



Mary O'Connor Sparks

November 17, 1934 - January 15, 2025

Sparks, Mary O'Connor. Born on 11/17/1934 in Rockford, Illinois. Died on 1/15/2025 in Brooklyn Park, MN. Mary was preceded in death by her parents, Robert M. O'Connor and Lorraine Swenson O'Connor, her brother, Richard O'Connor, and her husband, Jared Walter Sparks. Mary is survived by her children, Steve (Dianne), Julie (John), Lynn (Dan), and Brad (Stephanie), 10 grandchildren and 10 great grandchildren. Mary and Jerry were high school sweethearts who married in 1954. They shared fifty-one years of marriage before Jerry died in 2005. After Jerry died, Mary moved to Minnesota in 2006 where three of her children lived. During her time in Rockford, she dedicated her time to Booker Washington Community Center, Rockford Junior League, Holy Family Catholic Church, and caring for her elderly aunts, uncles, and neighbors. Some of Mary's most treasured times were spent during the summer months at Pelican Lake in Merrifield, MN. Mary's goal was to live to 90. In November 2024, a grand 90th birthday party was held to celebrate her and her love for her family. Her happiness on this day will be how we remember her! Mary died peacefully after four days in a residential hospice community.

Memorials include St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, and Our Lady of Peace Hospice, St. Paul, MN. Mary donated to St. Jude's for years because she believed in their mission. Our Lady of Peace is a donation funded hospice community that provides loving care for the dying and their families.

St. Jude: <https://www.stjude.org/donate/donate-to-st-jude.html>

Our Lady of Peace: <https://ourladyofpeacemn.org/donate>

A private interment will be held in the spring at Greenwood Cemetery in Rockford, Illinois, so Mary can be laid to rest with her Wally.