

Scripture of the Week

EPHESIANS 2: 8 & 9

... For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God. ... Not of works, lest any man should boast.

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Travis Winfree, pictured with Texas Governor Rick Perry, attended the 64th commemoration of D-Day on June 6.

D-Day Commemoration Attended by Local Veteran

By **STEPHEN JOHNSON**
The Waller Times Editor

Local resident, veteran, and longtime businessman Travis Winfree recently attended the 64th Commemoration of D-Day. D-Day was the Western Allied effort to liberate mainland Europe from Nazi occupation during World War II.

The event was held on June 6, 2008 in Normandy, France, the site of the D-Day invasion of France. Winfree is proud to be one of the few veterans still living that served in the Normandy invasion.

He attended the special event, held annually by the people of Normandy, and was joined by several other veterans and dignitaries. One such dignitary attending this year was Texas Governor Rick Perry. Veterans and dignitaries join the throngs of visitors by assisting in the wreath laying events during some 25 ceremonies held throughout the Normandy region. Winfree has attended the Commemoration eight times in the past 24 years and has met many exciting people, including the Queen of England.

This year, one exciting visit for Winfree was the sight of the St. Marie Gleese Church and

steeple in the town of St. Marie Gleese. Winfree says the spot still stands and depicts the steeple on the old church that caught a paratrooper's parachute on his way down. According to Winfree, the 82nd Airborne Paratroopers landed in the small town, which he says was the first town taken during the invasion. The paratrooper did not die during the ordeal, rather, he lived to tell the story until his death about 4 years ago, Winfree explained. The Normandy invasion began with overnight parachute and glider landings, massive air attacks, naval bombardments, an early morning amphibious landing and parachute landings.

Every year on his trek to the region, often considered one of the most beautiful areas in Northern France, his journey is filled with memories and reflections of his days as an Army medic.

On each of the trips, Winfree has also made a visit to the Memorial Wall that lists the names of the fallen heroes who fought for the freedom of the French people and the Jews against Nazism.

On one area of the wall, Winfree finds the name of another local man who fought and died in

the invasion. He was John "Nick" DiIorio, a descendent of the well-known DiIorio family in Hempstead. He is listed as MIA (Missing in Action) and Winfree locates his name and prays over his name on each visit as a tribute to the family.

Winfree was 19 years old when he arrived in Normandy. His service there is remembered and cherished by the local people, who arrange the annual commemorative events.

"The people of Normandy, with tears in their eyes, told us they loved us, they thanked us for their freedom and that they will never forget what we did for them," Winfree said after his recent trip. "Flying 3,000 miles and spending \$5,000.00 just to hear those words from the people who really know and appreciate the sacrifices that were made on their behalf was well worth it."

Winfree told of how the people of the Normandy region adopt gravesites in the memorial cemetery of some 9,300 graves and how they and their children lay flowers and wreaths on the graves as a tribute to the soldiers.

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Staff Sgt. Jeffery Hartley Memorial Plans Underway

Plans are currently underway to erect a special memorial for the late Jeffery Hartley, a decorated soldier recently killed in the Iraq war.

The memorial will be dedicated in Hartley's honor at Hempstead's Gazebo Park with a tentative date set for Friday, July 18, 2008. Complete details of the memorial and the time of the unveiling are yet to be announced but may include a reflection bench, and the United States and Texas flags. A special tree will also be planted near the memorial at the request of Hartley's family.

The move to present such a tribute to Hartley was made by anonymous residents and businesses in the area and is being handled by the Hempstead City Hall. Donors have asked to remain anonymous but they do welcome new donors if anyone is interested.

Pat Chernosky, a Hempstead City Alderman, said that many people have gotten involved in the idea of a memorial and the com-

munity has embraced the idea.

"Everyone is excited about doing something in memory of Jeffery. His death had such an effect on our community and it is fitting that a memorial of this nature is erected in his honor," she said. "It is so generous of the benefactors to do what they've done, but they also want anyone wishing to contribute to the memorial to feel welcome to do so." Arrangements for contributions to the memorial can be made by contacting Hempstead City Hall at 979-826-2486.

Hartley, age 25, was killed in Iraq on April 8, 2008 when the vehicle he was riding in encountered an explosive device. Hartley was on his 5th tour of duty in the Army when he was killed. Hartley was laid to rest on Saturday, April 19, 2008 with a full honors funeral, including a 3-volley gun salute and a Taps interlude by the Army Honor Guard. He was highly decorated, with over 20 medals of honor, including two



SSgt. Jeffery Hartley

Purple Hearts. One Purple Heart medal was for injuries sustained in prior service and the second for wounds sustained at his death.

More details will be forthcoming on the unveiling of the memorial. Watch local media sources for more information.



The Bobcat 4x200 relay team with (front row l-r) Michael Thompson, Chris Busby, Charles Toliver, and Lameil Hogan were honored by Governor Rick Perry (front row center) during State Champion Day at the State Capitol in Austin.

Hempstead Athletes Honored by Texas Governor Rick Perry

By **LAURIE BETTIS**
HISD Public Information Officer

Four young men from Hempstead High School were honored by Governor Rick Perry at the State Capitol on Wednesday, June 18. Michael Thompson, Charles Toliver, Lameil Hogan, and Chris Busby were among those recognized. The relay team was honored for being the UIL State 2A Boys - 4x200 Meter Relay Champions.

Gov. Perry honored the spring 2008 University Interscholastic League (UIL) state champions in athletics, academics, and music during the State Champion Day at the Texas State Capitol in Austin.

"These students represent the remarkable talent of our state and embody the competitive spirit that has made Texas one of the greatest states in the nation," said Gov. Perry during a special opening assembly. "I'm proud of these competitors' accomplishments and their determination to achieve excellence in all they do."

The Bobcat relay team, along with Athletic Director Bobby Spain and Head Track Coach Ricky Sargent, were among more than 500 students, coaches and administrators present at the State Capitol to celebrate the accomplishments of over 190 individual and team champions from across the state. Several UIL officials

were also part of the celebration.

Each state champion received a certificate signed by the governor and had an opportunity to meet with him. Inscribed on the certificate were the words, "Congratulations on your outstanding accomplishment! You excelled because of your dedication, discipline and hard work. Your parents, coaches and all who encouraged your progress and success are to be commended as well. This is a great honor for you and your community. Enjoy it and use it as a life lesson on which to build future accomplishments. Well done!"

See additional picture on page 5



'The End' Band performs at WARM celebration

On Saturday, June 28, 2008, Waller Assistance and Restoration Ministries, Inc. (WARM) celebrated its third year of service, offering emergency assistance in the Waller area. WARM would like to thank everyone who stopped by the Thrift Shop in the Waller Village Shopping Center. Special thanks for the live music provided by "THE END." The Christian band, pictured above, includes Andrew Brockenbush-guitar and vocals, Fabian Sanchez-percussionist, and Jennifer Garza - lead vocalist and keyboard. Also pictured is Bethany Long - friend of the band. Check out "THE END" at www.myspace.com/boxofbrokencolors. For more information about WARM, call 936-372-5173.

Fuel Price Spike Affects Consumers, Farmers

Practically no one can escape the price squeeze occurring between rising food costs and skyrocketing fuel prices.

There seems no relief in sight, and things could get much worse before they get better, said Waller County Farm Bureau President David Groschke.

Indeed, food prices for the consumer have increased in recent months, Groschke said, but they are still a bargain. As a percentage of disposable income, Americans still enjoy the lowest food prices of any country on the planet.

To think farmers are getting rich off these rising grocery prices is simply not true, Groschke said. In fact, he added, those same rising costs consumers face have many in agriculture wondering what the coming year may hold, even during a time of record crop prices.

"The main reason food prices have gone up is the soaring price of oil, and in that respect, consumers and farmers are left holding the bag," Groschke said. "The problem is particularly bad for our country's farmers because most everything we do, from filling up

the tractor with diesel to applying fertilizers, which are directly tied to fossil fuel prices, has more than doubled in the last year.

"Prices of petroleum-driven crop inputs have blown through the roof," he added. "And if prices keep going up the way analysts say they will, we won't be able to afford to plant another crop, even with today's record commodity prices. We're already forced into some serious decisions about the amount we can produce, and further cutbacks will only lead to higher prices for consumers."

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