



Mary Ellen (Lentz) Kiper

August 29, 1950 - January 2, 2025

Mary Ellen (Lentz) Kiper, 74, passed away Thursday, January 2, 2025.

She was preceded in death by her loving husband, Robert Glenn Kiper; parents, Ollie and Mary Lentz; and sister, Maxine Stinnett.

Mary Ellen is survived by her sons, Joshua Kiper (Elizabeth “Liz”) and Jonah Kiper (Cecilia); grandchildren, Nolan, Elise, Kendall, and Paisley Kiper; sisters, Bonnie Hawkins (Earl), Lori Ann Sweeney, Tammy Tyler (James), Karen Berry (Rob), and Connie Baumer (Phil); brothers, Joey Lentz (Debbie), Eddie Lentz (Francis), Danny Stump (Mary Jo), Ricky Stump (Emily), Kevin Hofelich (Michelle), Chris Hofelich (La Cherry), and Troy Hofelich (Jill); brother-in-law, John Stinnett; and many nieces and nephews.

Her funeral service will be at 2 p.m. Wednesday, January 8, 2025 at Owen Funeral Home-Jeffersontown, 9318 Taylorsville Rd. with burial to follow in Jeffersontown Cemetery. Her visitation will be from noon until the time of service Wednesday at Owen Funeral Home.

Mary Ellen (Lentz) Kiper was born into humble beginnings in Fern Creek, KY on August 29th, 1950. She was the first born into a family of what would become 14 children. To say her up bringing was a struggle would be an understatement. Her parents were very poor and it seemed there was always another mouth to feed in her growing family. At a young age Mary Ellen helped care for her younger sisters and brothers, and was often feeding, changing diapers and keeping them out of trouble. Life was hard, but out of these struggles came her nurturing and loving instincts that would help define

her as a sister, a wife, a mother, a Nana, and a friend to so many people. Mary Ellen attended Fern Creek high school and graduated in 1968. While at Fern Creek, she lettered in the high school drill team and developed her lifelong love of dancing and music. More importantly, she also met the love of her life, and our father, Glenn Kiper. Mary Ellen and Glenn married on Valentine's Day in 1969. After graduating high school, Mary Ellen took on several jobs including work at the Department of Housing and Urban Development. She continued working until she gave birth to her first son Joshua in April of 1974 followed by her second son, Jonah in November of 1981. In 1977, Mary Ellen and Glenn started K&S Auto Service with her sister Maxine Stinnett and brother-in-law John Stinnett. While balancing the demands of being a wife and a business owner she also somehow managed to become the most amazing mother to her two young boys.

Tragically, in January of 2000, Mary Ellen lost her loving husband of 31 years to a terminal illness. In typical Mary Ellen fashion though, she persevered when most might have given up, and began the next chapter of her life. She began a 20+ year career within the Jefferson County Public School system as a librarian's assistant and an office clerk at Jeffersontown High School and Moore High School.

During this time Mary Ellen's family was expanding and she finally received the "daughters" that she never had. First with Liz (Joshua) in 1998 and then Cecilia (Jonah) in 2009. She also took on the most important role of her lifetime, which was to become the worlds greatest Nana to four wonderful grandchildren. She was blessed with Nolan (Joshua) in 2003, Elise (Joshua) in 2010, Kendall (Jonah) in 2011 and Paisley (Jonah) in 2016. Being a grandchild of Mary Ellen meant getting to go to the Good Will and Dollar Tree for prizes. It meant getting a "Nana Bag" of clothes and treats every time she saw you. It meant getting to stay the night at her house and play with your cousins and look for deer in her front yard. But most importantly it meant being loved by someone more than is humanly possible.

Outside of family and work, Mary Ellen loved music and dancing. She felt that

music spoke to her and helped her through whatever challenge was in front of her. She spent many years as a member of the Pride of Kentucky Chorus and competed internationally in Sweet Adeline events. She was a woman of faith and was a member of Jeffersontown United Methodist Church as well as South East Christian Church. She loved shopping, mainly at Good Will and mostly for her grandchildren, and she prided herself on finding a “good deal”. Friendships were very important to Mary Ellen and you could always expect to be kept up to date on what was going on with everyone at her work or within the family. One-to-two-hour phone calls catching up on anything and everything were her specialty. Mary Ellen made friends where ever she went. Even during her final weeks in the hospital, she was making friends with doctors and nurses. Mary Ellen maintained life-long friendships and probably none more cherished than her 28-year friendship with Michael Taylor. They danced and sang and he helped her through some of her most difficult times and will forever be a member of our family.

Mary Ellen returned home to rejoin our Heavenly Father on January 2nd, 2025. She is now, joyously, with her mother Mary Lentz, our father Glenn and her sister Maxine. We will always love and miss you, mom, Nana, Mary Ellen. Rest in Peace until we meet again.

Cemetery Details

Jeffersontown Cemetery

Billtown Road
Louisville, KY 40299

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN 8. 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM (ET)

Owen Funeral Homes - Jeffersontown
9318 Taylorsville Road
Louisville, KY 40299
(502) 266-9655
<https://owenfuneralhome.com>

Service

JAN 8. 2:00 PM (ET)

Owen Funeral Home-Jeffersontown
9318 Taylorsville Road
Louisville, KY 40299
(502) 266-9655

Tribute Wall



“ Mary Ellen was the aide for our library JHS. She was such a patient and lady not only with adults but also with the kids. It was a pleasure knowing her. God's peace to her family.

Mary Bowen - January 13, 2025 at 09:52 AM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Mary Ellen (Lentz) Kiper.



January 07, 2025 at 09:46 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Mary Ellen (Lentz) Kiper.

January 07, 2025 at 09:46 PM



“ Your Moore FaMily purchased the Enchanted Cot tage for the family of Mary Ellen (Lentz) Kiper.



Your Moore FaMily - January 07, 2025 at 11:38 AM

MS

“ I will miss her. She and my brother Glenn are together again. He loved her so much.

marcia stansberry - January 07, 2025 at 11:15 AM



“ Beautiful Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Mary Ellen (Lentz) Kiper.



January 07, 2025 at 05:56 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Mary Ellen (Lentz) Kiper.

January 07, 2025 at 05:56 AM

KV

“ Karen and Bill Varga purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Mary Ellen (Lentz) Kiper.



Karen and Bill Varga - January 06, 2025 at 02:34 PM

KV

“ Karen and Bill Varga planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mary Ellen (Lentz) Kiper.

Karen and Bill Varga - January 06, 2025 at 02:34 PM

LF

“ Love from your JHS Charger Family purchased the Small Garden Dish for the family of Mary Ellen (Lentz) Kiper.



Love from your JHS Charger Family - January 06, 2025 at 11:29 AM

LF

“ Love from your JHS Charger Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mary Ellen (Lentz) Kiper.

Love from your JHS Charger Family - January 06, 2025 at 11:29 AM

FS

“ Frances S. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mary Ellen (Lentz) Kiper.

Frances S. - January 06, 2025 at 07:03 AM

MC

“ Mary Ellen was an incredible woman and I feel very blessed to have shared in her life. 🙏💖👍

Miriam Cole - January 04, 2025 at 05:57 PM

LS

“ Mary Ellen was such a kind and considerate person. I remember her always packing a goodie bag whenever Jonah, Cecilia and the girl were heading to a cheering competition or gymnastic event, or even when they would come to Pennsylvania to visit Cecilia's family. I can remember the time she made an activity bag for my then 4-year old grandson, with his name on it having never met him, to keep him occupied during the wedding of Cecilia and Jonah. Or be amazed at her finds when she would go to the Goodwill store, both with and without the girls, and buy clothing and such for pennies on the dollar, a trip show would make almost weekly. She was always there for her granddaughters, from sponsored Kendall and joined her in the baptismal water when she was getting baptized, to picking the girls up, almost daily any time needed, from both cheering practices and gymnastic practices and bringing them back to her house or theirs to spend quality time. Paisley never had to ask "Nana" if she could come to her house, which was more often than not, she would always welcome her with open arms, no matter the circumstances. She never thought of herself just of others, a true example of her selflessness. There will never be another "Nana" or parent like her, they broke the mold when they made Mary Ellen! She will never be forgotten and forever be missed. My sincere and heartfelt sympathy go out to Jonah, Cecilia and the girls, as well as the rest of her family in this time of deepest sorrow. May God be with you to comfort and keep you.

Linda Smith - "Grammy"

Linda Smith - January 04, 2025 at 01:09 PM



“ *Beautiful Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Mary Ellen (Lentz) Kiper.*



January 04, 2025 at 11:17 AM



“ *The Jeffersontown High School Alumni Association is saddened by the passing of Mary Ellen. She was always a smiling face to everyone who entered the library. She will be missed by the students and staff. Rest easy, Charger.*

Myra Fugate - January 04, 2025 at 10:43 AM



Thank you Myra. Did not realize you knew her too. She was my sister in law.

marcia stansberry - January 07, 2025 at 11:19 AM



So sorry for your loss Bonnie Love judy

Judy brewer - January 07, 2025 at 02:15 PM