



## Gloria M Eklund

May 1, 1930 - May 13, 2026

Princeton - Gloria May Eklund, née Peterzén, of Princeton, Illinois, passed peacefully into eternal life on May 13, 2026, at Manor Court in Princeton. She was 96 years old.

Gloria was born on May 1, 1930, in Galesburg, Illinois, to Assar and Aina (Carlmark) Peterzén, who immigrated to the United States from Kisa, Sweden, in 1922. She was raised in Knoxville, Illinois, where her lifelong love of learning and service first took root. A gifted student, Gloria graduated as valedictorian of the Knoxville High School Class of 1948. She continued her education at Illinois State University, earning her teaching degree in 1952.

Teaching was both Gloria's profession and her calling. Over the years, she taught physical education and English in schools in Knoxville, Bloomington, Manito, and Princeton, Illinois. She inspired generations of students with her intelligence, grace, and steady encouragement, leaving a lasting impression on all who knew her.

While in junior high school, Gloria met the love of her life, Donald Eklund. Their enduring love story began in youth and blossomed into a remarkable marriage spanning 72 years after they wed on April 6, 1952. Together they built a life centered on faith, family, devotion, and kindness until Donald's passing in 2025.

Gloria was a loving and devoted mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother. She is survived by her children: Michael (Adele) Eklund of Glendale, Wisconsin; Julie Schmitt of Grand Prairie, Texas; David (Jeanine) Eklund of Naples, Florida; and Barbara (Vincent) Marella of Virginia Beach, Virginia. She also leaves behind 11 beloved grandchildren and 8 cherished great-grandchildren, all of whom brought her immense joy and pride.

She was preceded in death by her parents; her brother, Ellsworth Peterzén, and his wife, Jane; and her sister, Barbara Bennett, and her husband, Orrin.

A faithful member of St. Matthew's Lutheran Church in Princeton, Gloria lived her life with quiet faith, humility, and compassion. She treasured family gatherings, education, reading, and her Swedish heritage, and she carried herself with warmth and dignity throughout her life.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be directed to St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, the Princeton Public Library, or the Donald and Gloria Eklund Endowed Scholarship Fund at Illinois State University.

A celebration of Gloria's life will be held at a later date.

Online condolences may be directed to [www.norbergfh.com](http://www.norbergfh.com)

Arrangements entrusted to Norberg Memorial Home, Inc. & Monuments.

# Tribute Wall

CE

“ *Carolyn Espel lit a candle in memory of Gloria M Eklund*



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**Carolyn Espel** - May 21 at 12:05 PM

CE

*Gloria and Don were both my favorite teachers. I will never forget when Don took our history class up to visit the Joliet Prison!! Such an adventure that was! And Gloria was a teacher who gave comfort and friendship to anyone who needed it. She and I shared many E-mails and jokes through the years. I was so blessed to have these two as teachers as well as being my dear friends.*

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**Carolyn Espel** - May 21 at 12:11 PM

BM

*Thank you so much for sharing your memories of my parents!*

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**Barbara Eklund Marella** - May 21 at 12:55 PM

SF

“ *A dear teacher & Friend. She will be missed. Heaven shines with her & Don. We love her. Mick and Sandy*



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**Sandy Finn** - May 20 at 06:23 AM

BM

*Thank you for your kind words about my Mom!*

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**Barbara Eklund Marella** - May 21 at 12:56 PM

TB

“ I did both Gloria's hair as well as Dons!!These people loved life and their family.Gloria was always a hoot! Loved her! Rip sweetie!!!

Terry Boehle - May 19 at 08:17 PM

BM

Thank you for all you did for my parents!

Barbara Eklund Marella - May 20 at 10:15 AM

LE

“ Oh sweet Gloria, It was such an honor to care for her and get to know her. she was truly a such light to anyone who crossed her path. she always had the biggest smile and she never forgot to tell you how wonderful, amazing & thankful she was. I will truly miss seeing her face and having our little dance parties we would have every morning i seen her. throughout everything she never lost her spirit and smile and that's one thing i truly learned learned from her.



leslie - May 19 at 07:25 PM

BM

Thank you so much for the wonderful care you gave my Mom! She loved you all!!

Barbara Eklund Marella - May 20 at 10:16 AM

GS

“ I am so sorry to hear of Gloria's passing. Gloria and Don were part of a group of weekly diners at the Park Tavern. Such a nice couple and we miss them.

Gail Sanderson - May 19 at 02:51 PM

BM

*Thank you for your kind words! My parents loved their time at The Park Tavern!*

Barbara Eklund Marella - May 21 at 12:57 PM



“ *It was a pleasure caring for her..she always had a smile and thank you for everything you would help her with..such a caring loving person...*

Jeanette Brewer - May 19 at 01:24 PM

BM

*Thank you for caring for our Mother! She loved you all!!*

barbara eklund marella - May 19 at 05:35 PM