

**FILED**

OCT 29 2002

*Deanne Daugherty*  
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**MEMORIAL FOR  
JAMES EWING AYRES  
PRESENTED AT THE MEMORIAL EXERCISES HELD IN THE  
FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT  
OCTOBER 29, 2002  
UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE  
SHREVEPORT BAR ASSOCIATION**

James Ewing Ayres was born in Jonesboro, Louisiana, on June 23, 1936, the son of the late Judge and Mrs. H. W. Ayres. He died on February 26, 2002, after waging a painful but courageous fight against cancer.

Jim received degrees from Jonesboro High School, LSU in Baton Rouge, and a law degree from LSU Law School. He graduated from law school in 1960, and moved to Shreveport, practicing law with the firm of Green & Ayres, where he practiced until his death.

His father was the late Judge H. W. Ayres, who began as a district judge in Jonesboro and was then elected to the First Circuit Court of Appeal. Jim's son, Leland Harrison Ayres, whom we affectionately call Lee, followed in his dad's and granddad's tradition of love for the law, and practices law with a firm in Shreveport. Thus, law practice is a great heritage in the Ayres family.

Jim left behind his wife of 43 years, Susan Lloyd Ayres; his daughter, Laura Ayres LeBlanc, and her husband, Michael, of Baton Rouge; his son, Leland, and his wife, Meg; and four grandchildren.

Jim's memberships included the American Bar Association, the Louisiana Bar Association, and the Shreveport Bar Association. For many years, he was an active member of the Louisiana State Law Institute. Specializing in mineral law, Jim was among the preeminent title lawyers in this area. An active community leader, he was a longstanding member of the Noel Memorial United Methodist Church, The Shreveport

Club, The Petroleum Club, the Cotillion Club, and formerly a member of the Board of Loyola College Prep.

Jim specialized in mineral law. We affectionately referred to him as a "Dirt Lawyer" as he dealt mostly with land titles. It was fascinating to listen to Jim speak about his practice, and particularly his enjoyment of receiving a difficult abstract from an oil company. With his keen sense of intelligence and veracity, he would spend hours of very patient work and would organize a detailed, chronological listing of every owner and anything that affected the title and would produce a perfect written title opinion. He liked to spread all of the documents out and work with his secretary by his side as he dictated the opinion. There were many times he helped me in dealing with successions and complicated matters of which I had very little experience.

Jim had a commitment to excellence in his specialization of mineral law. Jim was appointed to the Louisiana State Law Institute. The Institute is an organization of the brightest minds of the legal profession, who get together with law school professors on a regular basis, who toil -- yes, I mean toil - over the law to develop it as a workable tool. Jim was one of the principal contributors in our current mineral code. Jim thrived on working on this project and spent many, many hours of his time, which he gave generously to the Law Institute and to the practice of law. In fact, Jim is one of the few lawyers whom I know who served for an extend period of time, having been re-nominated as each of his terms expired because of the excellent work that he performed for the Law Institute. Serving on the Louisiana State Law Institute is a extraordinary honor. Many lawyers would like to have been appointed to the Law Institute.

Sometimes if life seemed to be a little harsh or hard to deal with, I would get out of my office and walk over to Jim's office a few blocks away because I always knew I would be greeted with a smile and he would say, "Charles, great to see you. Come in and

sit down." I knew I could discuss with him any aspects of my life and know that he would keep it in confidence and would be there for me.

There is no doubt that one of Jim's greatest loves was hunting and fishing with his friends. Shooting at and hitting birds, for instance, is something that I could never accomplish. It would have to be an accident for me to hit one. It never failed, when with a group of friends on a hunting trip, Jim would be by my side patiently helping me load my gun, and trying to teach me to shoot. Jim seemed never to miss. On the occasions that we would go fishing with friends, Jim would be there, put me in the boat, hand me a rod and reel, and then untangle my line, which seemed to become tangled on my every throw. It was a "high" just to stand beside him while hunting or sitting in the boat with him to see how much he loved the outdoors.

Although he was in such extreme pain particularly during the last months of his life, Jim never ever complained. I remember sitting with him shortly before his death, sitting by his bed, holding his hand and talking to him, and what was he concerned about? Me, not himself, although he was fast approaching his demise and was in so much pain. I got up to walk out of the room, and Jim weakly said, "Charles, take care of yourself." What a loving, wonderful person! In his hospital room, I saw the many friends and family who cared for him, particularly his daughter, Laura (a modern-day Florence Nightingale), and his loving wife, Susan, and son, Lee.


Jim was a man of integrity, who personified the good that our profession has to offer. His professionalism and ethics were above reproach.

To his family and his many dear friends, I express the profession's deepest sympathies. I have never heard Jim speak ill of anyone. His untimely death has left a vacuum in all of our lives, but we all join in thanking the Lord for bringing him into our lives so we could enjoy him, and we look forward to seeing again.

In the middle of the night on February 26, 2002, I firmly believe that the Angel of the Lord appeared at the foot of Jim's bed and looked down and stated, "Jim, my love, the Lord is ready to bring you home so you will no longer be in pain. You will always be happy with the Lord and will be warm again." I speak for his family and his many dear friends. We grieve for you daily, not because of your death, because we know you are in Heaven, but because we miss you on Earth as you were such an important part of our lives. You contributed much to our happiness and enjoyment of life.

To his beloved widow, Susan, on behalf of his family and friends and this Honorable Court, I submit this memorial to the memory of James Ewing Ayres, and request that it be inscribed in the records of the First Judicial District Court of Caddo Parish, Louisiana, and that copies be presented to his family.

Dated this 29<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2002, in Shreveport, Caddo Parish, Louisiana.

  
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Charles W. Salley