



Martha Evelyn Maestri

August 27, 1940 - August 15, 2025

Martha Evelyn Maestri, 84, passed away after a courageous 8-year battle with Alzheimer's disease on August 15, 2025. She was born on August 27, 1940, in Tontitown, Arkansas, to Joe and Elizabeth Ceola, both second-generation Italian immigrants.

Upon graduating from Springdale High School in 1958, Evelyn moved to Fort Smith to attend Saint Edward Mercy Hospital School of Nursing. She received her diploma in 1961 and embarked on a remarkable 20-year career at Springdale Memorial Hospital, where she was a beloved and skilled labor and delivery nurse. Being in that environment had a lifelong impact on her; even after her disease stole her memory and ability to speak, the sight of a baby or young child always brought a joyful smile to her face. The traits she developed as a nurse—compassion, empathy, patience, and generosity—became the hallmarks of her character.

For Tontitown residents, the annual Grape Festival was always a significant event on the calendar. In 1956, while running for the Festival's Queen Concordia, Evelyn met a recently discharged Korean War veteran and fellow Tontitown native, Frank Maestri. That chance encounter marked the beginning of a beautiful, devoted, and inspiring relationship that endured for almost 62 years until Frank's death in 2018.

After retiring in 1982, Evelyn more fully pursued her love of golf. She and Frank played at renowned golf courses throughout the country, including one of her favorites, Pebble Beach. Evelyn was part of a women's group at Springdale Country Club, where she and Frank were fixtures, eventually building a home at the tee box of the 8th hole where they lived for over 30 years. Traveling was also an important part of their lives; one of their most memorable trips was to Italy, where they visited the small towns of their ancestors. Hawaii, Las Vegas, and Palm Springs were favorite repeat destinations, but Frank and Evelyn, ever curious and adventurous, were open to exploring new places as long as a golf course was nearby.

Another passion of Evelyn's was supporting the Arkansas Razorbacks. Normally fairly quiet and reserved, if Evelyn was at the football stadium, basketball arena, or at home watching the game on TV, she would cheer louder than anyone. As the Razorbacks' most devoted fan, one of her happiest days was being in the arena in Charlotte, North Carolina, and watching the Razorbacks defeat the Duke Blue Devils for the National Championship in 1994.

Evelyn immensely enjoyed working jigsaw puzzles. There was almost always a puzzle in some stage of completion at the dining table. Family members would gather around the table, often late into the night, working furiously to finish and triumphantly insert that final piece. The conversations, stories, and laughter heard around the puzzle board—the same board her mother had once used for making pasta—make up some of the happiest and most memorable times with family.

Evelyn was a longtime member of St. Raphael Catholic Church in Springdale, and her faith was a constant and unwavering guiding principle in her life. She exemplified what it meant to be a faithful servant to God, and a loving wife, mother, grandmother, and friend.

Evelyn was preceded in death by her husband, Frank Maestri; her brother, Joseph “Joe” Ceola; and her sister, Betty Beckford.

Evelyn is survived by her daughter, Michaela, and her husband, Jamie Baker of Springdale; son, Kelly of Fayetteville; son, Kevin, and his wife, Kelli of Springdale; grandchildren, Jeremy Baker and his wife, Alisha, Joshua Baker, Hogan Maestri, Stella Maestri, and Lola Maestri; and great-grandchildren, Brooklyn Baker and Piper Baker.

The family would like to express their gratitude for the quality care that Evelyn received as a resident of Brookstone Assisted Living in Fayetteville. Her longtime private caregivers—LaVelle, Rosy, Soledad, Cathy, Monica, Tracy, and Danielle—provided professional and compassionate care that enabled Evelyn to live with dignity and comfort, and their dedication will always be remembered.

Visitation will be Thursday, August 21st, from 5 to 7 p.m. at Sisco Funeral Chapel in Springdale. The funeral mass will be Friday, August 22nd, at 10 a.m. at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Tontitown, with Father Balaraju Akkala officiating. Burial will follow at St. Joseph Cemetery in Tontitown.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the Tontitown Historical Museum, P.O. Box 144, Tontitown, Ark. 72770.

Online condolences may be left at www.siscofuneral.com.

Cemetery Details

St. Joseph Catholic Cemetery

380 E. Fletcher Ave.
Springdale, AR 72762

Previous Events

Visitation

AUG 21. 5:00 PM (CT)

Sisco Funeral Chapel
705 West Meadow
Springdale, AR 72764
(479) 751-4577
siscofuneralchapel@gmail.com
<https://www.siscofuneral.com>

Funeral Mass

AUG 22. 10:00 AM (CT)

St. Joseph Catholic Church
136 E Henri De Tonti Blvd
Springdale, AR 72762
<http://www.stjoetontitown.org>

Tribute Wall

GS

“ Good S. planted a grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Martha Evelyn Maestri.

Good S. - August 22, 2025 at 10:19 AM

JD

“ Jeff and Sherri Shaw Dillard planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Martha Evelyn Maestri.

Jeff and Sherri Shaw Dillard - August 21, 2025 at 03:11 PM

JD

“ Jeff and Sherri Shaw Dillard purchased the Medium Dish Garden for the family of Martha Evelyn Maestri.



Jeff and Sherri Shaw Dillard - August 21, 2025 at 03:11 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Martha Evelyn Maestri.



August 21, 2025 at 11:03 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Martha Evelyn Maestri.

August 20, 2025 at 11:40 AM



“ Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Martha Evelyn Maestri.



August 20, 2025 at 11:40 AM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Martha Evelyn Maestri.



August 20, 2025 at 11:26 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Martha Evelyn Maestri.

August 20, 2025 at 11:26 AM

AR

“ Alan And Nancy Roller lit a candle in memory of Martha Evelyn Maestri



Alan and Nancy Roller - August 19, 2025 at 11:03 AM

EC

“ I always enjoyed seeing Frank and his pretty wife come in the stock market, AG Edwards.
Sending healing love.

Ellen Cato - August 19, 2025 at 09:58 AM

LP

“ Mrs. Maestri was truly a remarkable person to know. So sorry for your loss, she is reunited with her husband in heaven.

LeAnn Piazza - August 18, 2025 at 11:29 PM

CS

“ Mrs. Maestri was a wonderful mom most of all. Her loss is felt by many. My deepest sympathy to her family.

Carole Shook - August 18, 2025 at 10:52 PM

TH

“ To the family, thank you so much for letting me have the opportunity take care of your mom. She was a special lady. Always loved her dancing and her smile. She'll be missed by many you guys are in my prayers. Tracy Hoveland

Tracy Hoveland - August 18, 2025 at 07:29 PM

SJ

“ Sean, Audrey, Caitlyn & Grace Jennings purchased the *Treasured Lilies Spray* for the family of Martha Evelyn Maestri.



Sean, Audrey, Caitlyn & Grace Jennings - August 18, 2025 at 12:30 PM