



Geraldine May Selden-Janik

August 21, 1936 - March 12, 2025

From her first day on this earth, August 21, 1936, until her last, March 12, 2025, Geraldine “Gerry” Selden-Janik (née Jeffus) lived her life with a daily commitment to those things she valued most: family; music; learning; God, church and faith.

Born in LaJolla, California, after her first year her family moved to Stratton, Nebraska, where she spent most of her girlhood, the only girl among four brothers. When her father re-enlisted in the Navy during WWII (he had served in WW1 on the USN Arizona), Gerry and her family moved for the duration of the war to San Francisco, where he was stationed, returning after the war to Stratton.

Her love of music and reading blossomed early. At age 10 she began playing organ and piano for a local church, an early start to a life-long dedication. She read every book in the Stratton public library, and graduated Salutatorian of her high school. She read voraciously all her life, with a special love for history and biographies of great people.

Though offered a full music scholarship to the University of Colorado, she chose to attend nursing school in Fort Worth in 1955; as a nurse, she believed she could be of greater help to people in need. In her first year of school she met Dr. Larry Selden, and they married in January, 1956.

Their first child, Eddie, was born in December, 1956. Soon after, Larry was inducted into the Air Force and posted to the Greenville Air Force base in Mississippi. Their second son, Rush, was born there in June, 1958.

After Larry's discharge, the couple sought a small Texas town where Larry could practice family medicine and Gerry could pursue another of her passions: raising children and shaping a family. They chose Rockdale, Texas, moving there in March, 1959. They bought a small house, and in December, 1960, her third son, Kevin, was born.

They joined the First Presbyterian Church, where for 24 years Gerry would play the organ and lead the choir; in 1978 she was elected an Elder in the church, only the second woman so honored.

Gerry quickly became active in community activities, especially the town's music and reading clubs. In 1960 she was recruited by the Rockdale band director to provide yearly piano accompaniment for dozens of junior high and high school students competing in UIL solo competitions. This became a treasured activity for Gerry, and she continued, without pay, for 24 years in Rockdale. This was but one of the many ways by which she combined her musical talent with her gift for helping children and young adults.

A fourth son, Keith Lemoyne, Gerry's last child, was born in October, 1963, but lived only two days. Early the next year, Gerry and family moved to a larger, older house, lacking heating or cooling, which Gerry would throw her creative energies into remodeling for the next 20 years.

In early 1985, Gerry left Rockdale for Georgetown, TX. She spent the next eight years taking a few classes at Southwestern University, playing the organ for churches in the area, and helping her son Kevin manage a chain of businesses throughout central Texas.

Gerry met Gilbert Janik in 1992, and they married in November of that year, moving to Gilbert's cattle ranch near New Baden, TX. She would spend the rest of her life there, making a home, helping with ranch chores, and pursuing her music career.

She returned to Southwestern University, completing a long-deferred dream of a degree in music and organ performance in 1995, at the age of 59.

Soon after marrying Gilbert, Gerry was chosen to be the organist at the First United Methodist Church in Bryan, TX. She was also hired as piano

accompanist for the Bryan Independent School District, playing for school choirs, soloists and concerts. She was also a very active member of the Texas Organist Guild. Until her retirement in 2015, Gerry was blessed to make music six and seven days a week, for a church she loved and for young music students.

After retirement, Gerry spent her days helping Gilbert with ranch work, tending to her flower gardens, reading, completing New York Times crossword puzzles, and – her happiest moments – hosting her beloved sons, their families, and her grandchildren.

Gerry chose to be buried at the IOOF Cemetery in Rockdale, next to her son Keith Lemoyne.

Gerry's friends and loved ones are invited to a memorial service at 1 p.m., Saturday, March 29, 2025, at the First Presbyterian Church in Rockdale, Texas, where Gerry's joyful life will be celebrated in spoken word and song. As pallbearers, Gerry chose all her grandchildren because, in her words, "they are beloved by me."

Honorary pallbearers are: Mr. Bill Cooke; Mr. Jack Drake; Mr. Gary Griesbach; Dr. John Weed; Dr. Bill Grusendorf; and Mr. Philip Leshikar. All are long and dear friends of Gerry.

Gerry is survived by her husband, Gilbert Janik; by her brother, Eugene Jeffus; by her three sons: Lawrence Edward Selden, Jr., Rush Alton Selden and wife, Lisa Ann, John Kevin Selden and wife, Kimberly Jones; and seven grandchildren: Leslie Ann Selden Henderson (David), Laura Elizabeth Selden, John Keith Selden (Sarai), Rush Parks Selden, Tilly Wells Selden, Cora May Selden, and Ella Sivia Selden; as well as four step-grandchildren.

In 2004, Gerry's sons established an endowment in honor of their mother with the Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services, whose mission was very dear to Gerry's heart. Her family invites gifts in memory of Gerry Selden-Janik be sent to Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services. Checks payable to "PCHAS" may be sent to PCHAS, P.O. Box 140888, Austin, TX 78714-9981.

Online donations may be made at pchas.org/get-involved/give. Please note "Selden-Janik Endowment" with either gift option.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

MAR **29**. 1:00 PM (CT)

First Presbyterian Church
1600 Alcoa Ave
Rockdale, TX 76567

Tribute Wall

BM

“ *Barbara McKee lit a candle in memory of Geraldine Selden-Janik*



Barbara McKee - March 28, 2025 at 09:30 PM

BM

“ *Barbara & Jan McKee lit a candle in memory of Geraldine Selden-Janik*



Barbara & Jan McKee - March 28, 2025 at 09:29 PM

ME

“ *So sorry for your the loss of such a sweet lady! She always brightened up a room with her smile. Our condolences are with you! Love, Mike and Michelle Van Essen*

Michelle Van Essen - March 26, 2025 at 08:44 PM



“ *Magnificent Life Spray was purchased for the family of Geraldine May Selden-Janik.*



March 20, 2025 at 12:04 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Geraldine May Selden-Janik.

March 20, 2025 at 12:04 PM