



Ralph Donald Spencer

March 17, 1927 - May 3, 2007

Memorial Service will be held on Thursday, May 3rd, 2007 at 11:30 am at the First Christian Church in Huntsville Tx., with the Rev. Kyle Dennis officiating. Burial will follow on Friday, May 4th, at 11:00 am at Austin Memorial Cemetery, in Austin, Tx. Ralph Donald Spencer Sr. was a loving and devoted husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather. Ralph passed away on April 29th, 2007 in Huntsville. He was born on March 17, 1927 to Ruth Fields Spencer and Frank W. Spencer in Breckenridge, Texas. He served in the US Navy in WWII on the USS Shamrock in the Pacific Theatre. Upon his return to Texas after the war, Ralph attended Tarleton State University & Texas Tech University, where he earned his Bachelor of Architecture degree in 1951. Ralph was an architect, and practiced his career in Lubbock, Austin, and Huntsville, Texas. Over his 56 years of practice, he designed and completed many educational and institutional projects across the State of Texas. He also served as Executive Director of the Texas State Board of Architectural Examiners in Austin from 1970-74. Ralph is preceded in death by his first wife, Patricia Ann Hoover. Ralph and Pat were married in 1948 in Stephenville, Texas. They were married for 49 years. Their survivors include sons R. Don Spencer II and his wife, Elizabeth of San Francisco , CA. and Richard Kevin Spencer and his wife, Paula, of Austin, Texas. Ralph's surviving grandchildren from Don and Elizabeth are Ralph D. Spencer III of Pacific Grove, CA, and Ford Spencer of Pasadena, Ca. Ralph's great grandchildren from Ralph III and his wife Felicia are Ethan and Olivia Spencer of Pacific Grove Ca. Ralph's

surviving grandchildren from Richard and Paula are Christopher Spencer of Austin, and Jonathan and Steven Spencer of College Station . Ralph is survived by his wife of 8 years, Vaneta Williams. They have lived in Huntsville for the past 7 years, where they have been active members of the community, and the First Christian Church. Ralph's work as the architect for Sam Houston State University projects over the past years has included the Lee Drain Building, English-Evans, Music II, and the Farrington Science Building renovations. He was also the designer and author of the SHSU Master Plans, which have been implemented for present and future growth at the University. Ralph's passion for life, family and his work was exemplary, and he will be forever fondly remembered by his loving family and friends. Those wishing to leave memorial condolences for the family may do so at www.shmfh.com.

Tribute Wall

CW

“ I happened to look up Ralph Spencer out of curiosity and found that he passed many years ago, but want to leave a comment about the profound impact that he had on me. Ralph was my mentor while going through the Architecture Program at UT Austin, and eventually my employer once I graduated. I learned so much from him and will forever be grateful for the opportunities he provided. He also never hesitated to give me credit (when due) in the male dominated field, which was rare at the time. He was a great man who left an incredible impact on the architecture world.

Christine Wilkinson White - December 02, 2025 at 03:13 PM



“ *Ralph Donald Spencer*

November 15, 2022 at 08:33 PM

PD

“ *To all,
Ralph was a dear friend and professor of mine at the University of Texas in Austin back in 1976. He was a mentor in my architectural career and the reason I went to the Big City, as he called it, in Houston, Texas to practice. I just found out that he passed away 6 years ago but will always have fond memories of how helpful he was in my career and personal life. Thanks for the memories Ralph!*

Patrick Dingrando - July 09, 2013 at 03:10 PM

CL

“ Dear Don & Liz, We were so sorry to hear of your dad's death, Don. Wish we could have seen you....please call us when you are in Austin. Thinking of you all.

Love, Carol & Joe

Carol & Joe Lea - June 12, 2007 at 11:48 AM

JM

“ Dear Mrs. Spencer and family,

Don and I were saddened to learn of Ralph's death. Although Don only knew him briefly through Jerry Turlington and the Geezerites, he told me on more than one occasion that Mr. Spencer was knowledgeable, wise, and a patriot who stood up for the truth as he saw it. As for me, I found him to be a true gentleman in every sense of the word. What a legacy Ralph leaves for his family. No doubt you will find great comfort in knowing that he made a difference.

Don and Janet McMillan

Janet and Don McMillan - May 02, 2007 at 09:34 PM

NJ

“ Dear Spencer Family, I had the pleasure of knowing your father when I was the Executive Director of the SHSU Alumni Association from 1977-1992. I was fortunate enough to see him in Huntsville during the last two years. What a brilliant man and certainly the gentleman! Please carry with you in your hearts the many wonderful things your dad did for you and the many great plans he did for Sam Houston and other places. Norma Dell Jones of Lovelady, TX

Norma Dell Jones - May 01, 2007 at 03:43 PM