



George Donald Gann Sr.

JUN 11, 1931 - DEC 11, 2020



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George Donald (Don) Gann Sr., high school sweetheart and husband of Joyce Walker Gann for nearly 70 years, passed away peacefully on December 11 at the family home in Redland, Florida. Don was the son of George Henry Gann Jr. and South Dade pioneer Hedwig Rutzke Gann. Don was born on June 11, 1931 in south Dade County. He attended Edison High, and later Homestead High where he met Joyce, graduating in 1949. The two married in 1950 and raised a family in Perrine and then Redland, where they built a cutting-edge energy efficient home without air conditioning designed by Alfred Browning Parker.

Upon graduation from high school, Don teamed up with Joyce's father, Herman Walker and his Big W Farms, growing tomatoes for 30 years. He was a modifier and inventor of farm machinery, a skill in which he took great pride. Early conservationists, Don and Joyce began restoring the native forest on their property in the 1960s. They began attending Native Plant Workshop to better understand the nature around them. Ultimately Don retired from farming, joining the family enterprise Gann's Native Tropical Greenery, one of the first native plant businesses in Florida. In the 1980s Don helped establish the Florida Native Plant Society and its Dade Chapter, The Institute for Regional Conservation, and the Florida Association of Native Nurseries. He was a long-time member of the Miami-Dade County Environmentally Endangered Land Program's Land Acquisition Selection Committee. He and Joyce jointly received numerous awards and acknowledgements from these and other organizations. Miami-Dade County proclaimed February 11, 2019, as "Don and Joyce Gann Day" in recognition of their many years of service and dedication to the protection and preservation of native plants and natural areas.

Don was a member of the Florida National Guard for a decade and served his community as a long-time leader in both the Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts. He was a Red Cross Canoe Instructor and took his family and scout groups on dozens of canoe camping trips, many 50 miles long or more. He valued his family and being a father above all, but was good to all people, no matter their gender, race, economic background, and personal or cultural differences. To encourage his



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children to read, and to spend more time outdoors and with each other, no TV was allowed in the family home for many years. He was an adventurer, traveling much of the Caribbean and Latin America for work and pleasure, hiking and camping in Florida and beyond, and whitewater canoeing in the Appalachians. After retirement, Don and Joyce drove from Redland to Alaska and back in their camper van, visiting friends and family along the way.

He is pre-deceased by his parents, and his only true love, Joyce. He is survived by his sister Kathryn Hunter; three children, Marilyn Baggett (Bill), Debbie West (A.J.), George Gann (Egdomilia); four grandchildren, Justin West, Jeff Baggett (Evan), Leif Gann-Matzen, Maya Gann; one great grandson Will Baggett; plus, countless other family members and friends.

A Celebration of Life will be held at a future date. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Florida Native Plant Society's Conservation Grants –

<https://forms.fnps.org/civCRM/contribute/transact?reset=1&id=32>.



Memories only last if you share them

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



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