

Ruth Binnicker Swann Eckerd

Ruth Binnicker Swann Eckerd, of Highlands, passed away Tuesday, July 18, 2006, in the company of her family at her home on Brushy Face Mountain.

She was born in Tampa, Fla., in 1922, the daughter of banker Richard J. Binnicker and Lois Binnicker. She was also preceded in death by her husband Jack M. Eckerd. Together they founded Eckerd Youth Alternatives, a not-for-profit organization serving at-risk youth based in Clearwater, Fla.

She attended Florida State University, returned to Tampa following graduation and married James Terrell Swann Jr. The couple lived in Tampa and had three children, Kathy Swann Brooks, James Terrell Swann III and Terrell Swann Clark.

She was an active member of the Junior League of Tampa and served on it's board. She was crowned Tampa's Queen Gasparilla XXXIII in 1941, with Mr. Swann serving as King. She remained Queen through WWII. Following Mr. Swann's death in 1955, she married Jack M. Eckerd in 1957, and made a home for their family in Clearwater, Fla. She had two children with Mr. Eckerd, Nancy Eckerd Hart and Kennedy Richard Eckerd. The family included seven children, with two from Mr. Eckerd's previous marriage, Rosemary Lassiter and William Kennedy Eckerd.

In 1980, the Eckerds built a summer home on Brushy Face Mountain and became involved in many community affairs in Highlands.

Much of Mrs. Eckerd's time was spent caring for others through various charitable activities. She was a volunteer in the Meals on Wheels program and spent time mentoring children with reading difficulties. She served on the Board of Directors of the Eckerd Family Foundation and Eckerd Youth Alternatives. Her passion for helping children inspired all who worked with her. She also served on the boards of Ruth Eckerd Hall and the Morton Plant Mease Hospital Foundation.

She was a member of the congregation of Peace Memorial Church in Clearwater and Highlands Methodist Church.

Mrs. Eckerd is survived by seven children and their spouses, 17 grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren.

Those wishing to make a memorial donation may consider the following Clearwater, Fla., based organizations: Community Pride Child Care, Eckerd Youth Alternatives Scholarship Fund and Ruth Eckerd Hall Educational Fund. A memorial service was held Saturday, July 22, at 11 a.m., at Highlands United Methodist Church in Highlands. Additional arrangements are pending. Those with inquiries may call (727) 461-1524.

Robert Gordon Hensley

Robert Gordon Hensley, 36, of Franklin, passed away on Thursday, July 20, 2006.

A native of Macon County, he was the son of Steve Gordon Hensley and Roberta Mason Hensley. He was preceded in death by a brother, Mitchell Ray Hensley.

He was a rock mason and was a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

In addition to his parents, he is survived by one sister, Athena Hensley Cobb of Franklin; one niece, Pandora Rene Cobb; and one nephew, Anthony T. Mosley VI.

A memorial service will be held Saturday, July 29, at 2 p.m., in the Chapel of Macon Funeral Home. Rev. Alton Dendy will officiate.

Burial will be in the Iotla Baptist Church Cemetery.

The family will receive friends Saturday, from 1 to 2 p.m., prior to the service at the funeral home. Online condolences are available by visiting www.maconfuneralhome.com.

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