

# Obituaries

and grandchildren.

After graduating from college, she accepted a high school teaching position in Rockport, Missouri. In 1955, Barbara came to Shenandoah as a young teacher not much older than her students. Barbara described her early years in Shenandoah as a wonderful time. For many years, she was invited back to chaperone Shenandoah High School's proms and graduations, always bringing her beautiful antique white wicker baskets filled with flowers from her garden.

In the summer of 1956, Barbara and Shenandoah High School physical education teacher, Helen Richardson Arkoff, sailed for Europe on the Cunard ocean liner, the Franconia, which had been torpedoed during WW II and listed to one side as it sliced through the ocean water. Barbara and Helen kicked up their heels and delighted in their travel adventures that summer. In the last week of her life, Barbara recounted meeting her future husband, R. Paul Sjulín, and recalled him as "very dapper." Their budding romance is well documented through the many letters sent back and forth during the summer of 1956. Barbara was married to R. Paul Sjulín at the First United Methodist Church in Shenandoah on June 16, 1957. They were married for 44 years before Paul's death in 2001. She brought love, joy, warmth, companionship, excitement, laughter, common sense, faith, music and beauty in to Paul's life. Together they worked to benefit Shenandoah and pursue their passions. They were co-founders of the Southwest Iowa Theatre Group, and both performed in several productions over the years. They served the Shenandoah Hospital for years in various capacities with Paul serving as the chairman of the fundraising committee to build the current hospital facility. Both were life-long Methodists and long-time members actively engaged at First United Methodist Church in Shenandoah.

Barbara enjoyed dedicating more than 60 years to membership in United Methodist Women (UMW), AAUW, Study Club, Garden Club, Book Club, Beta Sigma Phi, and PEO. She enjoyed gardening and flowers, especially her many roses. Her bread and butter pickles and grape jelly are treasured family recipes. Garden Club's Hall of Flame event was special for Barbara and she would spend time during her travels finding the "perfect thing" to decorate her tables at the Hall of Flame. Barbara also loved bridge and played in many couples' bridge clubs as well as ladies' bridge clubs, including the Thursday afternoon women's bridge club who played together for more than sixty years starting when they were young adults. She delighted in her many life-long friendships and kept in touch with so many – the coffee pot was always on at Barbara's home. Indeed, her children and grandchildren have married in Barbara's many friendships and her life philosophy, which could only be described as a true zest for life. Whether it was a simple Iowa summer meal (BLTs, corn on the cob and cucumbers), watching one of her grandchildren excel in music or sports or a recount of one of the amazing themed events organized by the Saturday Night Club in Shenandoah, Barbara's eyes twinkled. She simply never wanted to leave the party early.

In 1981, Barbara and Paul purchased West Gate Bank in Lincoln, Nebraska. Barbara served on the bank's board of directors for 37 years and was an active board member at the time of her passing. Barbara enjoyed watching the bank's success and was thrilled about the bank's recent expansion into Omaha.

Barbara was a passionate supporter of the arts and attended musicals and theater productions all her life including four Broadway shows in New York City in January 2018, the highlight being Bette Midler's final appearance in Hello Dolly. She enjoyed lively conversations, current events, reading, travel, history, ice cream and enthusiastic young people.

Barbara lived a long, productive and happy life here on earth. Her life was grounded in Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and she died looking forward to the place and reunions God has been preparing for her.

Barbara was preceded in death by her parents, James and Charlotte Land Sears, her brother, James Land Sears, and her husband, R. Paul Sjulín. She is survived by her

## Barbara Anne Sears Sjulín 1930-2018



Barbara Anne Sears Sjulín passed away surrounded by her three children and their spouses at Methodist Hospital in Omaha, on Sept. 6, 2018. Her long and well-lived life began on Feb. 3, 1930, when she was born to James Lucian Sears and Charlotte Nadine Land Sears in Humansville, Missouri.

Barbara and her older brother, James Land Sears, spent many childhood years in Glasgow, Missouri, a beautiful, historic town on the Missouri River where their paternal grandmother, Dr. Effie Sears, was a physician. Barbara took great delight in her oldest granddaughter, Sarah, graduating from UCLA Medical School 100 years after her own grandmother's medical school graduation.

Barbara graduated from Rockville, Missouri High School in 1947 where her mother was an English teacher and her father was the high school principal and the women's and men's basketball coach. According to Barbara, her father never put her on the court unless they were winning by a landslide so as to avoid any appearance of favoritism. In high school, she excelled in many extracurricular activities including sports, theatre, vocal music and band. She spent her summers at Camp Miniwana in Michigan, traveling there by train. Even though she was a child, she gave up her seat on the train to the soldiers returning from World War II.

Both of her parents were high school teachers and administrators, so it came naturally for Barbara to double major in education and business at Central Methodist College in Fayette, Missouri, where she graduated in 1951. Barbara's parents and her grandmother Sears all attended Central Methodist College, and Barbara made the most of those college years playing clarinet in the band and performing the lead role in several plays including "The Stoops to Conquer." In later years, she could still recite her lines brilliantly much to the delight of her children

three children, Kathryn Sjulín Lonowski, who lives in Fort Collins, Colorado, with her husband, Wayne, and their three children, Dr. Sarah Lonowski and her husband, Brad Wenderoth, David Lonowski and Anne Lonowski; her son, Carl, who lives in Lincoln, Nebraska, with his wife, Renee, and their two children, Megan Sjulín and Carl James Sjulín, Jr.; and her son, Dr. David Sjulín and his wife, Dr. Ann Sjulín, of Omaha, and their three children, Lucille, Charlotte and Jacqueline. She is also survived by many very dear friends.

A private family graveside service was held at Rose Hill Cemetery in Shenandoah on Sept. 11, 2018. All are welcome to attend a Memorial Celebration of Barbara's life at 10:30 a.m. on Oct. 27, at the First United Methodist Church in Shenandoah.

A luncheon catered by The Sanctuary plus Runzas and Miller & Paine cinnamon rolls will take place in fellowship hall immediately following the service.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions can be sent to Hackett-Livingston Funeral Home, 208 Clarinda Ave., Shenandoah, Iowa 51601, for either the Sjulín Shenandoah High School Scholarship Fund or the Sjulín fund for the Shenandoah Public Library.

Family and friends may visit Barbara's Memorial Tribute at [hackettlivingston.com](http://hackettlivingston.com) and leave a message of condolence for the family.