



Marion Alderman Thomas

December 3, 1931 - August 31, 2025

Marion Alderman Thomas passed early morning, August 31, 2025, at her home in Ocala, Florida after the Florida Gators won their season opening football game. She was attended by her beloved nurse and three of her nieces who held one last tailgate party in her honor resplendent with Gator memorabilia while listening to the game on the radio. Symbolic of the way she lived her life, she was surrounded by those she loved and those who loved her, evidenced also by the streams of visitors and phone calls she received preceding her passing. She was 93 years old.

Marion was preceded in death by her beloved husband, Marion Moultrie “Moot” Thomas, Jr. and her loving sisters Evelyn Alderman, Helen Hayes, and Velma Sowerby, extended family, and many friends, as well as numerous pet cats.

She is survived by her only brother, Arthur Alderman of Steinhatchee, Florida, Arthur’s daughters, Ashley, Amy, and Alison (Jaime); her sister, Helen Hayes’, children, Grace and Mike (Sharon), and her sister Velma Sowerby’s sons, David (Cindy), Roy, and Van (Amy), and her sister-in-law Marion Thomas Givens’ children Harrison (Maureen) and Anne (Andrew). She is also survived by numerous grand, great grand, and great great grand nieces and nephews. Marion’s two “Baby Boys” (cats), Ralphie and Rascal also survive.

Marion’s friend circle goes back over 70 years. As a young teacher, she was

only a few years older than her students. She and her students created lifelong bonds that remained strong until her passing.

Her extensive friend circle includes her former students, her bridge club friends, golf associates, travel companions, bible study groups, fellow country club members, Gator Alumni Association members, and many neighbors.

Nathaniel "Nate" Hamilton, Marion's gardener extraordinaire, worked with her for over 50 years on her beautiful gardens. She and Nate loved to walk the grounds of her home and discuss all of the plants and wildlife they both love.

Judy Hawthorne was Marion's House Manager for more than 25 years.

Susan Placanico was Marion's trusted hair stylist for more than 12 years.

Moreen Cherry was Marion's nurse for the past year; the two of them formed a special friendship that transcends professional care.

Marion Alderman Thomas was born in Winter Haven, Florida December 3, 1931 to mother, Grace Hardee Alderman and father, Arthur Vasco Alderman. She was raised in Tampa, Florida where she attended Hillsborough High School. She went on to gain her Bachelor of Science (1953) and Master of Science (1960) degrees in Physical Education and Health from the University of Florida. In both high school and college, she was a majorette. She taught baton twirling at the YMCA before going to college where she became Head Majorette. Marion was a darling of the University of Florida Gators as she graced magazine covers. Numerous articles were written about her throughout her life. She was known for her intelligence, humor, baton skills and athleticism; and she was compared to movie stars, notably her beautiful legs!

Summing up the life that is Marion Alderman Thomas is impossible. The highlight reel includes her love of teaching and coaching, her love for her husband, her love of golf, her love for the Florida Gators, her love of nature, wildlife and the water, and her love for all of her family and friends. She was a dynamic force of life on this earth and was as active as a teenager until the final month of her life.

Marion taught Physical Education and Health in Orlando and at the University of South Florida in Tampa, before moving to Ocala. She taught Physical Education and Health at Ocala High School where she was also the girls' basketball coach. Notably, she coached two back-to-back undefeated seasons and won two state championships. The Alderman Family was in the citrus business from the 1940's through the 1960's. Marion, along with her brother, managed the orange, grapefruit and tangerine groves.

Marion married Marion "Moot" Thomas in 1961 and they resided in Marion County. They married during a golf tournament in Valdosta, Georgia. Moot lovingly called her "Coach" throughout their life together. They were married for 46 years until his death in 2007. With Moot began Marion's love of golf. They lived at Golden Hills for many years. Marion was the Golden Hills Golf and Turf champion in 1976, 1978, 1980, 1982, and 1984. She won numerous club championships throughout the south. She was president of the Lady's Golf Association and was a Founding member of the Country Club of Ocala. Marion and Moot shared a love for the North Carolina mountains and had a house in Linville. They also shared a love of the ocean and their home in Ormond Beach. Together, Marion and Moot have left a legacy of charitable donations to many organizations. For example, the Ocala Golf Club hosts the Moot Thomas Golf Scramble every year, organized by the Public Education Foundation of Marion County.

Marion was a long-time member of the Presbyterian church and was involved in bible study and women's bible study groups. She was proud to be a fourth generation Floridian. She loved the culture, southern cooking, at which she was excellent, the flora and fauna, the water, and, of course, the University of Florida Gators, where, until recently, she held lifetime seats for home games.

Marion's family and friends have meant everything to her. She declared

herself the matriarch of our family and we are all for it! She was funny, her one-liners legendary, and she was fun. She was beautiful, talented, and intelligent. She was protective and supportive of everyone in her circle. She was the favorite of so many. Her life is an example of grace, elegance, and tenacity. She will be forever missed, though her legacy lives on through her family and all those who are blessed to have known her.

In honor of the life of Marion Alderman Thomas, she has requested a celebration. We encourage everyone in attendance to wear her favorite colors pink or blue, and of course, Gator colors and memorabilia are welcome. Anyone close to Marion is welcome to share stories and anecdotes about her life.

Funeral services will be held at the First Presbyterian Church of Ocala located at 511 SE 3rd Street, Ocala, Florida on October 10 at 11 a.m. with Pastor Kenny Ellis officiating. A reception will follow services for all attending. Burial will follow at Woodlawn Cemetery, 1515 NE 3rd Street with services led by her nephew Van Sowerby and attended by close friends and family. Visitation will be at Robert's Funeral Home Downtown Chapel, 606 SW 2nd Avenue, Ocala FL on Thursday, October 9th from 4-7 p.m.

Previous Events

Visitation

OCT **9**. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Roberts of Ocala Downtown Chapel
606 SW 2nd Ave
Ocala, FL 34471
(352) 537-8111
info@robertsfunerals.com
<https://www.robertsfunerals.com/>

Funeral Service

OCT **10**. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

First Presbyterian Church
511 SE 3rd St
Ocala, FL 34471
<https://www.fpcocala.org/>

Graveside Service

OCT **10**. 1:30 PM - 2:00 PM (ET)

Woodlawn Cemetery
1515 NE 3rd St.
Ocala, 34470

Reception

OCT **10** (ET)

First Presbyterian Church
511 SE 3rd St
Ocala, FL 34471
<https://www.fpcocala.org/>

Tribute Wall



“ *Roberts of Ocala Funerals and Cremations created a Tribute Video in memory of Marion Alderman Thomas*



Roberts of Ocala Funerals and Cremations - October 09, 2025 at 09:49 AM



“ *1 file added to the album Memories Album*



Roberts of Ocala Funerals and Cremations - September 10, 2025 at 09:06 AM

KA

So many wonderful memories shared for a lifetime.

Kaki - September 10, 2025 at 10:29 AM

CP

“ *I will miss Marian, such a lovely lady. I enjoyed her company at the beauty shop every month. Rest In Peace. Carol P.*

Carol P - September 08, 2025 at 12:42 PM