

CELEBRATING THE LIFE & MEMORY OF
Charles M. Kittrell II

DATE, TIME & PLACE OF SERVICE

Saturday, May 27, 2023 - 10:00 A.M.
Prairie Grove Cemetery
Prairie Grove, Arkansas

OFFICIATING

Bart Edwards

MEMORIALS

Butterfield Trail Village Memory Unit
1923 E Joyce Blvd.
Fayetteville, Arkansas 72703

APPRECIATION

On behalf of the family, we wish to express their gratitude
for your many acts of kindness, and for your
attendance at the funeral service.

Luginbuel Funeral Home
Prairie Grove, Arkansas

online guest book, visit www.luginbuel.com

Celebrating
THE LIFE AND MEMORY OF



Charles Minor Kittrell II

June 14, 1926 - May 23, 2023

Charles M. Kittrell, a former top executive of Phillips Petroleum Company and a leading spokesman for the oil industry during the Arab oil embargo of the 1970s, died May 23, 2023 at the age of 96.

Kittrell had retired from Phillips in 1987 after a 36-year career with the company minus 15 of them as a member of its board of directors. At retirement, he was the executive vice president responsible for most of the company's staff organizations, including research & development, engineering, human resources, environmental protection and public and government affairs.

It was during the 1970's, however, that Kittrell moved into the national spotlight. Oil prices had soared following an embargo by the Arab members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), and gasoline was more expensive and in short supply. As lines formed at service stations, angry motorists demanded explanations from the oil industry.

Kittrell, the head of Phillips' worldwide petroleum refining, distribution, and marketing operations, was one of the few industry executives who responded, giving speeches around the country and appearing on radio and television programs to answer questions and improve public understanding of the situation. With his wide-range interests, he did not fit the stereotype many had of an executive from "Big Oil." A Marine with strong ties to the military, he also had a personal friendship with philosopher Eric Hoffer and membership on the board of Ballet Aspen. He was able to simplify complex issues, and his direct manner and clear explanations drew praise even from industry opponents.

Oil supply and distribution was Kittrell's first responsibility when he joined Phillips in 1950 with an industrial engineering degree from the University of Arkansas. A native of Gregory, Arkansas, Kittrell joined the Marine Corps after graduation from high school in 1943. He served in both the Pacific and China theaters during World War II before returning to Arkansas for college.

At Phillips, Kittrell advanced rapidly in the supply and distribution department. He became the assistant to the department's manager in 1957, manager of the department in 1963 and vice president of supply and distribution in 1966.

Five years later, at age 45, Kittrell was picked to head Phillips' growing chemicals operations, named a senior vice president and elected to the company's board of directors. He became executive vice president of petroleum products in 1974 and held this position for six years before taking responsibility for staff organizations.

While at Phillips, Kittrell served as a special advisor to the President's Council on Physical Fitness and as a director of the Institute for Resource Management, an organization formed by actor Robert Redford to resolve conflicts between conservation, environmental protection and development of natural resources. He retained these interests after retirement, becoming an avid mountain climber and continuing his work with Redford's organization. Kittrell made a successful ascent of Kilimanjaro, Africa's tallest mountain and climbed several of the tallest mountains in the United States. He became, at the age of 63, the oldest American known to have reached the 21,500-foot advanced base camp on Mount Everest in Tibet.

Kittrell maintained strong ties with the University of Arkansas, which named him to its Engineering Hall of Fame in 1967, awarded him an honorary doctor of laws degree in 1981 and presented him a Distinguished Alumni Citation in 1985. Kittrell was a member and chairman of the University's Development Council and Chairman of the school's successful fund-raising campaign to save "Old Main."

Kittrell also was a member of the board of the National Association of Manufacturers and a former chairman of the American Petroleum Institute's General Committee on Transportation. He also served on the board of WestStar Bank in Bartlesville, Oklahoma, and the national advisory board of First Commercial Bank at Little Rock, Arkansas.

In retirement, Kittrell divided his time among homes in Bartlesville, Oklahoma, Prairie Grove, Arkansas and Snowmass Village, Colorado.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Faye. Survivors include his children, Carmen Weaver, Niki Vos, and Chuck Kittrell; 7 grandchildren and 5 great grandchildren.