

# Fern Millgate Beitner

G H-R 2-20-2012



Fern Millgate Beitner, 86, of Orlando, Fla., and formerly from the Grinnell area, died Thursday, Feb. 9, 2012, surrounded by her children.

Memorial services will be held Saturday, May 5, at 10 a.m. at the New Song Episcopal Church in Coralville, Iowa. Graveside services will be held at Bethel Cemetery in rural Grinnell in the afternoon. Memorial donations may be sent to the Humane Society opr PALS.

Fern was born Sept. 6, 1925, in Grinnell to Vern B. Millgate and Opal Hay Millgate. A 1942 graduate of Grinnell High School, Fern subsequently attended Broadlawns Nursing School in Des Moines and graduated in 1946.

Fern married Charles R. Beitner in June 1946 and followed him to Hoboken, N.J., where, from 1946 to 1949, she set up and managed the Stevens Institute of Technology infirmary while Charles attended engineering school.

Following Charles' graduation from engineering school in 1949, the couple moved to Kew Garden Hills, Flushing, N.Y. In 1955, Fern and Charles moved to Elkhart, Ind., where Charles accepted a position with CTS Corporation.

The couple moved to Asheville, N.C. in 1960 and lived there until their divorce in 1981. Fern moved back to Grinnell to be close to her parents.

She moved to Iowa City in 1985 and launched a new career as a house director to a number of fraternities and sororities, including Chi Omega, until she retired in 2002. She very much enjoyed being around young people during this time.

In May 2011, Fern moved to Orlando, Fla., to be close to her daughter, Heidi.

While nursing was Fern's profession, art was her passion. She explored a broad variety of media ranging from painting, illustration and cartooning, to fine jewelry-making, dress designing and ceramics, and for many years taught children's art classes and marionette-making.

She is survived by her daughter Heidi and son Jay of Pittsburgh; and a cousin Marilyn Peery of Grinnell.