



## BIG "D" NEWS

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2006

### From the EDITOR

Ray Heubner, Sr. Vice Commandant has called an officers and trustees meeting for Tuesday 17 Oct 06 to discuss and review our agenda for the coming months. If you have input, please email Ray or John and we will bring the issue to the meeting. The concern the officers have is that active membership is shrinking and the demands upon our time have increased, which puts a great strain on the currently active MC Leaguers.

**We meet at:** The Elks Lodge,  
4201 Gus Thomasson Rd.,  
Mesquite, TX 75150  
Social/Chow 6:00 PM; Meeting  
at 7:00 PM

### FUTURE MEETINGS

24 Oct 06,

12 Nov 06,

No regular meeting in  
December,

27 Jan 07

### QUICK HITS

#### Birthday Ball:

**RS Dallas** – 28 Oct 06  
2/14 – 10 Nov 06 Arlington  
Hilton Hotel - \$65.00 972-606-  
6680

#### Toys for Tots

Fri 08 Dec 06 - Sun 10 Dec 06

**17 Dec 06** – Officer Installation  
dinner. Knights of Columbus -  
\$11.00

Check our website  
[www.bigdmcl.org](http://www.bigdmcl.org) for updates  
on events and our meetings.  
This newsletter will be posted  
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For the State newsletter go to  
[www.mcltexas.org](http://www.mcltexas.org)



Janet Brady is running "Adopt a Soldier (or Marine) Now" program from her own resources and is really helping disabled vets. She has helped build a \$300,000 house for a disabled vet in Louisiana.

She lost a son about 2 years ago in a car accident. He was with the 1st Cav. Since then she has found families to "adopt" 17,000 soldiers

who are in combat zones. Adopting makes a connection and lets stateside "parents" send comfort items to their soldiers or Marines.

E-mail: [adoptasoldiernow@mac.com](mailto:adoptasoldiernow@mac.com)  
[www.adoptasoldiernow.org](http://www.adoptasoldiernow.org)  
405-326-9231

## **REBUILDING LIVES**

By: MARK COLLETTE,  
Staff Writer  
09/30/2006

Abridged

**TRYING TO RECOVER:**  
Army Sgt. Tommy Guinn (right) sits next to his wife, Bobbie, at his aunt and uncle's house in Overton, Texas. Guinn, a helicopter flight engineer, was paralyzed in an accident while on duty in Pakistan.

Tommy Guinn would rather be in Iraq. "He'd sit in his chair and be a door gunner if they could figure out a way to strap him in," says his wife, Bobbie.

The 38-year-old Army sergeant, a Chinook helicopter flight engineer, was paralyzed from the waist down March 5 after a helicopter blade knocked him off of the top of the aircraft he was working on, snapping his spine and cracking his skull. He was in a drug-induced coma for about a month before he woke up and realized he wasn't in Pakistan on the earthquake relief mission for which he had essentially volunteered. (Having worn braces for six years, and needing his jaw reset to correct an overbite, he could have opted out of deployment.)

Born and raised in Overton,

Guinn is now staying with his aunt and uncle. Because the Army has yet to discharge him (a bureaucratic delay, the Guinns say), his official home is still at Fort Hood. But his wheelchair isn't cut out for the narrow, two-story house, so the family returned to Overton.

Uncle Sam provides medical care and some money to apply toward new housing, but a house that will accommodate his needs, his wife, a 12-year-old son and 11-year-old daughter, will cost far more. In the meantime, they deal with the frustrations of everyday transport, using makeshift ramps and bracing for the occasional fall.

**At a veteran's hospital, the Guinns met another couple who introduced them to Adopt-a-Soldier Now, a nonprofit group. It was started by flight attendant Janet Brady, of Dallas, after her son died in a car accident while stationed in Hawaii. The group supports soldiers on duty and helps returning soldiers with housing needs.**

Johnson and Beers' husband both served in Vietnam, and that's what led them to join Adopt-a-Soldier Now.

"I don't want to see soldiers treated the way my husband and him were treated when they came back from 'Nam,"

Beers said.

When they were assigned to handle the project for the Guinns, Beers said she was taken aback at her first meeting with the family: "I thought he'd be (mad), depressed and everything else, and instead we came out here and found this adorable couple."

The kids now spend more time with their father, whom they talked to through his coma. Bobbie said her daughter, upon learning of Tommy's injuries, claimed the accident was her fault, "because she forgot to say her prayers for Daddy the night before."

But now the kids are learning to laugh more along with their parents, especially when Tommy zooms down the hill in his wheelchair, maybe just a little too fast.

He said he would make the same decision to deploy to Pakistan, given the opportunity again.

That's all the more reason, Beers said, to help him and his family establish a new home.

"This is Texas," she said. "We take care of our own here. The government might not do a real good job, but by God, we do."



### **Access to DD-214s Now Online**

The National Personnel Records Center has provided the following website for veterans to gain access to their DD-214s online: <http://vetrecs.archives.gov/>. ... Military veterans and the next of kin of deceased former military members may now use a new online military personnel records system to request documents. Other individuals with a need for documents must still complete the Standard Form 180, which can be downloaded from the online web site.

The site was easy to navigate, there is a window which says; "Launch eVetRecs..." I clicked on it and the next window asks; "Who are you?" I told them, and it asked, "Why do you want it?" I told them and it instructed me to print out a "Signature Verification" sheet. I did that and signed it. It gave me 30 days to get the signature to the address provided. I chose the FAX option. Now I will have to wait and see if I get a new DD-214.

*Semper fi, Ray*

### **ELECTIONS:**

We are supposed to routinely have fewer elections each year than we have been having; one in May and one in November. The downside is that these two elections will have more issues to decide.. The thinking of proponents of many elections is that each advocate, for example for School Bonds, could conduct a focused campaign and those who are marginally against more bonds for the schools will probably not come out to defeat the issue. That thinking seems to have lost out to the frustration of many elections cluttering up the calendar, to say nothing of our yards. Of course there is always a possibility of run-off elections when to win requires a majority and not just more than any other candidate in the contest.

<http://dalcoelections.org/november72006/SampleBallot.pdf>

This November election is quite a long ballot. Both political parties are urging their proponents to vote the Straight Party box, then "over-ride" that vote when another choice is desired. "Over-riding" is accomplished by voting for the candidate in the individual contest just as if no Straight Party vote was accomplished. If you are not voting "Straight Party" I urge you to plan on spending the time and effort to vote the entire ballot, the so-called down-ballot races could include some of your friends – they definitely do include some of Glee and my friends. They deserve your vote.

The second sheet of the ballot is for the City of Dallas Capitol Bond Program "Special Bond Election". It is contained on one side of a 19-inch sheet, and consists of 12 Propositions, which altogether total about \$1.4 billion. In numbers that is, \$1,400,000,000. Real money, even if there are 1,400,000 people in Dallas. The City of Dallas web site has a slick 30 page presentation about the bonds and what they are to be used to accomplish; <http://www.dallascityhall.com/pdf/Bond/GreaterDallasPlanningCouncil.pdf>

*Semper Fi, Ray*

### **5<sup>th</sup> DIVISION REUNION:**

Thanks to all the help, we had a very successful reunion. Polly and Nick attended the Frontiers of Flight event and the banquet. Ray Huebner attended the Frontiers of Fight event. Steve Gaston spent the afternoon there getting signatures on pictures of the famous flag raising. I think he must have had about 25 pictures he was getting all the 5th Div. Iwo veterans to sign. Lewis Machala was at several events and offered to help in every way possible.

Our Co-Chairman Ken Watterson and our Treasurer Billy Martin went far beyond just helping. With out them I will have fallen flat. Committee member Doc Danny Thomas was largely responsible for bringing in media people who were connected to Clint East coming movie "Flags of Our Fathers."

Canara Carruth who landed on green beach at Iwo in the first wave and Jan Kerr who was severely wounded while carrying a wounded Marine on a stretcher were both very helpful.

My wife, who told me not to get involved in this reunion business, buckled down and worked her fingers to the bone keeping up with member's registration and their tickets for the various events. My daughter Terrie Williams prepared the Journal material and got it ready for the printer. This was a pretty big job; and, her skill with the computer probable saved us 2 or 3 thousand dollars. Terrie did a lot of other things also, such as design the name tags and get them ready for printing. Several of our friends pitched in and helped with the registration.

The Irving Convention and Visitors Bureau went far beyond what I had any right to expect to make our reunion a success.

I don't know why I'm so tired. Anyway, I'm heading to Colorado.

*Semper Fi, Jon Huffhines*

#### **OUR HERITAGE:**

"I recently attended a Kansas City Chiefs football game at Arrowhead Stadium. It was their annual Veteran's Day tribute so members of all the services were asked to participate in the festivities.

A color guard for the National Anthem was provided by the Buffalo Soldiers Association. They looked very sharp in their 1800s-era US Army Cavalry uniforms. Following that, the Navy parachute team put on an impressive display that brought cheers from the 78,000 football fans in attendance. Shortly thereafter, we were treated to the truly awesome sight of an Air Force B-2 Spirit stealth bomber flyover as well as a few other aircraft. All of these sights -- but especially the B-2 -- were truly appreciated by the crowd who let it be known by their cheers.

I expected that was all we would see of the US Military that day. I thought we would see a high school or college marching band during half time. Few watch those shows anyway because they have to go to the head or grab another beer during the intermission.

Shortly before half-time, however, I looked down on the sidelines near the end zone and saw the Marine Corps' Silent Drill Team forming up. As the half time show started, the players left the field and the announcer came on the public address system to advise us of the Drill Team's performance. Many of us Marines have seen

these performances in the past and they're always awe-inspiring. I didn't expect that the large civilian crowd of football fans would be as appreciative of the Drill Team as they had been of the high-tech B-2 or the daring of the Navy parachute team. However, I was on the edge of my seat. As the Drill Team marched onto the field, the crowd grew noticeably quieter. Soon, the team was fully into their demonstration. The stadium was absolutely silent.

From high in the stands' upper reaches where my seats were, I was able to hear the "snap" and "pop" of hands striking rifles. Both big screen "Jumbotron" scoreboards displayed close ups of the Marines as they went through their routine. As they completed their demonstration and lined up for the inspection, the crowd began cheering as the Marines twirled their rifles in impossible fashion. Then came the inspection. Again, the crowd fell silent and watched intently as rifles were thrown, caught, twirled, inspected and thrown some more. Each well-practiced feat brought a "wow" or "did you see that?" from those sitting around me.

I sat there in silent pride as I watched my brother Marines exit the field. A young girl behind me asked her mother a question about how the Marines learn to do the things they just did. The mother replied, "They practice long and hard and they're Marines; they're the best."

Semper Fidelis,  
**An Anonymous US Marine:**

## DETACHMENT PHOTOS

### Memorial Day Honor Guard - Arlington

One of the most important things the Bid D detachment does is provide honor guards at military funerals. Here the honor guard is participating in Memorial Day ceremonies.



### Lt. Gen. Cary receives detachment coin

General Carey spoke to the detachment about the Fisher House project at one of our recent meetings. The Fisher House provides housing for families of disabled veterans while those vets are in treatment or are recovering from their injuries. You can find more details at <http://www.fisherhouse.org/>.





Big D Detachment  
5502 Harbor Town Dr.  
Dallas, TX 75287

Address Label

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

**Reminder: Meetings are at The Elks Lodge 4201 Gus Thomasson Rd., Mesquite TX 75150. Chow at 6:00 p.m. with the meeting to follow at 7:00p.m.**

