



Irene Marie Eller

July 26, 1930 - March 10, 2026

Remembering a true lady

At 96 years old, Irene Marie (Higginbotham) Eller, known simply as Gana Ree to her family, passed from this life during the early morning hours on 3/10/24.

Born on 7/26/1930, the St. Augustine native remained her in hometown throughout her life, during which she served as a homemaker for a family she was immensely proud of. Despite being a small-town girl at heart, she deeply cherished opportunities to travel our nation and the surrounding sea with friends and her husband Charles Ray Eller who she married in 1946.

Following a long life full of changes few of us young folk can appreciate, our Gana Ree is reunited in heaven with parents Elijah Higginbotham and Mary (Crews) Higginbotham, three siblings, and many lifelong friends.

Surviving Gana Ree are her four daughters, Sherry Stoppelbein, Susan Eller Roboch, Francie Temple, and Pamela Ray Taylor. By way of her daughters, she is also survived by over 100 grand, great grand, and great-great grandchildren, all of whom she knew by name.

In lieu of flowers, our Gana Ree encourages those with love in their hearts for her to explore new places, eat well, and to build a family to love as much as she did hers.

St. Johns Family Funeral Home and Crematory will be hosting a celebration of life service for Gana Ree on March 20th at 11:00 AM. Friends and family are encouraged to come together to celebrate a lady who so many of us owe our lives to. Those who cannot make it and/or are desirous to reconnect with

Gana Ree in her physical absence are encouraged to plant camellias in their gardens and to settle in with her favorite movie, *Gone with the Wind*.

Previous Events

A Celebration of Life

MAR **20**. 11:00 AM (ET)

ST JOHNS FAMILY FUNERAL HOME
385 State Rd 207
St. Augustine, FL 32084

Tribute Wall



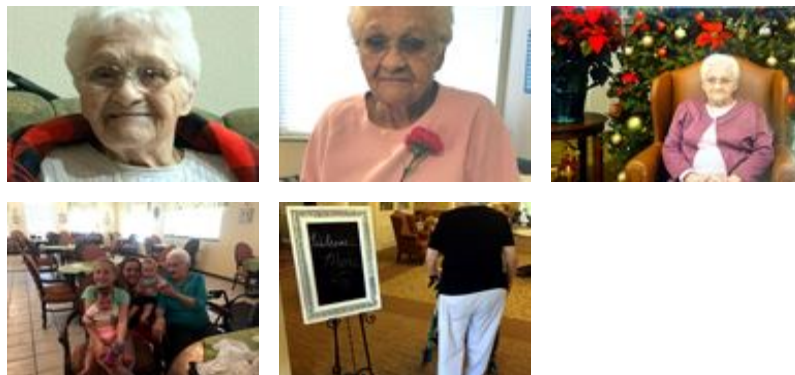
“ *St. Johns Family Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Irene Marie Eller*



St. Johns Family Funeral Home - March 18 at 02:04 PM



“ *66 files added to the album Life Tributes*



St. Johns Family Funeral Home - March 18 at 01:38 PM

CK

“ It is truly incomprehensible to imagine a world without GanaRee. For every single milestone of my life, she wasn't just a witness; she was my partner in crime. From the day I got my driver's permit to the day I left for college, and from my wedding day to the years she spent helping me raise my own children, she was the steady, fiery heart of our family.

But she was so much more than a grandmother to me. She was my friend.

Anyone who knew GanaRee knew she was a straight shooter. She possessed a legendary, fiery personality and a filter that was... well, let's just say it was non-existent. If a thought entered her head, it was coming out of her mouth. Sometimes that was exactly what you needed to hear—a burst of encouragement or a hilarious observation—and sometimes, it was a truth that stung just enough to make you grow. You never had to wonder where you stood with her, and in a world of pretension, her honesty was a gift.

She was the first person I called with news and the first person I turned to for help. To have had her for so long is a blessing I can't quite put into words, yet her absence feels like a physical weight. We will miss the fire, the laughter, and the way she made every big life moment feel complete just by being there.

GanaRee, thank you for the truth, the help, and the lifetime of friendship. I will be listening for your voice in the quiet moments—and probably the loud ones too.

Carol Kazounis - March 17 at 07:32 PM

MS

“ Our condolences and prayers to the families and friends of Ms Marie. Her, Mr Chuck and children were good friends of mine way back when (still are, we just don't cross paths any more). Hopefully all of you "children are doing well 🙏". Take care guys.

Neil and Pam Stevens

M.Neil Stevens - March 17 at 11:34 AM