



Elva Ruth (Canning) Schafer

January 11, 1938 - May 21, 2026

Elva Ruth (Canning) Schafer was born January 11, 1938, in Hale, Missouri, in her grandparents' home. Her parents were John Ross and Charlotte Faye (Dinsmore) Canning. She passed away May 21, 2026, in Lee's Summit, Missouri, at the age of 88. On June 27, 1957, Elva was united in marriage to Robert Otto Schafer, Sr. and to this marriage three children were born. Elva lived in Salem, Missouri, from 1957 until 2012; in New Jersey from 2012 until 2019; and in Lee's Summit, Missouri, from 2019 until 2026.

Elva graduated from high school in Springfield, Oregon, in 1955. She graduated from Southwest Baptist College in 1957 with an Associates of Arts degree; and, from Washington University in 1966 with a Bachelors of Science degree in Education. She also obtained a Master's degree in Education from the University of Missouri. Elva had a long career in education, having taught in a one-room school, elementary school, and junior high school in Dent County, and the Salem school districts from 1960 until 1992. After retiring from teaching, she operated Schafer's Furniture, along with her husband, until 2011.

Elva accepted Jesus Christ as her personal savior at a young age and her faith remained strong throughout her lifetime. At her passing, Elva was a member of Abundant Life Baptist Church in Lee's Summit, Missouri. Previously, she had been a member of Second Baptist Church in Salem,

Missouri; Oak Grove Baptist Church in Salem, Missouri; and Salem Avenue Baptist Church in Rolla, Missouri. She also attended Valley View Chapel in Long Valley, New Jersey, while she lived there. She taught adult Sunday school classes at Oak Grove Baptist Church, helped with the AWANA children's program at Salem Avenue Baptist Church, and volunteered with the Living History program at Phelps County Regional Medical Center in Rolla, Missouri.

Elva's pride and joy was her family that included her three children: Robert Otto, Jr., Kelley Joann, and Steven John. She was a grandmother to six grandchildren: Andrea, Ashley, John, Brian, Joe, and Kyle; and eight great-grandchildren: Addison, Otto, Carter, June, Sutton, Thomas, Jack, and Cora, with one on the way. She loved her four siblings dearly: Alyce, Ross, Gene, and Glen. Elva and her husband enjoyed playing golf, building homes in the Salem area, and attending auctions where they collected a treasure trove of priceless items. She also enjoyed quilting, painting, and playing bunco.

Preceding her in death were her grandparents, parents, husband, daughter and son-in-law (Kelley and Mike Shoemaker), brother (Gene Canning), her father-in-law and mother-in-law (Rev. Otto Ray Schafer and Lela Elizabeth (Ragsdale) Schafer), and her sisters-in-law and brothers-in-law (Virginia and Bob Dale, Faye and Kip Drown).

She is survived by her oldest son and daughter-in-law (Robert, Jr. and Minnie Schafer) of Cuba, Missouri; youngest son and daughter-in-law (John and Suzie Schafer) of Loch Lloyd, Missouri; grandchildren Andrea Schumacher and husband Jon, Lee's Summit, Missouri; Ashley Schafer and husband Cassidy Zhou, Edwardsville, Illinois; John Shoemaker and wife Casey, Alexandria, Virginia; Brian Schafer and wife Brianna, Denver, Colorado; Joe Shoemaker, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and Kyle Schafer, Boulder, Colorado. Her surviving siblings include sister Alyce Frazier and husband Joe of

Mansfield, Texas; brother Ross Canning and wife Vee of Port Angeles, Washington; sister-in-law Tenny Canning of Seattle, Washington; and brother Glen and wife Dotha of Corvallis, Oregon. At her passing, she was the great-grandmother to eight beautiful great-grandchildren, several nieces, nephews, and other relatives. She will be deeply missed by those who have known her.

A Memorial Service to celebrate the life of Elva will be held at the Abundant Life Baptist Church Administration Building, 414 SW Persels Road in Lee's Summit, Missouri, on June 8, 2026, at 10:30 a.m.

A Graveside Service will be held in Salem, Missouri, at the Cedar Grove Cemetery on June 5, 2026, at 11:00 a.m.

Cemetery Details

Cedar Grove Cemetery

Salem, MO

Upcoming Events

Graveside Service

JUN 5. 11:00 AM.

Cedar Grove Cemetery
Salem, MO

Memorial Service

JUN 8. 10:30 AM (CT)

Abundant Life Baptist Church Administration Building
414 SW Persels Road
Lee's Summit, MO 64081