Mary Strange Curtit

Mary Marie Curtit, age 82, of Jefferson City, Mo. passed away peacefully Monday, December 29, 2025, at Reflections at the Timbers surrounded by family.

She was born on February 9, 1943, in Ulman, Mo., the third of eight children born to the late Clifford and Tressie (Tannehill) Strange. Mary graduated as her class valedictorian from the School of the Osage High School in 1961. During her high school years, she was named Princess of the high school and Outstanding Senior Girl and received the DAR Award. She was also a cheerleader and served as editor of the school newspaper.

She was united in marriage to John W. “Jack” Curtit on August 3, 1969, in Jefferson City, after meeting on a blind date organized by Jack’s brother, Jerry, and his girlfriend, Marilyn Bexten. Mary and Jack shared 56 years of marriage and built a beautiful legacy.

Mary was employed by the Missouri League of Financial Institutions where she served as an assistant to the Executive Director. She was the editor of their monthly magazine and organized meetings for 400 to 500 people for the statewide association. She also served as the acting Executive Director for a period of time. Mary resigned from her position at the Institution to stay home to raise her children. When her kids reached school age, she went back to work as the secretary at Belair Elementary School. She was later employed by IBM where she served as Support Services Specialist and received the Branch Manager’s Award in 1989 and 1992. Mary was also employed by MoDOT and Healthlink before settling into her retirement in 2002.

A woman of deep faith, Mary’s church was very important to her. She regularly attended First United Methodist Church, served on the board of directors for the church’s preschool, and led as a Sunday School teacher. She allowed her faith to guide her actions and proudly raised her family in the church. She found great joy in playing hymns on the piano, which she learned by ear.

Family was at the center of her life. She was a dedicated wife and mother, an exceptional cook, and a gifted seamstress. Her Christmas, Thanksgiving, and Easter dinners were legendary, with holidays cherished by family. She loved sewing, both by hand and by machine, and her craftsmanship was remarkable. She embroidered more than 140 quilt squares designed by her Aunt Mary – enough to create four beautiful quilts. She also lovingly made 16 Christmas needlepoint stockings for her family which hung on the fireplace mantle each year. Throughout her life she proudly sewed clothes for herself, her children, and her grandchildren, leaving behind not only treasured keepsakes, but a legacy of care, creativity, and love.

Mary enjoyed planting flowers each spring and tending to them throughout the summers. She had a knack for decorating her home and always dressed her best, often encompassing her classy yet charming nature. Jack and Mary loved to travel together. Their adventures took them across the entire 48 continental United States - visiting all of them with their children by the time their youngest was 9 - as well as to places like Canada, Mexico, France, and England. They also enjoyed a memorable Caribbean cruise as a family.

Mary will be remembered for her steadfast faith, a quiet devotion that guided her life; for the deep and constant love she poured into her family; and for a gentle charm and graceful style that never faded. A devoted wife, loving mother, and cherished Granny, she leaves behind a legacy of warmth and faithfulness and will be immensely missed by all who were blessed to know and love her.

She is survived by her loving husband, Jack; her children, Eric Curtit, Shelley Newman (Steve) and Cary Gampher, all of Jefferson City; her grandchildren, Abby, Miles, Stella, and Elle; her sisters, Jean Wilburn of Vacaville, Ca., Donna Badley (Bill) of Sebastian, Fl., and Linda Kemmer (Jim) of Linn, Mo.; her brothers, Harold Strange (Gail) of Fairfield, Ca., and Gail Strange (Sandy) of Maricopa, Az.; her sister-in-law, Bobbie Strange of Vacaville, Ca.; and a host of nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Clifford and Tressie; two brothers, Clifford Strange, Jr., and Dale Strange; sisters-in-law, Judy Kerns and Susie Eidson; brothers-in-law, Jerry Curtit and Del Willburn; an infant brother, James; and an infant sister, Cecilia.

Visitation will be at Freeman Mortuary from 4:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. Monday, January 5, 2026.

Funeral services will be conducted at 11:00 a.m. Tuesday, January 6, 2026, in the Freeman Chapel with the Reverend Dr. Stephen Buchholz officiating. Graveside services and interment will be held at Riverview Cemetery.

https://www.freemanmortuary.com/obituaries/Mary-Curtit?obId=46823089