



## Mary Ellen (Piatt) Ryffel

October 20, 1958 - May 14, 2026

Mary Ellen (Piatt) Ryffel Whittenburg passed away on May 14, 2026, in Mountain Grove, Missouri, at the age of sixty-seven years. She was born on October 20, 1958, in Salem, Missouri, to Howard Piatt and Carolyn (Comely) Brown. Mary grew up in Salem and spent her life devoted to her family, her work, and the people she loved.

Mary was blessed with four children: Charles, Joyce, Jeannie, and Maggie. She dearly loved her family and cherished time spent with them. She adored her grandchildren and great-grandchildren as they brought her so much joy.

Mary dedicated many years of her life working as a Certified Nursing Assistant in several nursing homes throughout the area. She deeply loved caring for others and became a wonderful example to her daughters and granddaughters, helping guide them into the nursing profession as well. Her compassion, hard work, and devotion touched countless residents and families through the years.

Mary was united in love with Eugene Whittenburg after the two met in 2011 while working together at a nursing home. What began over a simple glass of tea grew into a treasured companionship filled with laughter, love, and treasured time spent together.

Mary enjoyed camping, fishing, and floating the rivers of Shannon and Dent Counties, especially at Montauk, Current River, and Sinkin Creek. Mary was happiest spending time outdoors and enjoying nature. She also loved her flowers and working in the yard.

Mary is survived by her husband: Eugene Whittenburg of Rockaway Beach, MO; son: Charles McCune and wife Mindy of Illinois; daughters: Joyce Wethy and husband Jacob of Salem, MO, Jeannie Cook and husband Les of Lynchburg, MO, and Maggie Stuber and husband Tony of Salem, MO; sisters: Beth Braden of Morea, IL, Debra Schaedel and husband Bob of Higbee, MO, and Betty Mayer and husband Tommy of Granite City, IL; brother: Charles Brown of Salem, MO; twenty grandchildren; thirteen great-grandchildren; as well as numerous nieces, nephews, other relatives, and dear friends.

Preceding her in death were her father: Howard Piatt; mother: Carolyn (Comely) Brown; brother: Howard "Eugene" Piatt; and her grandson: Kory Bounds.

Those who knew Mary will remember her as ornery, full of spunk, colorful, and loving. Her strong spirit and caring heart left a lasting impression on everyone who was fortunate enough to know her. Mary's love, laughter, and unforgettable spirit will be deeply missed by all who knew and loved her.

Funeral Services were held Monday, May 18, 2026, in the Wilson Mortuary Salem Chapel with Boone Piatt officiating. Serving as Pallbearers were Dallas White, Christopher McPherson, Les Cook, Tony Wallace, Cameron Sapaugh, and Marcus Sapaugh. Honorary Pallbearer was Dylan McCune. Burial was in the Sapaugh Cemetery. The family was served by Wilson Mortuary.

Condolences may be left at [www.wilsonmortuary.com](http://www.wilsonmortuary.com)



# Previous Events

## Visitation

MAY 18. 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM (CT)

Wilson Mortuary - Salem  
1000 West Scenic Rivers Blvd.  
Post Office Box 45  
Salem, MO 65560  
(573) 729-5555  
<https://www.wilsonmortuary.com/>

## Funeral Service

MAY 18. 1:00 PM (CT)

Wilson Mortuary - Salem  
1000 West Scenic Rivers Blvd.  
Post Office Box 45  
Salem, MO 65560  
(573) 729-5555  
<https://www.wilsonmortuary.com/>

# Tribute Wall



“ 1 file added to the album *Memories Album*



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**Wilson Mortuary** - May 22 at 11:44 AM



“ 168 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



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**Wilson Mortuary** - May 18 at 09:36 AM