

OBITUARIES



LOUIS ANDREW "DIGGER" LENZ III

Louis Andrew "Digger" Lenz, III, 89, of Sparland, IL, formerly of Lacon, IL and past member of the Columbia Record Club, passed away in his home on Monday, May 11, 2026, surrounded by family and beautiful, sweeping views of the Illinois River Valley.

Born on April 17, 1937, to the late Helen and Louis A. Lenz, II, Lou was larger than life - part historian, part philosopher, part collector, and wholly unforgettable.

Affectionately known as Digger, Lou grew up in Lacon and graduated from Mid-County High School, where his tall, lean frame helped him set the high jump record long before landing mats existed. He attended Illinois Wesleyan University, where he was a proud member of Theta Chi fraternity and the Bohemian Club. It was there he met the love of his life, Marjorie Smith, whom he married in 1958.

He attended Worsham College of Mortuary Science, though Lou often claimed Chicago itself was his true education. He spent his days at the Waveland Golf Course, drove an ambulance for Carroll's Funeral Home - barreling down Wabash Avenue at 80 miles an hour during rush hour, and threw epic parties.

Lou served as an undertaker with his father, brother Dave, and nephew "Boogie" at Lenz Memorial Home in Lacon, a business that was in their family for 116 years. An undertaker for more than half a century, Lou considered it a privilege to guide families through the darkest moments of their lives. "A funeral director weaves a strange path through life," he once reflected, thinking of the friends he had known - and eventually buried. He also operated Lenz Furniture and Interiors with Marjorie for 25 years.

A raconteur without equal, Lou possessed a mind like a sponge and an endless curiosity about the world. He could discuss anything from the Donner Party to injection molding to Abraham Lincoln's travels through Central Illinois and was an unofficial historian of Marshall County.

Lou was a legendary collector - of antiques, music, stories, gadgets, oddities and people. He never met a flea market he didn't love or a countertop he couldn't cover. He adored buying in bulk, salt, Pepsi, and anything "As Seen on TV." He was endlessly handy, completing much of the construction work on his beloved Hillside, and always had "too many irons in the fire."

Above all, Lou loved people. He often said he grew up in a county, not a community, because his friends were everywhere. He was a mentor, surrogate father, and loyal friend to many. Peacock Ridge parties and his Chinese dinners were legendary. His wit was unmatched, his opinions well-informed, and his one-liners unforgettable. Whether describing someone with zero personality as "flatter than piss on a plate" or a politician as "grinning like a jackass eating thistles," Lou had a way with words that could never be duplicated.

He is survived by his children, Andy (Lynn) Lenz of Colona Illinois and Laura (Tom) Eboli of Downers Grove, IL; his brother,

Dave Lenz of Lacon; grandchildren Annie, Katie, Elizabeth, Andrew, and Lauren; and great-grandchildren Calvin, Camille (10 Tiny Toes), and Rosie. He was preceded in death by his beloved wife, Marjorie; his son, Stephen; and two infant children.

Heaven undoubtedly grew far more interesting upon his arrival. Somewhere beyond, Lou is reunited with family, friends and a wild cast of characters who are laughing and swapping stories.

And as he always hoped, he finally made it to St. Paul.

Cremation rites have been accorded. A visitation will be held on Thursday, May 21, from 9:00 to 11:00am, with a memorial service at 11:00am. Memorials may be made to the ARK Animal Shelter, and online condolences can be left at lenzmemorialhome.com.



MARY LOU SEFTON

Mary Lou Sefton, 90, of Henry, IL, passed away peacefully on May 13, 2026, surrounded by her loving children.

Born in Pekin, IL, on August 5, 1935, to the late Eugene and Violet (Creighton) Cottingham, Mary Lou married the love of her life, Duane Sefton, on May 16, 1954, in Pekin. Duane preceded her in death on July 30, 2004.

Mary Lou is survived by her daughter, Kristi (Joe) Klein of Lacon; her son, Kurt (Lori) Sefton of Odenton, MD; six grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren, all of whom brought immense joy to her life. She was also preceded in death by her son, Kent Sefton, and her sister, Peggy Colson.

A devoted woman of faith, Mary Lou was a member of Chillicothe Bible Church and the Christian Women's Club. She faithfully served her church community in many ways throughout her life. She played the piano and organ for church services and special events and lovingly accompanied her children during music contests. She also shared her musical talents as part of a women's trio at church. Mary Lou enjoyed leading Bible studies and teaching Sunday school, touching many lives with her kindness, wisdom, and steadfast faith.

Mary Lou found great happiness in simple pleasures and time spent with family. She loved the Chicago Cubs, working crossword puzzles, camping with her family, and cheering on her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren at their many sporting events and activities.

Mary Lou will be remembered for her deep faith, her musical gifts, her loving devotion to family, and the warmth and encouragement she shared with everyone around her. Her legacy of love and service will continue to live on in the hearts of those who knew and loved her.

Funeral service for Mary Lou were held on Monday, May 18 at the Chillicothe Bible Church at 11:00 a.m. Pastor Joe Horn officiating. Visitation was held one hour prior to the services. Burial was in the Henry City Cemetery, next to her husband Duane. Memorials can be made to the Chillicothe Bible Church and online condolences can be left at lenzmemorialhome.com

Brian Fox Ellis, Storyteller, Captivates Midland 7th Graders



On April 28th, Master Storyteller, author Brian Fox Ellis visited Mrs. Tower's 7th-grade classes at Midland Middle School and shared his original fables. The students were completely captivated by the timeless lessons and clever characters in his stories. The stu-

dents had a firsthand look at how storytelling can be used to share wisdom in a creative way.

Inspired by his visit, every single student in the class has since crafted their own original fable and had the opportunity to share it with their parents during a Fable Reading

Event on May 12th. This wonderful experience was made possible in part by a grant from the Sun Foundation and the Illinois Arts Council and the Midland Parents' Club.

BRIDGETOWN EVENTS

102 North Ida St., Lacon, Illinois

- ◆ Weddings (Indoor/Outdoor)
- ◆ Funeral Dinners
- ◆ Meetings



- ◆ Reunions
- ◆ Showers
- ◆ Parties
- ◆ Banquets

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