



Martha Ellen Bender

September 28, 1928 - July 21, 2021

Martha Ellen Stovall Bender died peacefully surrounded by her loving family early July 21, 2021 at 92 years of age. She was born September 28, 1928 in Jackson, MO to Mattie Morton Stovall and Earl Wilson Stovall, Sr. She was predeceased by her parents, her infant sister, her brother Earl, Jr. and grandson Clayton Bender Van Wagner.

Martha graduated from Jackson High School in 1946. She attended Southeast Missouri State College being active in The Hesperian Society, the Thespians, and the a cappella choir. On a regional choir tour, Martha met and went dancing with her future husband, Kenneth E. Bender. She graduated with a B.A. in History with a minor in Social Science May 15, 1950. They were married at First Presbyterian Church in Jackson that same afternoon.

Martha later received a B.S. in Elementary Education and taught at Jefferson Elementary School. After which, she studied Library Science and served as a librarian at Kent Library for nearly ten years.

Martha spent many years as a community volunteer dedicated particularly to the founding of the Cape River Heritage Museum. Other interests over the years included Garden Club, PEO, Cape Girardeau Bicentennial Commission Chairwoman, Riverfest organizer, and Missouri Advisory Council to the National Register of Historic Places appointed by Governor Bond. Martha was an avid reader, bridge player, and gardener as well as an accomplished cook and decorator.

After the birth of their two daughters, the family became charter members of

St. Andrew Lutheran Church. Martha and Kenneth also chaired St. Andrew's 50th Anniversary Celebration.

Martha and Ken celebrated their 25th anniversary with a European tour and a later one with a trip to the British Isles, 50th with a family celebration at Melhana Plantation, 60th on a Caribbean cruise with their daughters and spouses, and 70th with a dinner and 50-car parade of friends and well-wishers at their home.

Martha is survived by her husband Kenneth of 71 years, daughters Rebecca (John) Van Wagner, Kimberly (Ron) Foltz, four grandchildren, and six great grandchildren.

Visitation will be at St. Andrew Lutheran Church Sunday, July 25 2-4 p.m. The service will be at the church Monday, July 26 11 a.m. with burial following at Cape County Memorial Park Cemetery. After, a luncheon will be served at the church.

Memorial contributions may be made to Cape River Heritage Museum or St. Andrew Lutheran Church.

Ford and Sons Funeral Home in Cape Girardeau is in charge of arrangements.

Online condolences may be made at www.fordandsonsfuneralhome.com.

Cemetery Details

Cape County Memorial Park Cemetery

2315 Highway 61 North
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701
(573) 334-1909
<https://www.fordandsonsfuneralhome.com/>

Previous Events

Visitation

JUL 25. 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM (CT)

St. Andrew Lutheran Church
804 N. Cape Rock Dr.
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701

Funeral Service

JUL 26. 11:00 AM (CT)

St. Andrew Lutheran Church
804 N. Cape Rock Dr.
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701

Tribute Wall

AC

“ I worked at Jackson Oil Company with Mr. Bender & Earl. Sorry for your loss. Praying for you all!

Andrea Crites-Nenninger - July 24, 2021 at 10:03 PM

RW

“ I worked at Kent Library during part of my college years (1972-1974) in the circulation department. I remember Mrs. Bender having a smiling face and a very nice personality. May her family find comfort in their Christian faith. God's peace,
Rita Heimbaugh Weber

Rita Weber - July 24, 2021 at 05:26 PM

MH

“ Sending sincere condolences and loving sympathy to Ken, Becky and Kim and their families, and all who knew and admired this great lady. We enjoyed being with her in the Georgia Mountains at extended family reunions, and playing bridge with the champion Benders! Our hearts are with you as you lay her to her well deserved rest.
Marcia & Ron Hickman
Marietta, Georgia

Marcia Hair - July 24, 2021 at 05:09 PM



“ *Loving Grace was purchased for the family of Martha Ellen Bender.*



July 24, 2021 at 10:59 AM



“ *I loved Martha Bender /her smile, her style, her grip on life! We took to each other and there was joy in the taking! I, too, feel an emptiness and a personal loss!*

Jane Cooper Stacy - July 24, 2021 at 07:44 AM



“ *Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Martha Ellen Bender.*



July 23, 2021 at 07:17 PM



“ *I spent much of my young life around Mr. and Mrs. Bender and their family. I am so sad and sorry for your loss. Mrs. Bender was such a wonderful person. I will keep all of you in my prayers during this very difficult time.*



Susie Pickett O'Connell - July 23, 2021 at 04:54 PM