



Jo Ella Finley

August 11, 1938 - June 17, 2025

Jo Ella Horner Finley passed away at home in Cape Girardeau, Missouri, on June 17, 2025, after a long battle with dementia. She was born August 11, 1938, to Aud and Lorena (Huff) Horner in Rector, Arkansas. She attended Marmaduke High School, where she played on the high school basketball team. During the summers, she (unhappily) picked cotton on the farm. She graduated from Arkansas State University in Jonesboro, Arkansas, in 1960 with a Bachelor of Arts in Business Education.

Jo Ella taught high school business (shorthand, typing, accounting) in Missouri her entire career: two years at Broseley High, two years at Kennett High, and thirty years at Arcadia Valley High in Ironton.

Consistent with the subjects she taught, she was an exacting teacher who taught generations of students essential skills. She also had a sly sense of humor, particularly when in the company of fellow teachers and cohorts Kathy Norris, Jo Maguffee, and Dorothy Scott Cox.

She was named an Arcadia Valley Difference Maker in 2022.

She married Jim Finley, a fellow teacher at AVHS on June 11, 1966. They have two children,

Kara (Mike) Skelton of Cape Girardeau, Missouri, and Kris Finley of Los

Angeles, California.

Jo Ella is survived by her husband of fifty-nine years; her two children; a son-in-law Michael

Skelton; two grandsons, Grant Michael Skelton and William Finley Skelton; three sisters Dianne

(John) Phelps, Andrea (Gordon) Walton and Janet (Rex) Harmon; a brother-in-law Jerry (Debbie)

Finley; three nieces - Elizabeth (Ian) Caton, Lauren (Alan) Preston, Mary (Brian) Evans; three

nephews - Kelly (Joan) Harmon, Brad (Crystal) Phelps, and Hunter (Abby) Finley; and a

goddaughter, Betsy (Corby) Turner. She was preceded in death by her parents; a baby brother,

Kenneth; a brother-in-law, Rex Harmon; and a godson, Jonathan Scott.

She was a longtime member of the Arcadia Valley United Methodist Church in Ironton and of

the Grace United Methodist Church in Cape Girardeau. She was a member of Arcadia Valley

Woman's Study Club, a founding member of Mina Sauk, a board member of the Ozark

Regional Library and of Granting Grace Outreach, and a proud, lifelong member of the

Democratic Party.

At her request, her body was donated to science.

The family will hold a visitation at Cole Family Funeral Home in Ironton on July 18, 2025, from 4:00 - 6:00

pm.

A visitation will be held at Grace United Methodist Church in Cape Girardeau on July 19

from 10 am - 12:00 pm, with a Celebration of Life to follow.

In lieu of flowers, Jo Ella requested that memorials be given to Granting Grace

Outreach, 1572

Howell Street, Cape Girardeau, Missouri, 63701, a non-profit founded by her grandson, Grant,

in 2015 that helps community members in need.

Previous Events

Visitation

JUL 18. 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM (CT)

Cole Family Funeral Home
210 E Reynolds St
Ironton, MO 63650
(573) 546-0742

Tribute Wall



“ *Beautiful in Blue* was purchased for the family of Jo Ella Finley.



July 09, 2025 at 04:07 PM



“ *Charles and Evon Turner lit a candle in memory of Jo Finley*



Charles and Evon Turner - June 25, 2025 at 12:44 PM



“ *Charles and Evon Turner lit a candle in memory of Jo Finley*



Charles and Evon Turner - June 25, 2025 at 12:43 PM



“ *Full Of Love Bouquet* was purchased for the family of Jo Ella Finley.



June 25, 2025 at 11:52 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Jo Ella Finley.

June 25, 2025 at 11:52 AM



“ *Kenny & Sue Wooten lit a candle in memory of Jo Finley*



Kenny & Sue Wooten - June 25, 2025 at 10:31 AM



“ *JoElla was a dear high school friend. We were basketball teammates as well as classmates. I have many fond memories of JoElla and all the White Oak kids in school. My sincere condolences to Jim and all her family. She was a treasure--one of a kind. You'll be missed, Kay*



Kay Vance - June 24, 2025 at 07:38 PM

CM

“ I remember when Jo Ella and her family(my cousins) came to visit my family in Utah for a family reunion. We had so much fun (1st time I would meet them) and listening to the stories my parents and Jim/JoElla would tell were amazing. Several years later me and my parents traveled to their home in Missouri which was a first for me. JoEllas hospitality was incredible and she will be greatly missed. A great reunion in heaven with her and my parents was I'm sure is still going.



Connie Sue Murray Marshall - June 24, 2025 at 06:23 PM

NB

I was in high school with JoElla from the 7th grade through 12th grade graduation at Marmaduke High School. She was the most supportive of all of my friends, and always inclusive so she moved easily within the few friends' groups we had in our small class. I was fortunate to reconnect with her a few years ago, and to meet Jim. It was easy to see how he adored her. I came to admire the beautiful family they build together. I don't know anyone in my orbit I feel was more successful in every area of her life than HoElla was. I grieve with the family and send my sincere condolences for their loss. This gentle, lovely lady will be missed by many, but most of all by Jim, her beloved husband: Kera, her beautiful daughter, and Kris, her accomplished son, as well as those two sweet grandsons.. May God's blessings and His peace and love be with you all.

Nelda Herrod Brimberg - June 25, 2025 at 01:20 PM

SZ

I didn't know Mrs. Finley well at all nor did I know Jim well, but I knew OF them both and had met them on different occasions. I was saddened to hear of her passing and extend my sincere condolences to Jim and their daughter. I often heard family members who live in the Valley speak of both Jim and his wife....always with kindness and respect for both. May God bless her family as they go through this sad loss.

Shirley Zapf - June 26, 2025 at 10:50 AM