



Leon M. Avery

April 2, 2008

Leon M. Avery, 83 of Grand Island, FL, died Wednesday at home. A native of Syracuse, he lived in Camillus for 30 years before moving to Florida in 1980. He was a veteran of World War II. He retired in 1979 from Crouse-Hinds as a Vice President after 37 years. Leon was predeceased by his wife of 50 years Marjorie (Harris) Avery in 1996. He is survived by two sons Donald of Annapolis, MD and Richard of Summit, NJ; three grandchildren D. Scott Avery of Sterling, VA, Melissa Ann (Avery) Glunt of Roaring Spring, PA and Kaitlyn Avery of Summit, NJ; four great grandchildren Hailey Noel Glunt, Paige Riley Glunt, Maya Almaquer and Phoenix Almaquer. Services will be at 2 pm Saturday at the B.L. Bush & Sons Funeral Home, 10 Genesee St, Camillus. Calling hours will be from 11 am to 2 pm Saturday at funeral home. Burial will be in Greenlawn Memorial Park, Warners following the service. Contributions may be made to Hospice Foundation of Lake & Sumter, Inc, 12300 Lake Park, Tavares, FL, 32778. Please sign his guest book at www.BLBUSH.com

Information from the Funeral of Leon Avery held at the Funeral Home Born in Syracuse, NY 1925 and was the oldest of three children. His father George (WWI veteran) died when Leon was in high school (~1941) forcing him to look for work to help support the family. He found a job as the mail runner at Crouse-Hinds Co. WWII intervened and he ended up joining the Army Air Corps in 1943. He faked the color blindness test so he could fly. He then trained all over the US in B17 bombers, as a gunner. He was finally assigned to the 20th Air Corps, 794th bomber squadron. Leaving NYC in early 1944, he

hopped continents east until he ended up in Calcutta, India, where a new B29 bomber wing was forming. He “camped” in tents and flew missions over the “Burma Hump” to China and Japan, in an airplane named “High Stepper” complete with a tawdry female painted on the fuselage. The squadron was ultimately moved to Tinian Island in the Pacific where raids on major cities in Japan continued until the end of the war. He and his mates were happily confused one morning when their missions were abruptly cancelled. The Enola Gay took off with the first atomic bomb on board. Later, he was flying back to base from a bombing mission when the war ended. By November 1945 he was in NC and discharged after being awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Medal, and various other combat awards. He received most of them in 1982, much to his surprise. He kept in touch with his crew – who all survived the war – for years to come. Returning to Syracuse, he married Marjorie Harris, whom he had first met in kindergarten at Delaware School. He returned to Crouse-Hinds Co. as an apprentice draftsman. Over the years he excelled in technical work, and holds seven patents on lighting product designs. They raised two sons while Leon attended Syracuse University College at night, attaining a degree in electrical engineering and later majoring in marketing. His career took him into the then new technology of computerized traffic control equipment at Crouse-Hinds. He became the director of product R&D and later the VP of International Marketing. He served on the Presidential committee that created traffic control standards for the United States. He traveled extensively in Central and South America as well as the Middle East. He worked with heads of state, was honored as a “professor” in Mexico and had a private audience with the Pope regarding technology improvements in the Vatican. By 1979, he was ready and able to retire and moved to central Lake County, Florida. He became very active in the local Kiwanis Club and served as its president. He established reading programs for the region’s prison system inmates to improve their quality of life, and enjoyed entertaining their many friends. He loved to fish, sail and read. At one point he complained that he had read “everything” in his local library. He

also complained once when a fishing partner was not using any hooks, that it was “un-American.” His wife Marjorie of 50 years, died in 1996 losing to her second round of cancer. Leon never really overcame the loss. In recent years he had sponsored a high school drop out – the grand daughter of his then long-time companion – to live under his care with the condition she would graduate. It worked. He came from a place of having nothing – even the family apartment burned to the ground when he was a teenager where little was salvaged – to a place of abundance and, generosity.

Tribute Wall

B(

“ Dear Don & Richard, It seems so strange to be writing to you as Don & Richard when all I can remember is "Donnie & Dickie Avery, the boys who lived next door! Where has all the time gone??? I have kept up a bit with your mom & dad thru Kathy Davis; of course, I was sadden to learn of your dad's passing. We can feel confident he is in a much better place now and the world is a better place because of his life. You are in my thoughts and prayers. Sincerely, Barb

Barb Resseguie (Doster) - April 13, 2008 at 12:00 AM

AC

“ Dear Richard and Donald, May you be comforted in knowing that your father had lead a full life, and that he was fortunate enough to have, and enjoy, grandchildren, and even a great grandchild. Please accept my condolences on the passage of your father.

Arthur Carp - April 06, 2008 at 12:00 AM

S(

“ Don and Richard, we are so sorry to hear of your dad's passing. Hang on to the good memories and they will help you get through. My dad passed away Jan 2nd of this year and we all are doing our best to get through the grieving process. Mom also sends her condolences to you and your family. Take care and remember that you are in our thoughts.

Sue Rosenthal (Massie) - April 06, 2008 at 12:00 AM

JC

“ *Richard and Donald, As a long-time friend of Richard's, I've been aware of the deteriorating condition of your dad. Now that he's passed on, let me express my condolences to you and your families. May your father be in a place where he experiences true peace. Jerry Cahn*

Jerry Cahn - April 06, 2008 at 12:00 AM

TW

“ *Our deepest sympathies to the Avery family for the loss of your father, Leon. Tina, Ed, Rosemay and Autumn*

Tina & Ed White & Walter - April 04, 2008 at 12:00 AM