

# Tom Fariss Marsh

1941 - 2021



Tom Fariss Marsh died at home surrounded by family at the age of 80 on Friday, October 15, 2021. Tom was born in Amarillo, Texas on May 13, 1941 to Estelle Fariss Marsh and Stanley Marsh, Jr. As a teenager he worked as a roustabout and at the Fort Worth Stockyards. After graduating from Amarillo High, Tom studied international relations at Princeton University and graduated in 1963 from the Woodrow Wilson School. Later that year, Tom married his hometown sweetheart and true love, Charlene Cline Marsh, and they began a life of adventure together.

Tom's entrepreneurial spirit led him to follow in the footsteps of his father and grandfather who developed oil and gas properties in the Texas Panhandle. Over the years, his business interests expanded beyond oil and gas exploration to include operating television affiliates, cofounding the first commercial feed lot in the Texas Panhandle, and becoming a founding member of Commodities Corporation. Tom helped start dozens of business ventures over several decades and treasured his business associates, insisting that he only partner with "gentlemen with brains." Despite his many successes, including early investments in Russia and China, he remained humble: he liked to quip that he had drilled dry holes in 19 states and seven foreign countries. During their 58 years of marriage, Tom and Charlene made Dallas their home and cultivated a rewarding family life marked by dedication to each other and their children. Twice they lived in New York, and it became a center of their life for several decades. They shared an intense love of art and travel and a profound curiosity about cultures around the world, frequently traveling to Europe and Asia. As newlyweds they flew to Australia where they saw a new band called The Beatles perform to a packed stadium. There was nothing that pleased Tom more than gathering his family for a good meal with lively, far-ranging conversation. No place was more special for these gatherings than his family ranch in northern New Mexico. He enjoyed barbecuing, playing tennis, swimming, bird hunting, skiing, and alpine hiking. He took his children on hiking trips all over the world. He was deeply interested in ecology, captivated by irrigation systems, and proud to have planted thousands of trees during his life. A prodigious reader, Tom was an understated, clear, and measured thinker, and deeply intellectual. Tom loved books, not as ornaments to his life, but for the knowledge they gave him. He was a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, served on multiple boards, and was involved in innumerable educational, medical, and arts institutions. He was erudite, exceedingly funny, gracious, and principled. The abiding sadness of his life was the loss of his son, Thomas Fariss Marsh, Jr., in 1979. He is survived by his wife, three children, Estee Kellogg and her husband Luke, Charles Marsh and his wife Louise, C.C. Marsh and her husband David Beach, ten grandchildren, C.C. Kellogg, Coley Kellogg, Tom Kellogg, Will Marsh, Luke Marsh, Tennessee Marsh, Ginnie Marsh, Nicholas Beach, Estelle Beach, Tom Beach, his younger brother, Mikie, and many nephews and nieces. Donations may be made to UTSW, UTMDA, or another charity of your choosing.

Sparkman/Hillcrest Funeral Home & Memorial Park  
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Published by New York Times on Oct. 24, 2021