



# Richard Gray Avent

APR 2, 1918 - JUL 21, 2008



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OF LONGVIEW AND HENDERSON

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## **Richard Gray Avent**

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**R**ichard Gray Avent, entrepreneur, educator, and lawyer, died Monday, July 21, 2008 at age 90 after a long battle with Alzheimer's. He was born to Col. Hugh P. Avent and Ruth Gray Avent in Palestine, Texas on April 2, 1918. Dick spent his formative years as an army brat. He graduated from high school in Greenville, South Carolina and attended Clemson University. He moved to Austin, Texas in 1940 to attend the University of Texas School of Law. World War II intervened and Dick enlisted in the Army-Air Corp on December 8, 1941 and became a Counter-Intelligence Officer in the European Theater. He often worked behind enemy lines in occupied France and enjoyed living on the edge in that part of his life. His experiences in 1945 documenting atrocities at two Nazi concentration camps stuck with him the rest of his life. Dick returned to Austin and finished law school in 1948. While in Austin, Dick served as Assistant District Attorney for Travis County, was president of the Young Lawyers, active with the State Bar of Texas, and admitted to the United States District Courts for the Western District of Texas, the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans, and the United States Supreme Court. Dick's real love, however, was real estate and he was a sub-divider and builder in Austin. In 1951, he met his future bride, Frances Ava Roddy. They married and lived in Austin, Texas until 1966.

After 20 years of building and subdividing in Austin, Dick became interested in teaching on a Collegiate Level, obtained his Masters Degree in Educational Psychology from the University of Texas at Austin and moved his family to Kilgore to join the faculty at Kilgore College. He taught Criminal Law and Psychology. In 1969, he opened Learning Foundations, a Longview tutoring center. He managed real estate investments in later years.

Dick was a lifetime Episcopalian and served on the Church vestry in Kilgore and later in Longview at Trinity Episcopal Church. In his younger days, Dick was a scratch



## Obituary

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golfer. At age 13, he won a local tournament at Augusta Country Club in Greenville, south Carolina and was honored to play a round of golf with golf legend Bobby Jones. Dick Avent was a Life Member of the Texas Ex-Students Association, a Rotarian and Paul Harris Fellow. He was a Master Mason, Scottish Rite Mason, and a Shriner.

He leaves as a legacy his love of life and family and dry sense of humor. Dick and his wife Frances traveled the world.

Dick was preceded in death by his parents, Colonel Hugh P. Avent and Ruth Gray Avent, brother, Hugh Avent, Jr. and sister, Dr. Henrietta Avent. He is survived by his wife, Frances Avent, and sisters, Frances Grove and Mason Hunter. He is also survived by a son and daughter, Robert Avent and his wife, Vy; Ava Avent Welge and her husband, Jack, and grandchildren, Kirsten Welge, Kathleen Welge, William Billy Avent, and Scott Avent and numerous cousins, nieces, and nephews.

Memorial services will be held 10 AM Saturday, July 26, 2008 at Trinity Episcopal Church, Longview, Texas with the Reverend Kevin Wittmayer officiating under direction of Rader Funeral Home of Longview, Texas. The family will receive friends from 6 until 8 PM on Friday, July 25, 2008 at Rader Funeral Home, 1617 Judson Rd., Longview, Texas.

Memorials may be made to the Scottish Rite Hospital for Children.



## Tribute Wall

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**Anonymous** posted:

Dear Aunt Frances, Ava, and Bobby,I was so sorry to hear of Uncle Dick's passing. I remember him from those many years ago in Atlanta. Lazy, carefree summer days. My thoughts are with you all at this time.Love,Mary Anne Mimi###imported-begin##Mimi Grove Owen###imported-end##

July 28 at 7:00 PM



**Anonymous** posted:

Dr. Avent was a compassionate man whose service to those around him made this world a better place. He had a huge positive impact on me as a teenager. He showed an interest in me and introduced me to the life changing idea that we can change our lives by changing our attitude. I am living proof that this is a true principle. As recently as a few years ago I revisited some of the materials he shared with me as I faced new challenges in my life! I am so sorry for your loss. God Bless the entire Avent clan and all those who loved him! Sincerely, Mack McGowen###imported-begin##Harold McGowen###imported-end##

July 25 at 7:00 PM



**Anonymous** posted:

Dear Ava and family,I am so sorry for the loss of your beloved father. My thoughts and prayers are with you and your family. May our Lord bless you and keep you and grant you His comfort and peace.With love, Kathy and family###imported-begin##Kathy Sponberg McLaughlin###imported-end##

July 25 at 7:00 PM



**Anonymous** posted:

Mrs. Avent, Ava, Bob and families,My condolences to you with the loss of Mr. Avent. I have such fond memories of being in his psychology class at Kilgore College back in the 60's and all the interesting stories he told us. Then, every time I saw Mr. Avent afterward he was always so cordial and friendly and interesting to talk with. Just know that my thoughts are with you during this time.With Gods blessing for your comfort,Mike###imported-begin##Mike Kerr###imported-end##

July 24 at 7:00 PM



## Tribute Wall

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**Anonymous** posted:

Jack and Ava,I was so sorry to read of the loss of Mr. Avent. I know you were very close. Although I am far away, I am grieving with you in your loss.##imported-begin##Amy Hill##imported-end##

July 23 at 7:00 PM



**Anonymous** posted:

I will be keeping your whole family in my prayers at this time of loss. May God comfort you as only He can.##imported-begin##Pamela Billingsley Pyeatt##imported-end##

July 23 at 7:00 PM



**Anonymous** posted:

Ava and Family.I just read about your terrible loss. Mr. Avent was such a kind man - especially to me when I moved to Longview and worked for Learning Foundations. His encouragement meant a lot to me. My thoughts and prayers are with you and your family at this difficult time. Fondly, Linda Mobley##imported-begin##Linda Mobley##imported-end##

July 23 at 7:00 PM



**Anonymous** posted:

Ava-----I am so sorry for the loss of your dad----what an interesting life he lived! Please know that you are in my thoughts and prayers. Jan Robberson Wylie##imported-begin##Jan Robberson Wylie##imported-end##

July 23 at 7:00 PM



**Anonymous** posted:

Bob, Ava, and Frances,I was so sorry to hear about Mr. Avent's death. Some of the best times of my life were spent at your house listening to his stories. As a matter of fact, my neighbors and I were sitting out at the lake one night last week and I caught myself repeating one of them. Even though I haven't seen him in probably thirty years, I will miss him. You guys are in our prayers.James and Family##imported-begin##James, Donna, Blair & Jordan Gee##imported-end##

July 23 at 7:00 PM



## **Memories only last if you share them**

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



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