



# Emma Laverne Sparks Olson

February 26, 1935 - December 24, 2023

Emma Laverne Sparks Olson, 88, of Cape Girardeau, Missouri passed away Sunday, December 24, 2023 at her home.

Emma was born February 26, 1935 in Lamar, Arkansas, daughter of Thomas Frank and Augusta Theresa Christine Doerr Sparks.

Emma graduated from high school in New Madrid County in 1953 and from Southeast Missouri State University in 1965 with a B.S. in Education. She then completed graduate work in Special Education and Behavioral Science at University of California, Los Angeles. She also received a N.D.E.A. Grant to do study and research at University of Illinois. She pursued a career in teaching in Michigan, California and Illinois. After 34 years of teaching, she retired from Wheaton, Illinois School District. Most of her career was spent teaching disabled and behavior disorder students.

Emma was an ardent, lifelong conservative and active member and supporter of the Republican party.

She was confirmed as a member of the First Baptist Church in 1947. In 1972 she married John Edwin Olson, in Elmhurst, Illinois. He passed away May 4, 2001.

Survivors include eight nieces, Carolyn Lee of Russellville, Arkansas, Rosanna Christine Collins of Sapulpa, Oklahoma, Susan Sturdy of Lamar, Arkansas, Sandra Kennedy of California, Janet Sparks of Evanston, Illinois, Melanie Peeler of Texas, Teresa McCulloch of Steele, Missouri, Stacy Chandler of Idaho; three nephews, Mackenzie McCulloch of St. Louis, Missouri, Greg Happe of Arizona, Shane Scholes of California.

She was preceded in death by her parents; four sisters, Velma (Bud) Farrenburg, Eileen (Mel) Happe, Christine (Bill) Fox, Pauline (Harry) Scholes; two brothers, Kermit (Polly) Sparks and Lyle Quinton (Edna) Sparks; and a nephew, Keith Sparks.

There will be a graveside service at Cape County Memorial Park at 11 am, Friday, December 29, 2023 with the Chaplain J.T. Thomason officiating.

Burial will be at Cape County Memorial Park in Cape Girardeau.

Memorial contributions may be given to VNA Hospice at P.O. Box 768 Kennett, MO 63857.

# Cemetery Details

## Cape County Memorial Park

2315 Highway 61 N  
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701

# Previous Events

## Graveside Service

DEC 29. 11:00 AM.

Cape County Memorial Park

# Tribute Wall

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“ I will always remember Aunt Laverne as a beautiful woman, a dedicated teacher, and a life-long learner. When I was a little girl, she took me to spend the day in her classroom. From that day forward, I knew that I too wanted to be a teacher. We love you and will miss you, Aunt Laverne. Carolyn L

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**Carolyn Lee** - December 27, 2023 at 12:39 PM