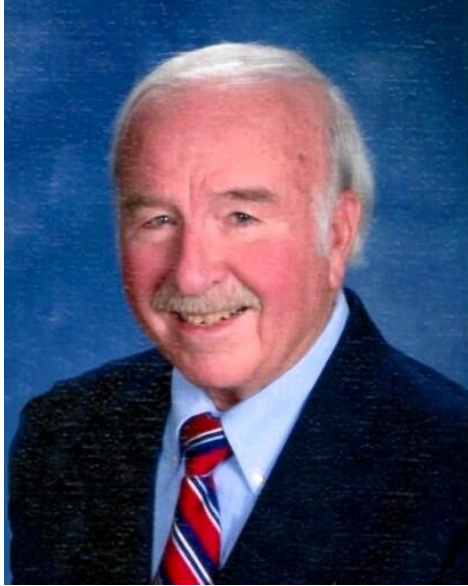


George Ray Gardner, Jr.

December 3, 1940 — June 19, 2024

Crofton



George Ray Gardner, Jr. passed away on June 19, 2024, following a long illness. Born in Panama City, FL on December 3, 1940 to George Ray Gardner and Agnes Holbrook Gardner, George was the oldest of 8 children. From the very beginning, George loved the water - fishing, swimming and boating in Panama City, working on a tugboat through his college years, sailing in Mobile Bay in Alabama, Cayuga Lake in New York, Elephant Butte Lake in New Mexico and the Chesapeake Bay.

After graduating from Auburn University, he joined the Peace Corps, working with credit unions in Valparaiso, Chile. This experience led to a lifetime dedication to international development, working with such organizations as Project Hope and the Agency for International Development. He earned a doctorate in Development Sociology from Cornell

University, then served as Associate Director of International Programs at New Mexico State University.

In 1980, he joined the Agency for International Development, working with Africa and Near East programs. For nearly 40 years, he travelled through Yemen, Egypt and 20 countries in sub-Saharan Africa, evaluating, advising and supporting programs to improve agriculture development and food security.

He loved his work and he loved the people he met. He shared that passion by being the founding force for an international outreach program at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Crofton.

George was the “go to” guy for questions about how to care for trees and flowers, how to fix a broken bike, how to fix almost anything. He especially liked fishing with his son in the Chesapeake and was delighted to see his grandchildren inherit his love for the water and nature.

He was predeceased by his parents, George and Agnes Gardner, by his sister Ann, and by two brothers, Thomas and Frank. He is survived by his wife of 45 years, Nancy Gallant, his sons, Stephen Gardner and Michael Gardner and daughter-in-law Linda Gardner, by grandchildren Alice, Henry, Colin and Hazel, his sister Rose Gardner Flowers (Robert), brothers John David, J. Marshall (Joan), Patrick (Kathleen) and sisters-in-law Jenese Gardner, Louise Gardner, Sheila Aitken, Mary Ellen Obreiter (William), Kathleen Baril, Virginia Toland (Daniel), Julie Veilleux (James), 21 nieces and nephews and many great nieces and nephews.

The world is a better place because he was here and we are grateful.

Visiting hours will be July 1 from 6-8 at Beall Funeral Home in Bowie. A Mass of Christian Burial will be at 11 a.m. on July 2 at St Elizabeth Ann Seton in Crofton, with interment at Lakemont Memorial Gardens in Davidsonville.

To order [memorial trees](#) or send flowers to the family in memory of George Ray Gardner, Jr., please visit our [flower store](#).