



Larry Patrick Stephens

March 17, 1940 - August 20, 2024

Larry Patrick Stephens, age 84, of Columbus, Ohio, passed peacefully on Tuesday, August 20, 2024 at Country View of Sunbury in Sunbury, Ohio. Larry was born March 17, 1940 in Yoakum, Texas to Agnes N. Graham and William C. Stephens. As a child, he moved to Coshocton, Ohio. During his youth, he loved bike-riding, winning yo-yo contests, playing marbles, and making friendships that would last a lifetime. At Coshocton High School, he lettered 4 years in football and baseball and 3 years in basketball. Other football honors he received were being named to the All-Central Ohio league team his junior and senior years and being chosen on the first team of the Associated Press All-Ohio in 1958. One evening after arriving home from practice, he found his mother in the living room with OSU football coach Woody Hayes. Larry received a four-year athletic scholarship to play football at OSU. Even though he had received an offer from a professional baseball team around the same time, his mother would not let him pass up the opportunity to earn a college education and play football with Woody Hayes and the Buckeyes.

At OSU, he lettered three of the four years (freshman were not allowed to play varsity at the time) and ended his college career on the 1961 National Championship team playing middle guard on defense. Woody Hayes nicknamed Larry “Spunky” because it embodied the kind of energy that he brought onto the field. The nickname stuck—Larry took that Spunk into everything he did.

After college, Larry enlisted in the army in 1963 and was discharged in 1966 as a first lieutenant in the 101st Airborne Division. He trained at Fort Campbell earning the Parachutist Badge and the National Defense Service Medal. He also played football at Fort Campbell as a member of the army football team.

With the degree in business he earned at OSU, Larry was involved in various business ventures throughout his life. His business acumen led to many entrepreneurial projects, as well as a brief career as a stockbroker.

In 1969, he married Claudia P. Morettini at St. Joseph Cathedral in Columbus. They had two children, Lawrence Andrew Stephens and Gabrielle Marie Stephens and lived in Worthington, Ohio for many years.

Forever the athlete, Larry enjoyed an active lifestyle and excelled at things he had never tried before (annoying his family members and delighting his teammates). He had regular golf outings with friends into his seventies, he played tennis when he was young, took up biking the trails around Columbus, and enjoyed hiking with his children. In later years, he could be found walking around Antrim Lake and then around his assisted living facility, pushing himself to keep active.

Larry is the type of person who after a quadruple bypass surgery in 2007, was walked around to other patients' rooms by his doctors to encourage recovery and patient morale. He had "down" days, but he didn't let those moments consume or define him, and when the Buckeyes lost a game, he would famously say, "I'm going to bed" and would wake up the next day full of positivity. Larry made an impression on people he only met once and never met a stranger. He truly made friends everywhere he went and fun and laughter soon followed.

While he enjoyed pushing himself to the limits physically in his earlier years, later in life Larry immensely valued quality time with family and was a loving and supportive father and grandfather. He never wanted to miss a family gathering or an opportunity to see his grandchildren. While his memory of individual life events blurred and changed with Alzheimer's, his orientation to his loved ones always remained strong, and his charisma, humor, and positivity remained intact.

Larry is survived by his children, Lawrence Andrew Stephens, Gabrielle (Blake) Stephens and his grandchildren, Marco Prieto and Ryan Cooper.

Please join the family for a memorial service to honor Larry's life on September 28, 2024 at 10 a.m. at Immaculate Conception Church. Mass at 10:00 a.m.; military salute and luncheon directly following at the church.

Flowers can be sent to Immaculate Conception Church by 9 a.m. on Saturday, September 28th or in lieu of flowers, donations can be made in Larry's name to the Alzheimer's Association.

Previous Events

Memorial Mass

SEP **28**. 10:00 AM (ET)

Immaculate Conception Catholic Church
414 E. N. Broadway
Columbus, OH 43214

Tribute Wall

SB

“ Gabrielle and I became fast friends when we were in middle school and I spent a lot of time at their house from then through high school. Mr. Stephens was a hoot! He was always so kind, fun and just an overall enjoyable person. Thinking of him now I still smile and giggle a little. I am very lucky to have known him and had our experiences together.

sarah barnes - September 27, 2024 at 01:17 PM

SB

“ Sarah Barnes purchased the Simply Elegant Spa thiphyllum for the family of Larry Patrick Stephens.



Sarah Barnes - September 27, 2024 at 01:05 PM

JL

“ 1 file added to the album Larry P Stephens



Jim Larr - September 27, 2024 at 01:03 PM

JL

“ Jim and Karlen Larr planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Larry Patrick Stephens.

Jim and Karlen Larr - September 23, 2024 at 04:55 PM



“ *Sacred Duty Spray was purchased for the family of Larry Patrick Stephens.*



September 23, 2024 at 04:55 PM



“ *1 file added to the album Larry P Stephens*



Jim Larr - September 23, 2024 at 12:43 PM



“ *3 files added to the album Larry P Stephens*



Jim Larr - September 22, 2024 at 12:32 PM



Thank you for sharing these, Jim.

Gabrielle Stephens - September 26, 2024 at 11:47 AM

JL

“ 26 files added to the album Larry P Stephens



Jim Larr - September 12, 2024 at 11:10 AM

JL

“ 41 files added to the album Larry P Stephens



Jim Larr - September 06, 2024 at 10:50 AM



“ *May the love of God surround you and your family during this difficult time,
May you come to know that the love of God is with you always,*

May your memories of Larry Patrick Stephens, give you peace, comfort and strength...

Rest now in the arms of our Lord your mission on earth is complete. I thank you for your service to our Country and my Freedom. You will not be forgotten.

*My thoughts
and prayers to the family of*

US Army Veteran, Larry Patrick Stephens, is “A True American Hero” God Bless†

† Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. John 15:13 †

Cheryl Skinner, Tri-state Military Museum - August 29, 2024 at 06:11 AM

DZ

“ *My condolences to Larry's family. I was a classmate at Sycamore Grade School thru Coshocton High School with Larry. (We were boyfriend/girlfriend in 5th grade, he gave me a necklace for Christmas.) Always a good friend to so many of his classmates. Rest in peace, Larry.*

Dixie (Emerson) Zack - August 28, 2024 at 08:37 AM

GA

“ 1 file added to the album *Larry P Stephens*



Gabrielle - August 27, 2024 at 03:26 PM

GA

“ 1 file added to the album *Football*



Gabrielle - August 27, 2024 at 11:50 AM

BT

Dave Tingley is right next to Spunky. We will miss him and his wonderful story telling of the good old days at OSU. Roommates in college, Wyandotte apts and friends forever! Barb and Dave

Barb Tingley - September 01, 2024 at 09:09 PM

JL

He was my best friend since we were nine years old growing up in Coshocton. Later in life we enjoyed many trips together from coast to coast, and some memorable football trips to Michigan and the Rose Bowl. I have posted many pictures of our adventures. He was the best and sorely missed.

Jim Larr

Jim Larr - September 07, 2024 at 11:36 AM