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