



Maura Elizabeth Sparks

March 2, 1940 - May 19, 2025

Maura Elizabeth (Larkin) Sparks, age 85, of Pierce City, MO passed away on Monday, May 19, 2025, at Cox-Monett in Monett, MO. She was born in Pierce City, MO on Saturday, March 2, 1940; daughter of Edward Patrick and E. Carol (Higgins) Larkin. Maura married Perry Jackson Sparks on Monday, August 6, 1962, in Pierce City, MO. Maura graduated from Pierce City High School in 1958. She attended Mount St. Scholastica College in Atchison, Kansas, for two years. In 1960 she became an airline stewardess for Delta Airlines, where she traveled the world until her marriage in 1962.

During Maura and Perry's marriage they transferred often, living in over ten states, while Perry was employed as a General Manager with the W. T. Grant company. At the age of 50, Maura graduated cum laude from Texas Women's University in Denton, Texas with a degree in Paralegal Studies. She was gainfully employed at many of Dallas' top law firms.

Following their retirements, Maura and Perry built their forever home just outside of Pierce City on land homesteaded by Maura's grandfather. They became active members of the community, which included their passion for the Pierce City Senior Center and St. Mary's Catholic Church. Maura was a member of the St. Mary's Council of Catholic Women and was co-chair of the funeral circle for many years.

Maura took pride in her years of service and her and Perry's work towards building the new Senior Center after the 2003 tornado destruction of the old Center. Maura served for many years as president of the Pierce City Senior Center. She was active in the Silver Haired Legislature and represented her district for several years.

She served on the Cox Monett Hospital Board, was a member of the Lawrence County Senior Tax Board, served on the Lawrence County Council on Aging for ten years, and was certified by AARP to teach safe driving courses to seniors.

In 2010, Maura received the Dale Taunton Helping Hands Award. In 2018, she was given the Missouri Senior Service Award, presented in Jefferson City by Lt. Governor Michael Parson.

Maura was an avid gardener and became a master gardener through the University of Missouri Extension. She enjoyed traveling and made many trips to Europe and beyond. She relished nothing more than enjoying her granddaughter's success at her many sporting events, as well as her dance and piano recitals.

Maura's latest greatest adventure was traveling to Peru and climbing Machu Picchu.

Surviving are the following: one daughter, Lisa (Michael) Larkin of Jefferson City, MO; one granddaughter, Madeline Larkin; four siblings, Jim (Evelyn) Larkin, Sheila Scott, Bridget Cromer, and Kevin Larkin; several nieces and nephews; and many friends.

Maura was preceded in death by her parents, Edward and Elizabeth Larkin; her husband, Perry Sparks; a brother, Terrance Larkin; and a niece, Stacey

Mitchell.

The family will receive friends at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Pierce City, MO on Wednesday, May 28, 2025, from 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM.

Memorial Mass will be at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Pierce City, MO on Wednesday, May 28, 2025, beginning at 11:00 AM with Father Matt Rehrauer officiating. Burial will follow at St. Patrick's Catholic Cemetery in Pierce City, MO.

In lieu of flowers, please consider making a donation to either the "University of Missouri", University of Missouri Advancement, 407 Reynolds Alumni Center, Columbia, MO 65211 or gifts may also be done online at mizzougivedirect.missouri.edu/support-ALS. Or Team Gleason Foundation, PO Box 24493, New Orleans, LA 70184. After Maura's ALS diagnosis she became an advocate, volunteering for ALS research.

After Maura's diagnosis of ALS in January 2024, she became an advocate, volunteering for ALS research studies. Arrangements are under the personal care and direction of Lakin Funeral Home in Pierce City, MO.

Cemetery Details

St Patrick's Catholic Cemetery

Pierce City, MO

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY 28. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

St. Mary's Catholic Church
200 Front Street
Pierce City, MO 65723
(417) 476-2827

Memorial Mass

MAY 28. 11:00 AM (CT)

St. Mary's Catholic Church
200 Front Street
Pierce City, MO 65723
(417) 476-2827

Tribute Wall

CT

“ I’m so sorry to hear of Maura’s passing. Bridget and I were friends back the 70’s and I knew several members of the Larkin family. They were lovely people and it sounds like Maura was very active in the PC community. I know you all have many lasting memories.
Chris Conyers Tornquist



chris conyers tornquist - June 13, 2025 at 08:18 PM

BK

“ Dear Larkin Family, I’m so sorry to hear the passing of Maura. She was as nice as she was beautiful. I was very happy to see and visiting with her at brother Don’s visitation. My prayers for her swift flight to heaven.

Ben Kutz - May 30, 2025 at 10:56 AM

JA

“ Maura was always so full of adventure and she always had a smile on her face. Hugs, love and prayers to the family.

David and Janie Jones

janie - May 29, 2025 at 09:50 PM

TW

“ I didn’t have the pleasure of knowing Maura, but I know her sister, Sheila, who always spoke highly of Maura, enjoyed traveling with her, and loved her very much. I offer my sincere sympathies to her family.



Tina Scott Watson - May 29, 2025 at 12:36 PM

RP

“ I visited with Maura several times at her sister’s home in Jefferson City. She was always so cheerful and had a great sense of humor and held her own when teased by her brother in law Gary Scott. I so admired her zest for adventure and travel. Rita Scott Penserum

Rita Scott Penserum - May 28, 2025 at 08:09 PM

JC

“ Always hate to hear about losing a loved sibling, or anyone. I only knew Maura in name only, and from seeing her on occasion. But, am familiar with Jim, Sheila, Bridget, and Kevin. I want each of you to know that each of you, as well as your oldest sister are all in my thoughts and prayers at this time. Condolences to all of you.

Joseph Dale Cochran - May 25, 2025 at 04:41 PM

KL

Thank you Dale

Kevin Larkin - February 17 at 08:02 AM

RS

“ Maura's work, energy, and foresight are very apparent in her efforts following the PC tornado. My condolences to her family.

Randy Staponski - May 24, 2025 at 08:20 AM

CE

“ Maura and I became good friends at our line dancing lessons. We were always getting in trouble with Fran our leader for laughing. Maura was so easy to laugh with. Miss you Maura. Don't get in trouble. Cheryl Elbert

Cheryl Elbert - May 23, 2025 at 04:07 PM

JB

“ I have lost a best friend of almost 80 years
Our friendship started at first grade at St. Marys gradeschool and has lasted through the years. In high-school she would drive us around in an old farm truck that would frequently die. She would get out, lift the hood, bang on something, get back in and away we'd go. We spent many days in her bedroom talking about the movies books and, of course, boys. She was crowned football queen and was voted Outstanding Senior Girl. After high-school we pursued different paths. But renewed our friendship after retirement. She called me one day and asked if I wanted to go to Ireland so we shared a fun journey through that country. Later we toured the Netherlands and took a trip together through several countries in eastern Europe
Maura loved to travel and was a great travel companion. The doors to her home were always open to us and she hosted several class reunions there. She always looked lovely which made this terrible disease even more tragic as it took away her ability to talk and swallow, then to walk. She was very courageous and a great example to us all. She continued to stay in her home, to drive and to play bridge and even hosted a party for classmates just recently.
I asked Maura why she returned to Pierce City and she said "When i went to my mother's funeral, the church was full of her friends. "I want that." I'm sure that her wish will come true as I know the church will be overflowing with her family and friends.

Joan Bowen - May 23, 2025 at 09:20 AM

DJ

“ Maura was my brother Perry's devoted wife. I admired her love for family. Perry, Lisa and Maddie never doubted that Maura cared for them. She will be missed.

Donna Jones - May 22, 2025 at 01:48 PM

JB

“ Lisa & family, She will be missed by so many. Know I'm thinking of all. Your whole family was respected & loved by my grandmother, Clara Mae. Lots of great memories....
Juliana (Julie Landoll) Barnes

Juliana Barnes - May 22, 2025 at 12:57 PM

JB

“ Maura was extremely helpful to me as we tried to help build a new library after that May tornado. I didn't know the people as I had just moved here so she ran interference for me. I am forever grateful for her wisdom and friendship and ask real blessings for her family as they gather to mourn her passing.

Judy Bowman - May 21, 2025 at 08:23 PM