



## Kathleen Branigan

February 23, 1925 - December 22, 2025

Kathleen was born on February 23, 1925, in Amboy, Illinois, to Kathryn and Frank Branigan, the second of four daughters. Kathleen's independent streak began when she was the only sister who did not follow the path of graduating from North Central College but instead earned her degree with a double major in Spanish and English from the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana. She did, however, join the teaching profession to continue that family tradition. Her first position was in Lee Center, Illinois. Soon after, the family moved to Phoenix for her father's health where she attained a teaching position at Phoenix Technical High School. When Camelback High School opened, Kathleen was hired to teach Spanish and English. After earning her certificate in counseling, Kathleen transitioned to the role of guidance counselor, which she held for the majority of her career.

Upon her retirement, Kathleen volunteered with Sun Sounds, St. Vincent de Paul, and St. Francis Xavier Church. She considered exercise a necessary part of every day and always walked two miles on Murphy's Bridle Path (which produced many stories) and never skipped her swim. In addition, she joined a golf league and acquired many new friends. Later, she added exercise classes to her regimen. No doubt, this active routine contributed to her longevity.

Kathleen was known for letter writing. Since she never had a home computer, there were no emails. She sent letters of complaint and congratulations. She wrote to politicians, utility companies, and her doctors. And she always heard

back.

Kathleen was a huge fan of the Phoenix Suns and for many years had season tickets with family and friends. When the decision was made not to renew, she became a dedicated TV viewer through all seasons, thick and thin.

She loved decorating and entertaining whether pool parties, Christmas parties, or holiday family gatherings. Every table setting reflected the season or the holiday in great detail. But the most important family holiday was always St. Patrick's Day. Wearing green was de rigueur, and corned beef and cabbage was the only menu option. To this day, her nieces and nephew adhere to "the rules."

Kathleen left an imprint with colleagues and students alike and stayed in touch with many over the course of her life. She was particularly gratified when two former students named their children after her. A number of former students attended her 100th birthday party in 2025. She will be remembered for her quiet independence, her grace, and her intellect that never wavered.

Kathleen's survivors include nieces Karen Timberlake of Phoenix, Linda Disney (Bill) of Illinois, and nephew Jack Glessner (Debbie) of New Jersey. She is lovingly remembered by three great nieces and two great nephews along with one great-great niece and eight great-great nephews.

The funeral Mass will be Tuesday, January 6 at 10:00 am at St. Francis Xavier Church, 4715 N Central Ave, Phoenix, AZ 85012. Interment will be at St. Patrick Cemetery, Amboy, Illinois on Wednesday Jan. 14, 2026 at 11:30 AM. In lieu of flowers, Kathleen requested donations be made to St. Jude Hospital.

# Cemetery Details

## St. Patrick Cemetery in Amboy

816 Rockyford Rd  
Amboy, IL 61310

# Previous Events

## Service

JAN 14. 11:30 AM (CT)

St. Patrick Cemetery in Amboy  
816 Rockyford Rd  
Amboy, IL 61310