



Marsha Jo Orloff

March 22, 1947 - October 21, 2023

A little of the light, joy and fun has gone from the world for many with the sudden and unexpected passing of Marsha Orloff. She was one of the great romantics. She had a deep love of the world – love of nature, love of music, and most of all, love of her family and friends. Putting other people first, respecting the feelings of others, teaching young people hard concepts and helping young people grow into their better selves was her gift. To children, she was a warm, caring, sympathetic, kind and compassionate teacher. To adults, she was a truly caring, selfless friend and confidant.

Marsha was born in Tyler, Texas in 1947 to Fannie and Lewis Forman. She graduated from the University of Texas at Austin in 1969 with degrees in Mathematics and Government. She met Gary on a blind date while at UT where she was a member of Delta Phi Epsilon. They married in 1970 and were inseparable until the end.

She began her professional career in 1969 as a teacher of sixth and seventh grade mathematics at Jackson Intermediate in Pasadena. During this time, she also earned Masters hours attending classes at UofH. She retired in 1974 to start a family with Gary. She loved and took pride in her daughters, Denise and Julie, and was enchanted by her now three year old granddaughter, Olivia. She and Gary were consumed by Livy, and when she wasn't directly involved with her, she was shopping for her or working on plans for vacations

for the whole family that would include age appropriate sights and activities for Livy. She was a wonderful, caring daughter to her mother, who suffered years with Alzheimer's. Marsha was herself a cancer survivor. She also was an avid fan of Houston's professional sports teams, and of course, UT.

Civically active, Marsha was president of the Houston Bar Association Auxiliary and representative to the American Bar Association Auxiliary. She received the HBAA lifetime volunteer service award in 2006, and additionally an appreciation award on the HBAA's 60th anniversary. Ever the teacher, she developed the Auxiliary's student essay program that has led to scholarships for winners from each of Houston's three law schools. She was president of Congregation Beth Israel Sisterhood, president of Houston Kappa Moms and a lifetime member of B'nai Brith women. From each of these organizations she developed lifelong friendships.

Marsha loved having her home and life filled with flowers and music. She was a prodigy on the piano, her parents being asked if they would allow her to go on a national tour at the young age of 13. They declined, but she filled her daughters with a love of music, making sure they learned to play the piano. Her family especially loved Claire de Lune and Rhapsody in Blue. She played occasionally for herself in her last years and was beginning to teach Livy to play.

She is survived by her husband Gary, daughters Denise Starr of Washington, D.C. and Julie Orloff and her husband, Adam Moreland of Atlanta, GA, granddaughter Olivia Carter Moreland, Marsha's sister Patricia Nelkin and niece Libby Mintz and nephew Lane Nelkin. A Memorial Service will be held in Marsha's honor at 11:00 am, Wednesday, October 25th, at Congregation Beth Israel, 5600 North Braeswood, Houston, Texas. In lieu of flowers, donations in her memory may be made to Congregation Beth Israel or the Houston Bar Association Auxiliary Foundation.

Cemetery Details

Beth Israel Memorial Garden

1101 Antoine Dr.
Houston, TX 77055

Previous Events

Memorial Service

OCT 25. 11:00 AM (CT)

Congregation Beth Israel
5600 N. Braeswood Blvd.
Houston, TX 77096

Tribute Wall

RA

“ *Marsha was always a Lady. Gentle and kind in all situations. It was an honor to know her.* ”

Ruth Attar - March 14, 2025 at 09:51 AM

MG

“ *I send my deepest sympathies to you Gary and your daughters. Marsha was such a beautiful lady. She never failed to say thank you and show her appreciation for the many Bracewell events I coordinated through the years. It always meant a lot to me. My prayers will be with you and your family. Sincerely, Marilyn George.* ”

Marilyn George - October 24, 2023 at 04:57 PM

TS

“ *Linda and I are so fortunate to have known Marsha and Gary since 1974. Over the years we enjoyed many dinners together as well as Astros and Texans games and were delighted to share in Marsha's glee when Jose Altuve walked it off against the Yankees in 2019. Marsha was a kind, genteel, and accomplished lady who always thought of others and went out of her way to support her many friends and organizations. Her obituary says that she was “enchanted” and “consumed” by Livy, which actually understates her intense feelings for that precious little girl. Our thoughts are with Gary, Denise, Julie, and Marsha’s other family members and friends who, like us, are stunned by and grieving over her unexpected passing.* ”

Thomas L Shelton - October 24, 2023 at 12:01 PM

AR

“ Dear Gary,

So sorry to learn of the untimely passing away of Marsha. We are out of the country and unable to attend the memorial service. May she rest in peace and may her memory always be for a blessing.

Love and hugs

Adriana and Steve

Adriana Rosenbaum - October 23, 2023 at 05:14 PM