



J. Wylie Harris Jr.

June 28, 1928 - May 3, 2018

J. Wylie Harris, Jr. (Wylie) was born in Beaumont, Texas in 1928. Wylie and his sister, Carla Ruth, were raised in Beaumont by their grandparents, Charles and Vida Heisig after the death of his mother during childbirth. During WWII he served in the merchant marines on oil tankers delivering fuel to England. After the war, he attended the University of Oklahoma (OU) where he received his degree in Petroleum Engineering and Geology — and it was at OU that he met Sue Anne Williford. They married in 1949 and moved to Houston where they raised their four children. Wylie loved the OU football team and enjoyed the annual battle with University of Texas (UT) where all of his children attended school. Interestingly enough, Wylie's great, great, great grandfather was also the chief of all Cherokee tribes.

After working for several major oil companies in the 1950s, he began exploring the remote mountains of South America and Africa by muleback which eventually resulted in several successful mining operations, as well as many close calls with communist guerrillas and other stories he would not tell.

Wylie loved to laugh, tease and play jokes. He also enjoyed playing tennis with his children and loved their annual ski trips to Vail where the family would ski all day and play Spades at night. He was an avid organic gardener and spent many hours in the company of his beloved dogs.

In 1978, Wylie married Sandra Naylor. After retiring in Houston, in 1990, they moved to Salem, AR where they spent 15 years enjoying the country lifestyle. Eventually, they moved back to Montgomery, Texas where they could be closer to family and friends.

Wylie was politically active in the Republican Party and enjoyed his “solid as a rock” reputation. He was strongly opinionated, resulting in many friends and family reaching out to him regularly for advice.

Wylie is survived by his loving wife, Sandra Harris and his three children, Rebecca Harris Terry of Peapack, New Jersey, John Harris of St. Helena, California and Mark Harris of Sandy, Utah and stepson, Joey Naylor and wife Maile and their three children Mimi, Dylan and Lily of Boston, Massachusetts. He is predeceased by his youngest daughter, Carla Harris-Best of Charlottesville, Virginia. He is also survived by grandchildren; Hillary Keller and Julia Prey of New York, Kent and Beau Harris of California, Clay, Casey and Leigh Harris of Utah, and Annelise Tao Best-Harris of Virginia. He is also survived by his sister Carla Ruth Robinson, of Seattle, Washington.

Wylie passed away peacefully at his home surrounded by his family and dogs at his side on May 3rd. His unique style and deep sense of loyalty will be missed. His family would like to express their sincere appreciation to his wife Sandra and care-giver Talia Pascual for their love, support and care for him, particularly over the last two years of his life. Along with many gold bars, Wylie will be buried in his family plot in Beaumont, Texas.

Tribute Wall



“ *J. Wylie Harris Jr.*

November 15, 2022 at 08:33 PM