



Art Chapman

NOV 12, 1944 - OCT 17, 2024



Scan to Visit

Table of Contents

Obituary	Page 3
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Art Chapman was born with the gift of laughter, and he was generous in sharing that gift with everyone from family and friends to acquaintances and complete strangers.

There's an old saying about living as if everyone is your friend, or nobody is your friend. Art never met anyone who wasn't at least a potential friend. As a former colleague put it, with his death, "The world is less fun and certainly less smart," the kind of man who made friendship an art form.

He died on October 17th in Fayetteville, Arkansas, just short of what would have been his 80th birthday.

Art truly was a man in full. If you ask a group of children ages five or six what they want to be when they grow up, chances are Art was at least one, and perhaps several, of those choices.

He was a proud member of the US Marine Corps. A Denton police officer, a longtime journalist, a saltwater and fly fisherman, a golfer, and a storyteller without peer, often making himself the butt of his own stories.

He also was an avid motorcyclist and gardener. As a horseman, he regularly competed in team roping competitions across Texas, where such things are taken very seriously. He was an omnivorous avid reader and researcher, an expert in Texas history who enjoyed sharing that expertise with readers.

Art probably was best known as a writer and journalist over a long career of 40-plus years. His career started at the University of North Texas student newspaper, where he covered sports after complaining about the newspaper's sports coverage. The response was a challenge: "If you think you can do better, then do it." And so, he did. That response was pure Chapman. Experienced or not, just jump in and give it all you've got. And what he had was usually more than enough.

From there, he went on to the Denton Record-Chronicle, where he started in sports



Obituary

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and moved up to become managing editor. From there it was on to the Dallas Times Herald and finally, the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, where he worked for more than 30 years.

Although he did everything it was possible to do in a newsroom, within that career he was never more popular than he was as the Fort Worth Star-Telegram's television columnist. His work was syndicated to more than 140 newspapers. He also served two years as president of the National Television Critics Association. He also wrote a food column, published a cookbook, was the State, Ft Worth Stock Show, and Features columnist, and wrote an outdoor column for several years.

His travels as a journalist took him to France, China, and all over the United States. While he was born in Kansas City and lived his last years in Fayetteville, Art was a Texan through and through. Whenever he went, he brought a little - and sometimes a lot - of Texas with him.

A friend remembers watching Art outside of a posh hotel in Beverly Hills roping a fire hydrant "just to keep in practice." He did the same thing in New York City, only this time his target was a garbage can in a back alley, where he was approached by a police officer who wanted to know "What the hell do you think you're doing?" When Art explained, careful to mention that he was a former cop himself, the officer left him to it, with the comment, "Just don't let it get away."

All of this pales in comparison to the pride he took as a husband and father. Art and Mary Lynne Chapman were married for 57 years, and together years before that. Thin or flush, their lives were filled with adventure and travel and laughter and love until the day he died. While they lived as one, they still gave each other enough space to be themselves.

Without a doubt, their proudest achievement was their daughter Casey, a constant shining light in their lives. If a child reflects the parents, then Casey Chapman is proof that Art and Lynne Chapman combined to be a very bright light themselves. Art was born in Kansas City, Missouri. Graduated from Paseo High School. Enlisted in the Marine Corps, after moved and settled in North Texas where he met and married Mary Lynne Chapman and lived up until the past several years when they moved to Fayetteville, AR.



Obituary

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He is preceded in death by his mother and stepfather Bertha and Brian Shugart, and father, Wiley Chapman. Survived by his wife Lynne, daughter Casey, brother Daryl Shugart, wife Robin, stepbrother Brian Shugart, and wife Gail. Uncle, Cousin, and friend to many. He will be missed.



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Art by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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