

# LINKS FREE

Volume 1, Issue 11

## HOMETOWN OKLAHOMA SPECIAL EDITION SERIES

November 10, 2004

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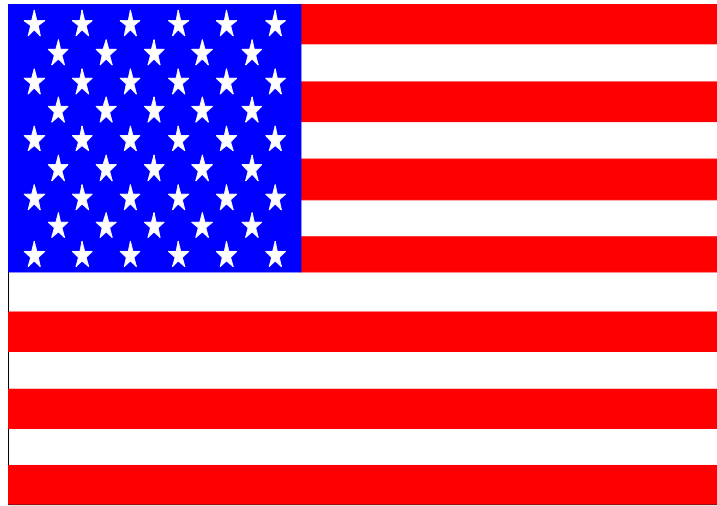
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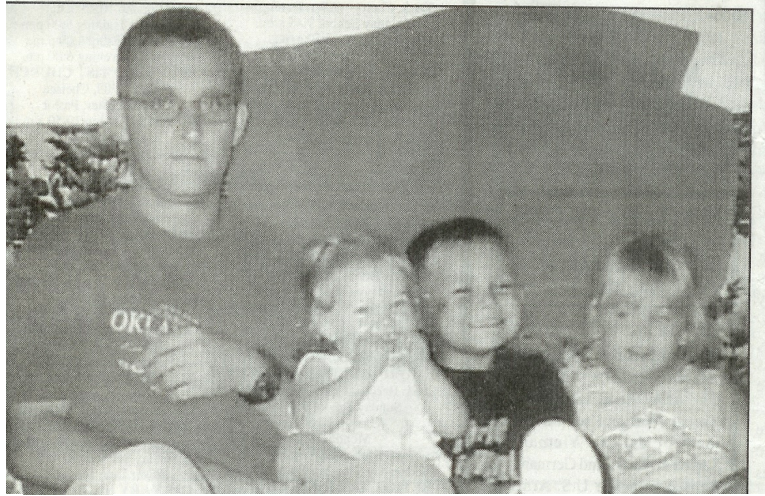
In honor of Veteran's day, this issue of Hometown Oklahoma pays tribute to all the people who have served the United States of America. We want to take this opportunity to say "THANK YOU!" to those who have served and returned home. To the families of those who didn't make it home, we extend our heartfelt sympathy.

We pay special tribute to all our troops currently serving in Iraq and Afghanistan and to their families who are keeping things going on the home front, in their absence. Our thoughts and prayers are with you.

We have collected information about veterans from **Craig, Delaware, Mayes, Ottawa, and Rogers Counties**. It is with great pride we share the stories of Northeast Oklahoma's

# Hometown Heroes

## Currently Serving



### Dustin Helt

SPC Dustin Helt of Chelsea is currently serving in Iraq. He is with the United States Army, Delta Company, 57<sup>th</sup> Signal Battalion.

Dustin is the son of Harold and Connie Helt. His wife Lesha is also serving in Iraq.

Prior to being sent to Iraq, Dustin was stationed at Fort Hood, Texas. He has been in the Army since 2002.

### James Brandon Moore

PFC James Brandon Moore is a 1997 graduate of Chelsea High School. He shipped out to Iraq June 1<sup>st</sup> of this year.

Brandon is pictured here enjoying some quality family time with his children; one year old Alexis, five year old Dylan, and three year old Micaiah.

Brandon is the son of James Randall Moore of Chelsea and Lisa Moore of Tulsa. His grandparents are Jerry and Carol Elam of Chelsea and Helen Fack of Foyil.

Brandon's wife, Kerry is the daughter of Gary and Peggy Atchley.

### Thank you!

We would like to thank everyone who sent in the veterans forms. Your help makes it possible to share more information about local military with our readers. We at Community Links salute our Hometown Heroes!



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## Chelsea American Legion - Charles Milam Post No. 60

The following information was given to us by Joe Baker. The history was written by Lyle Jefferies in the mid 1940s. It was written from memory, as the original history documents were lost in a fire that destroyed the Jefferies home.

A meeting was held by some ex-service men in the Mack O. Davis Building in late fall of 1919, for the purpose of organizing an American Legion Post.

Some 25 or 30 men attended this meeting, and after some discussion as to ideals and purposes of the Legion, the group elected temporary officers. Rolla A. Crawford was chosen as commander and Lyle Jefferies was adjutant. The Post met regularly each week. In 1920 Crawford and Jefferies were chosen as official officers.

About 1922 the Methodist Church decided to build a new church building. The old building was offered to the Legion with the stipulation it was to be moved to its own lot. The offer was accepted and the building was moved and remodeled. The undertaking required a great deal of work as well as money, but was well worth the effort. The Post sponsored many different activities to raise funds to maintain the building.

In 1927 it was decided to build an addition to the Hall. The necessary \$1,500 was raised by sponsoring various kinds of entertainment. The post was soon debt free. Membership prior to 1944 was 110 members. As people returned home from WW II, membership grew to over 200.

The Charles Milam Post was fortunate to have good officers every year; men who were willing to give not only of their time and efforts, but generously of their money.

We would like to thank Joe Baker for his help with this story. Joe told us he is concerned about the future of the Post because of funds. He also told us they have project in the works to pay tribute to the Chelsea area service people killed in action.



The M.E. Church, South, was originally located at 6<sup>th</sup> and Beech. It was moved to the present location in 1923, where it became the American Legion Hall.

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## Joe Baker of Chelsea Served 24 Years

This highly decorated veteran is proud of the opportunity he had to serve his country during his successful military career in the U.S. Air Force.

Dearest to his heart is the opportunity he had to offer help and support to the children orphaned by the Vietnam combat. "It's something I will never forget." Baker said, "It will be with me till the day I die; the plight of those children."

Baker served in Vietnam from August 1967 to June 1968. During the TET Offensive (January 30 to February 24, 1968) the North Vietnamese Army and the Viet Cong attacked with approximately 84,000 troops. Fighting was bloody.

During that time, Staff Sgt. Baker was cited by Brig. General McLaughlin for his volunteer work and disregard for his own safety, by riding as an armed guard on air division vehicles dispatched to the Saigon/Cholon area to recover division personnel.

Although Viet Cong activity was heavy throughout the area, Joe voluntarily worked at this hazardous duty until all personnel were returned to the base. Joe's selfless devotion to duty contributed immeasurably to the welfare of division personnel and the overall mission of the 834<sup>th</sup> Air Division.

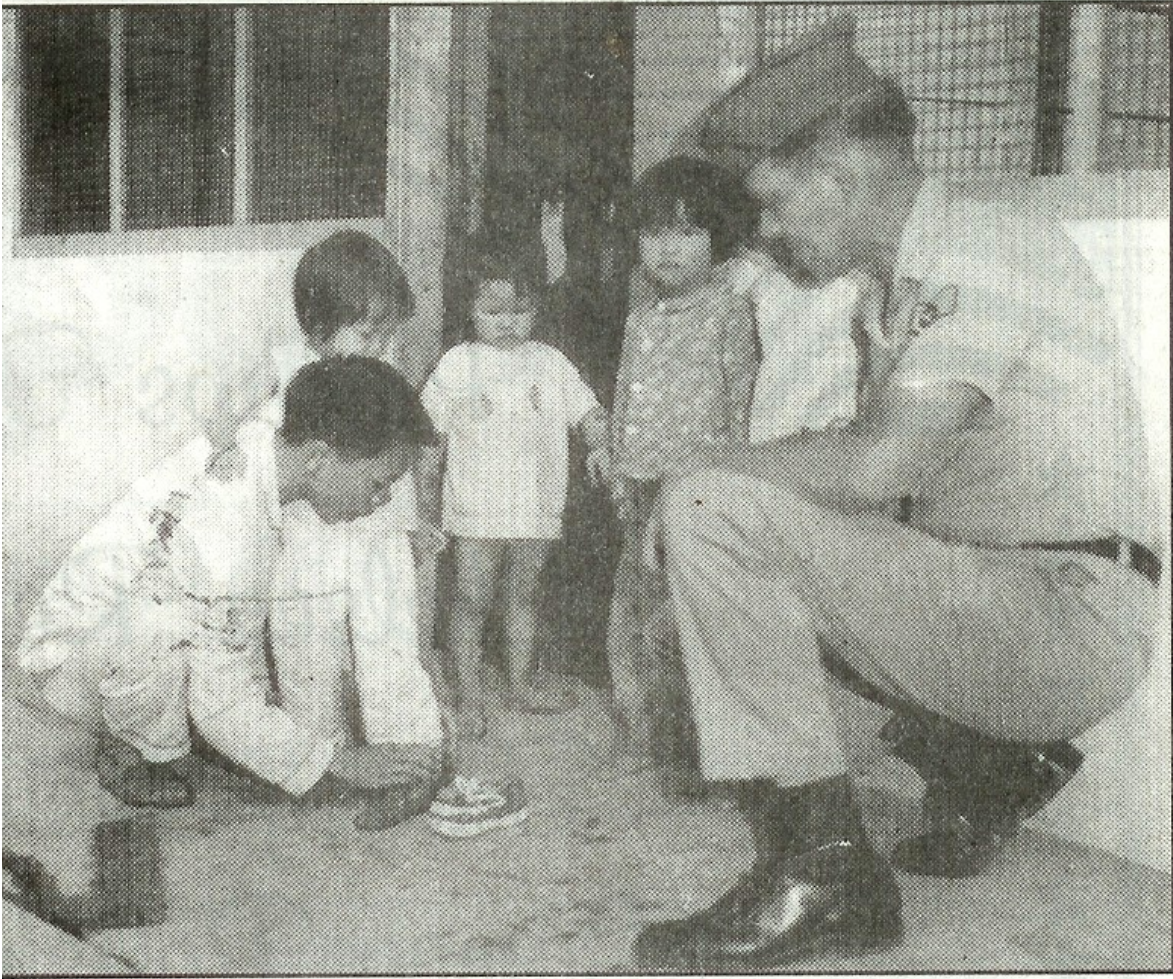
Joe was presented a Bronze Star, Meritorious Service Medal, Air Force Commendation Medal, Air Force Combat Readiness Medal, Army and Air Force Good Conduct Medals, American and National Defense Service Medals, US Viet Nam Service Medal, Viet Nam Campaign Medal, Viet Nam Service Commemorative Medal, Republic of Viet Nam Defense Commemorative Medal, Cold War Commemorative Medal, Overseas Commemorative Medal, US Air Force Commemorative Medal, National Guard and Reserve Commemorative Medal, and the US Armed Forces Retired Service Commemorative Medal.



**S-SGT. JOE BAKER IN 1969**



Joe and Sue in 1969



Joe Baker at the Bethlehem School

During this time Joe became involved with the Bethlehem School, Gia Dinh, located in what is now Ho Chi Mien City. Joe personally took it upon himself to do whatever he could to help the children who were in such dire need.

Joe contacted the First Christian Church in Claremore, which his mother-in-law Georgia Pike, and grandmother-in-law Gladys Willford attended. He asked for light clothing and anything else that would be of use to the children. Joe and the base chaplain personally delivered the items to the children.

Joe continued to help the children in any way he could during his time in Viet Nam. "I will always remember the look on the faces of those children when we made deliveries. It touched my heart in a way nothing else ever has."

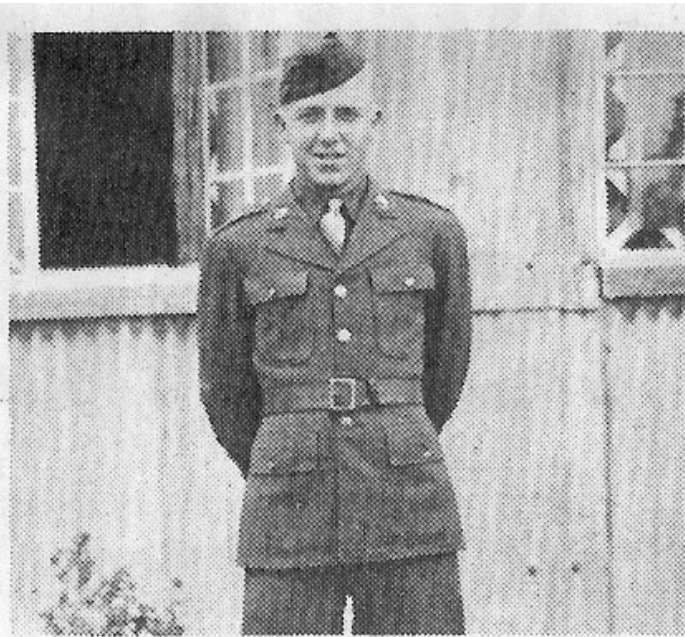
Joe was raised in a small rural farm community in North Carolina. After graduating from high school he enlisted in the Air Force.

While stationed in Kansas, he also worked part time at a club. It was there he met his future bride, Sue Rader. "Sue loved to dance and she and some of her friends would come in there to dance," he said. "I couldn't keep my eyes off her when she was on the dance floor."

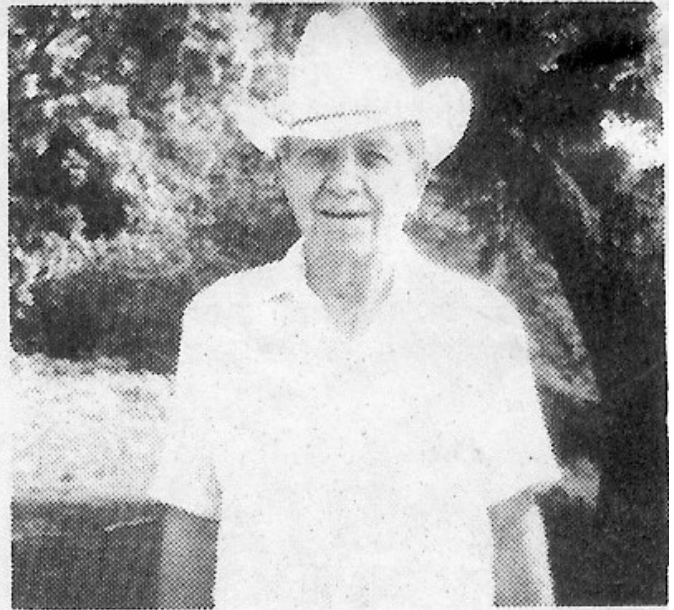
The couple was married in 1967 at Miami. They have one daughter and two grandchildren. Although both Joe and Sue have had some serious health problems, they continue to stay active. Sue works at the Bank of Commerce, and Joe is active with the Chelsea American Legion.

Joe said if he had to do it all over again, he would gladly enlist and serve his country. "In fact I can highly suggest a military career. It would be good for any young person, after graduating from high school to join the military and get all the college you can get."

This article was taken from information found in a story published in the Chelsea Reporter in the November 6, 2003 issue. The photos used were furnished by Joe.



**Bill Coop, 1944**



**Bill Coop, 1994**

## **D-Day Held Special Meaning for Vinita Resident, Bill Coop**

Bill Coop was only 21 years old when he chose to fight for his country. A former resident of Bluejacket, he decided to join the Army in early 1943. He was sent to Fort Leonard Wood, Mo. for basic training. Before basic training was finished, he was shipped to New Jersey, boarded the Queen Elizabeth which took him to Scotland, then on to England by train.

In March of 1943, while in England, he and his battalion had the opportunity to stay in some of the fanciest hotels on a beach resort before they were moved into tents near the White Cliffs of Dover before the D-Day Invasion in 1944.

Bill told his story to Angela Self, a Vinita Daily Journal reporter. The article appeared in the June 6th, 1994 issue. Bill passed away May 18, 2001, at his home in Vinita, after a battle with lung cancer. His wife, Mary sent us a copy of the article.

“When we left England, our mission was to go over and blow up land mines on the beach of Omaha. I was with the 112<sup>th</sup> Combat Engineer Division, supporting the 29<sup>th</sup> Division. We landed on Omaha Beach at H-Hour (6:00am), June 6, 1944.” Bill said.

The battle site on Omaha Beach proved to be the bloodiest of battles on the Normandy beaches. It was the one area heavily guarded by German troops. The 100-foot tall cliffs gave the enemy an advantage over Allied Forces coming ashore.

The day started out bad for Bill. He was driving one of three trucks loaded with TNT and other explosives, which was being unloaded from the transport ship onto the ferry that would transport them to shore. The transfer from one ship to another turned into a disaster.

Bill and a lieutenant were in the truck, crossing the ramp between the two ships when a chain came unhooked. He, the lieutenant, and truck fell into the English Channel. The water was rough and there was much confusion; Bill wasn't sure if he would be rescued or not. A short time later he was pulled from the water, but he never knew if the lieutenant was rescued.

Shortly after they reached Omaha Beach, a second truck was hit and destroyed by enemy fire. The remaining truckload of explosives was used to blow up land mines, and clear the path for incoming infantry.

The third truck driver was injured in the leg by shrapnel. "He got his leg almost completely blown off and wanted me to cut it off. I went to get a medic and when the medic arrived, I remember I patted him on the back and said, 'Have a good trip home.' The medic did a real good job."

Bill described the day as the worst in his life. He recalled seeing the battleships shooting artillery at the beaches overhead as they tried to reach shore. "You never saw a 4<sup>th</sup> of July that could compare to this." As the day wore on, it was looking bleak for the soldiers at Omaha Beach.

"We lost our colonel in the battle and they had to carry off the major because he just lost it. He was wanting to turn back. It was not as bad for those of us who were younger, in our twenties. We didn't know what to expect. But for someone in their 40s it was devastating. I think the ignorance of so many young men helped us get through this battle."

As the battalion continued to blow up mines, they couldn't clear the path fast enough for oncoming troops and it became hard to tell if they were helping or hurting the situation. They managed to make it through the day and their persistence paid off at Omaha Beach, making D-day the event that turned the tides of World War II and led Allied Forces to victory less than a year later.

Bill recalled talking with other soldiers as they guarded a bridge, hoping to keep the Germans from blowing it up. "We were talking about things we missed back home. I was craving a bowl of chili from Clanton's and reminiscing about the good times we had at the Candy Kitchen on Main Street in Vinita. The whole time I was away I didn't have one glass of milk or a hamburger. The worst part of being there was not knowing if you were gonna get to come home."

When he did get back home on October 27, 1945, he had two things in mind. "I went to Craig Goodpaster's Army Store, bought some slippers and threw away my combat boots, forever. Then I bought a 1939 Chevrolet and went to see my dad in Tulsa."

Looking back, Bill didn't feel all his experiences were bad. He recalled some of the better moments, like the time his battalion helped reclaim Paris and the beautiful French girls who hopped on his truck as he drove past the Eiffel Tower.

"In some ways, I had to grow up fast. Maybe that was good. But on the other hand, I feel like some of the best years of my youth were taken away." The one thing Bill was thankful for was the fact that he got to come home victorious, unlike so many who lost their lives on D-Day, June 6, 1944.

Bill is survived by his wife Mary and their three daughters, Marlene, Nancy, and Marla.

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## Robert Welsh of Disney was WWII “Top Gun”

The following information was taken from an article in the Grand River Chronicle, which was published November 10, 1993. We would like to thank Bob’s wife Geri for sending it to us.

In the spring of 1943 two boys were shingling a farmhouse near LeSueur, Minnesota. When a plane flew over, it was apparently the last straw for the young men. They knew they had to go to war and they knew they had to fly.

Bob Welsh was the only son left on the farm, and was not required to serve in the military. When he approached his father with his decision to join the war effort, his dad said, “Do what you have to do.”

Bob went to Minneapolis and enlisted in the Army Air Corps, before the separation of the Air Force and the Army. His buddy joined the Navy Air Corps and eventually flew Corsairs in China.

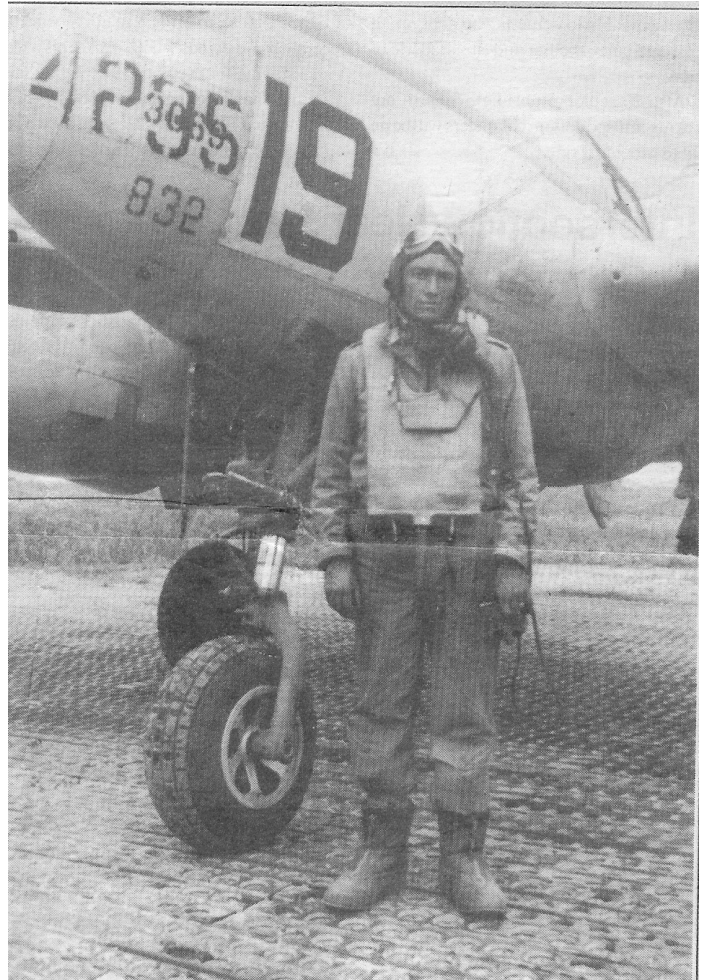
After completing his training, Bob was sent to join the 15<sup>th</sup> Air Force in Foggia, Italy. He was attached to the 48<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron which consisted of 25 to 30 men and planes which were part of 32 squadrons forming the 1<sup>st</sup> Fighter Group.

Bob’s airfield was Triola No. 3 and was nothing more than a farm where portable steel runways had been laid. His home was a tent, with pigs and other farm animals nearby.


General Carl Spaatz, Chief of the U.S. Bomber forces believed the key to Allied victory was the destruction of the German oil supply. Since all other air groups were deployed in other missions, in preparation for the invasion at Normandy, the 15<sup>th</sup> Air Force was designated to do the job alone. The men were prepared to make a series of 20 missions to Ploesti which would represent their most memorable contribution to the Allied cause.

The Ploesti rail yard, where the oil was loaded for transport to Germany, was the primary target. By mid August, due to a constant hammering, the oil transport from Ploesti was brought to a virtual standstill, but not without a high cost to the 15<sup>th</sup>. A total of 223 aircraft and an even higher number of men were lost.


Bob flew 52 missions and logged 257 combat hours out of Foggia in 1944, including four bombing raids on Ploesti. He flew in bombing raids against the Germans in Rumania, France, Italy, Yugoslavia, Austria, Hungary, and two raids against Hitler’s own beer hall in Munich, Germany.



Bob Welsh



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Bob also participated in numerous strafing raids against airfields in northern Italy and Austria. "The object was to fly about 50 feet over the Adriatic Sea to avoid radar detection. Then we would fly at treetop level and hammer enemy planes, buildings, oil dumps, or anything that could be of use to the enemy." He commented.

In the three months it took Bob to fly the 50 required missions plus 2 extra missions he volunteered for, the pilot roster of the 48<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron was replaced three times. Official records showed 48 pilots downed, missing in action, or known killed in his squadron between April 12 and July 17, 1944.

Bob and another pilot were escorting a bomber flight when they saw a plane go down in the Adriatic Sea. They saw the crew get out of the plane, but they had no life raft. Bob and his crew were able to drop a raft to the men.

On returning from another mission, Bob discovered a German marshalling yard and two troop trains in Yugoslavia. Bob and three other fighters turned back and set up a firing pattern. Holding the trigger down, they flew straight down the tracks, hitting gas barrels and burned the entire yard. An antiaircraft shell blew out an ammunition canister in the nose of Bob's plane, but four of his five guns still fired.

While returning to his base, another train was reported around the bend of a canyon he was approaching. With complete disregard for his own safety, Bob dove on the enemy locomotive and opened fire. The locomotive exploded and the remainder of the train set on fire. Once again heading for home base, Bob strafed another enemy train.

According to the orders which accompanied his award of the Distinguished Flying Cross, Bob was not only flying with disabled fire power; one engine of his plane was inoperable due to enemy flak. In his own words, Bob said he received the metal just because he was the one who thought about doing the dastardly deed.

After returning stateside in 1944, Bob served a short stint in the Ferry Command, flying 20 different types of aircraft all over the United States. In December of 1944, he was one of ten pilots selected to test the new American jet plane, and he flew the F-80 until his discharge in October of 1945.

Bob joined the Army Air Force reserve in Minnesota and returned to farming until 1954, when he joined the Kansas Air National Guard at McConnell Air Base in Wichita. He performed duties as test pilot and flight instructor from 1960 through 1972. Accumulating 5000 hours of flying time, Bob retired as Squadron Commander, 127<sup>th</sup> tactical Fighter Squadron with the rank of Lt. Colonel.

Bob and his wife Geri retired to the Grand Lake area in 1972 and finished raising their eight children. They now have 19 grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren who visit them often.

We want to thank Bob and Geri for sharing this story with us! And a special "Thanks!" to Bob for all he did for our country!



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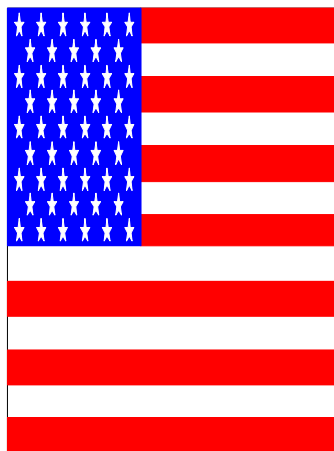
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SECTION 8 HOUSING VOUCHERS ACCEPTED



# Hometown

## Heroes



*We dedicate this issue of Hometown Oklahoma to the memory of all Oklahomans who have lost their lives in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Our hearts and prayers go out to the families of these Hometown Heroes.*



*Honor them by remembering.....*



Thomas Blair  
Broken Arrow  
Died 3-24-03  
24 years old



Randall Rehn  
Lawton  
Died 4-3-03  
36 years old



Aaron D. White  
Shawnee  
Died 5-19-03  
27 years old



Doyle Bollinger  
Poteau  
Died 6-6-03  
21 years old



Steven White  
Lawton  
Died 8-13-03  
29 years old



Stephen Scott  
Lawton  
Died 8-23-03  
21 years old



Jason Ward  
Tulsa  
Died 10-22-03  
25 years old

Ross Pennanen  
Shawnee  
Died 11-2-03  
36 years old

Luke James  
Hooker  
Died 1-27-04  
24 years old

Lawrence Colton  
Oklahoma City  
Died 4-11-04  
32 years old

Scott Vincent  
Bokoshe  
Died 4-30-04  
21 years old

Erickson Petty  
Fort Gibson  
Died 5-3-04  
28 years old



James Marshall  
Tulsa  
Died 5-5-04  
19 years old

Kyle Brinlee  
Pryor  
Died 5-11-04  
21 years old

Sonny Sampler  
Oklahoma City  
Died 7-8-04  
23 years old

Joseph Nice  
Nicoma Park  
Died 8-4-04  
19 years old

Nachez Washalante  
Bryan  
Died 8-21-04  
21 years old

John Boria  
Broken Arrow  
Died 9-6-04  
29 years old

Not pictured: Lamont Wilson of Lawton. Died 9-6-04. 20 years old. We regret we could not find a picture of

## Chelsea Father and Sons Served

Robert N. Bacon is a 1966 graduate of Chelsea High School. He enlisted in the Air Force in January of 1967.

In Viet Nam Rob was U.S. Armed Forces Custom Inspector. He participated in the Tet Offensive in Saigon in 1968. He extended his time in Viet Nam by six months. He received the Airman's Medal of Valor and a Medal of Merit.

When Rob returned stateside, he was stationed at a nuclear missile base, F.E Warren Air Force Base in Cheyenne Wyoming. He was discharged with the rank of E4 in January 1971.

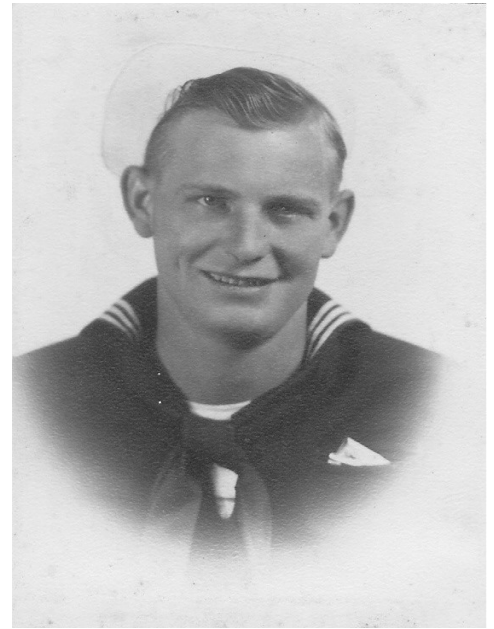
Rob has always resided in Rogers County. He graduated from O.S.U./Okmulgee. He is married to Linda House. Their daughter, Holly was Miss O.S.U. in 2002.

Dink served in the United States Navy from 1941 through 1945 and served in World War II

Dink and his wife Ruth ran the Chelsea Butcher Shop for several years. Dink was also on the Chelsea Police Department for a time.

Jim is a graduate of Chelsea and served in the Army in Korea.

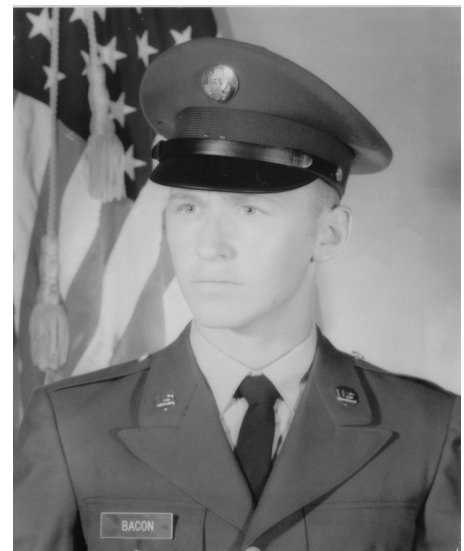
The Bacon family needs help identifying the two men pictured here with Dink. He is the one in the middle. It is believed the other two are from the Foyil and Verdigris area. Please contact us or the family if you know the identity of either man.



Miles 'Dink' Bacon



Rob Bacon



Jim Bacon



## Tom McSpadden of Chelsea

William Thomas McSpadden was born February 11, 1929. He was the son of Clinton and Beulah McSpadden and the grandson of Fair and Serena McSpadden. His sister, Carolyn McPheeters lives in Bushyhead.

Tom served in the United States Army from 1950 to 1951. He was a Corporal with the 31<sup>st</sup> Infantry, 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division in Korea.

Tom was killed in action on November 7, 1951. He and his unit were searching for land mines when the enemy troops opened fire on them.

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## We Salute Northeast Oklahoma Veterans!

The information about the following Veterans was submitted by our readers. We thank you for sharing this information with us. Above all, we say a special Thank You to these true Hometown Heroes!!!

**Jerry Dean Brown** of Copan served in the U.S. Marine Corps from November 12, 1964 to November 19, 1968. He served in Viet Nam from November 12, 1965 through June 29, 1966. He was in the Motor Transport Section in East DaNang, between China Beach and Marble Mountain. He was even in the Bob Hope Christmas Show!

Jerry received a Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Viet Nam Service Medal, Vietnamese Campaign Medal, and Marksman Badge, M-14 Expert.

Jerry is one of 13 children of Tom and May Elizabeth Elkhair Brown. Two brothers also served in Vietnam. David with the U.S. Navy and Richard with the U.S. Army.

Jerry has been a self taught code pipe and pressure welder for 25 years.

**Gene Czapansky** of Chelsea served in the U.S. Air Force from December 15, 1949 to December 21, 1953. He did his Basic training at Lackland Air Force Base. He spent almost two and a half years in Korea with the 28<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadron attached to the 20<sup>th</sup> Air Force. He received 3 Battle Stars and Korean Ribbon. He received special training on several different aircraft and was also an instructor at Sheppard Air Force Base. Gene is originally from Lamont Oklahoma.

**Lloyd A. Dennis** of Collinsville served in the U.S. Army from December of 1939 to August of 1945. He served in WWII with the 85<sup>th</sup> Infantry, 2<sup>nd</sup> Division. He was wounded in action. His rank was Staff Sgt. He received the Bronze Star, Expert Marksman, Combat Infantry Badge, 4 Battle Stars, European Theater Ribbon, Good Conduct Ribbon, and Pearl Harbor Ribbon.

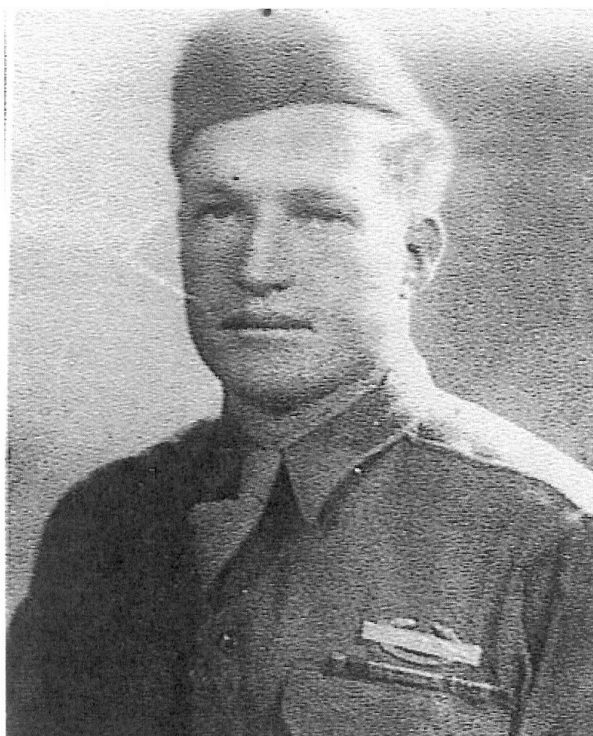
Lloyd married Esther Fisher on November 11, 1942. After the war, he worked for Peabody Coal Company until his retirement. He has two daughters: Betty Little and husband Winston, and Beverly Dawes and husband Bob. Two grandchildren: Scott Little and wife Nancy, and

Susan Bickford and husband Ron. Two great grandchildren: Brandon and Geoffrey Bickford.

**Richard Holland** is originally from Reno Nevada, but has called Miami home for 22 years. He was with the Navy Seals from 1981 to 1987; serving in the Cold War - Missions Training.

Richard saved a team member's life while being fired upon; and took a bullet in the spine while doing so. The bullet is still lodged in his spinal column.

Richard's entire team was killed in a live fire training accident. He was the only survivor. He received the Purple Heart with clusters and the Silver Star.



Lloyd A Dennis

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**Sammy Jay Looney Sr.** of Bluejacket served in the U.S. Navy from 1951 to 1955. He served aboard the USS Brown, which patrolled the coast off Korea. While in the Navy he had to opportunity to see Hawaii, China, Japan, Philippines, and Korea.

Sam is the son of the late Charley and Sarah Looney of Vinita. He is retired from MKI, Union Pacific Railroad. He and wife Alice have 6 children, 17 grandchildren, and 14 great grandchildren.

**Oran E. Need** of Miami has been with the Air Force since October 13, 1942, and at the age of a fit and healthy 88 years old, is currently a Lt. Colonel in the Air Force Retired Reserves! He was an Air Force Cadet. In WWII he was in the Southwest Pacific during the occupation of Japan. He served in the Korean War. He received 1 Battle Star for the Corral Sea. Oran worked as a meteorologist. He had 10 months of "Metro" training at Grand Rapids Michigan.

Oran and his wife have been married for 67 years!



Sammy Jay Looney Sr.

(Continued on next page)

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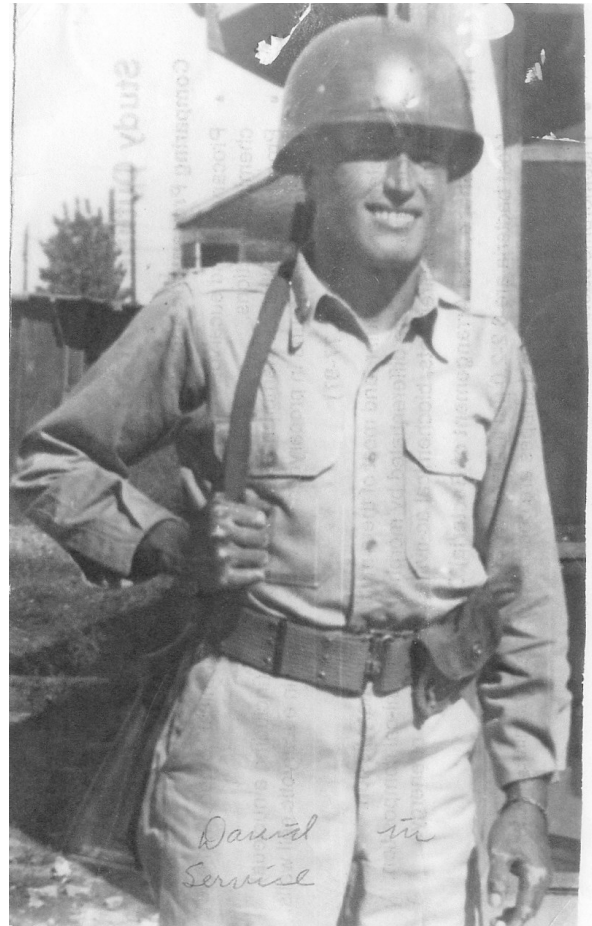
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**Mark Arlan Ridgley** of Vinita has been with the U.S. Army since 1987. He is currently a Major serving as Finance and Accounting Officer at Camp Doha, Kuwait. His office is in charge of a majority of the Middle Eastern area. The office provides military pay, travel pay, disbursing, and local foreign and stateside vendors. He works with Middle East banks to supply local currency for soldiers use, and to pay foreign vendors.

Mark's prior duty assignments include being deployed in support of Desert Shield/Storm in Saudi Arabia and Iraq.

While Mark is in Kuwait, his wife Jamie, two daughters, one son and one grandchild are living near Fort Bragg, North Carolina. His mother Geraldine Ridgley lives in Vinita. His father, now deceased, served in the U.S. Army in the 1950s.

**David L. Roberts** of Bristow served in the U.S. Army during the Korean War. While serving in Korea he was given a camera and told, "While you're fighting, take pictures." As it turns out, that camera saved his life! The soldier in front of him stepped on a land mine just as David had raised the camera to take a picture. The heat from the blast burned David's hands, ears, and forehead. He had to have skin grafts, and continued photography after the war.



David L. Roberts

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**Leonard N. Todd** was born March 7, 1926 in Ada, Oklahoma, and grew up in Dawson, Oklahoma. He served with the 124<sup>th</sup> Horse Cavalry from June 1944 to June 1946. He entered the service at the age of 18 and was trained at Fort Riley Kansas. He served in the "C.B.I." Theatre of Operations for 18 months. He received 3 Battle Stars and a Combat Infantry Badge. He was honorably discharged at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

Leonard married Bonnie Lawrence in 1944. They had three sons, Steve, Terry, and Kelly. Bonnie died in 1993. He got a G.E.D. at 50 years of age. He retired from Rockwell International in 1988. He has stayed active in Veterans Organizations and church work at Bethel Chapel in Foyil.

**Jack Vann** of Inola, served in the U.S. Army in 1967 and 1968. He served in Viet Nam with the 144<sup>th</sup> Transportation, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion. He is of Cherokee ancestry.

**Buck Whorton** of Chelsea served in the U.S. Army from April 1986 to April 1992. MOS – 74 F – Programmer / Analyst. He served from 1989 to 1992 in Fairbanks Alaska with the 6<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division as the system manager for the Command Operation Center at headquarters. During Desert Storm they supported ground forces with satellite feed and imagery.



1984

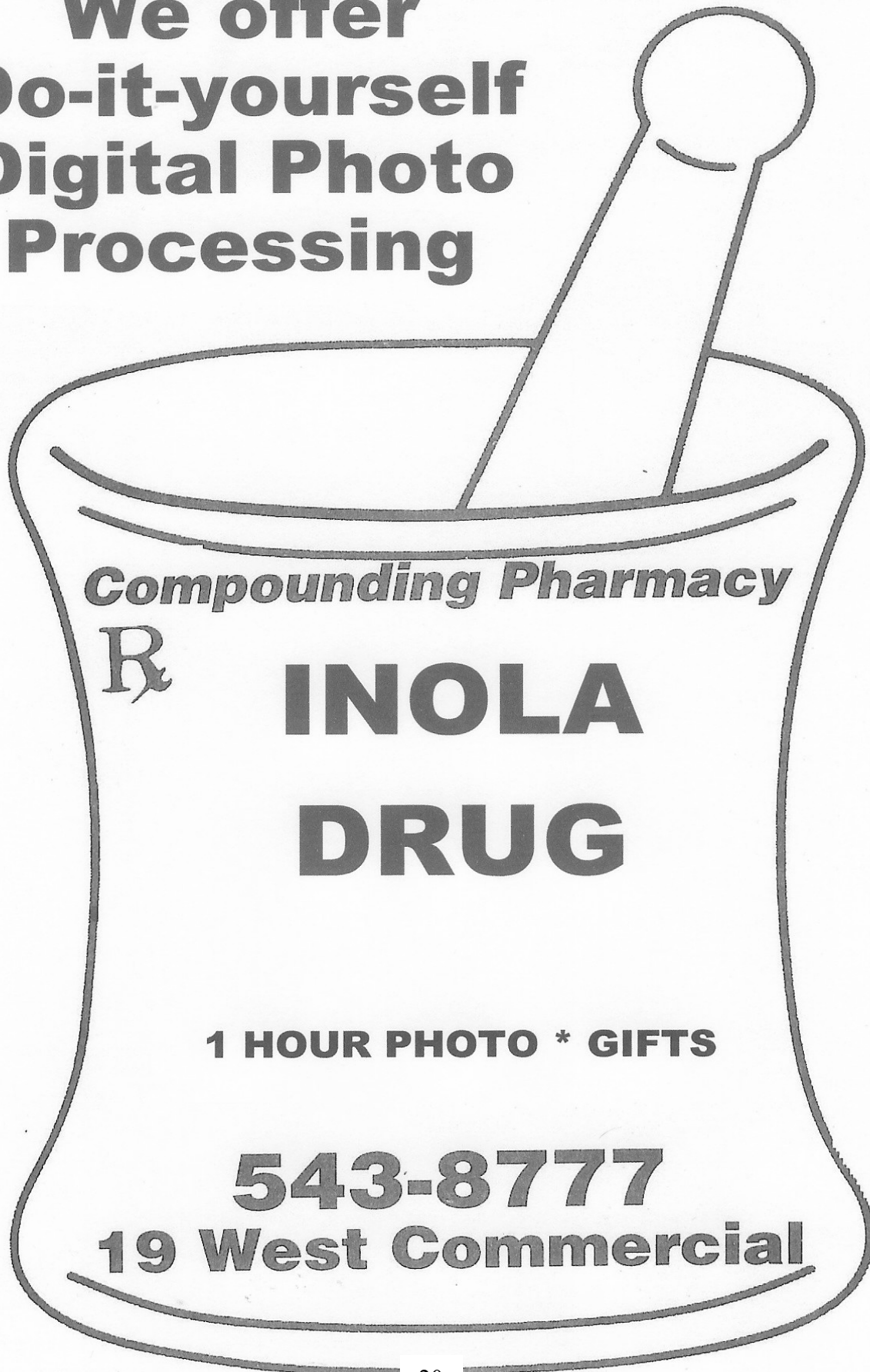


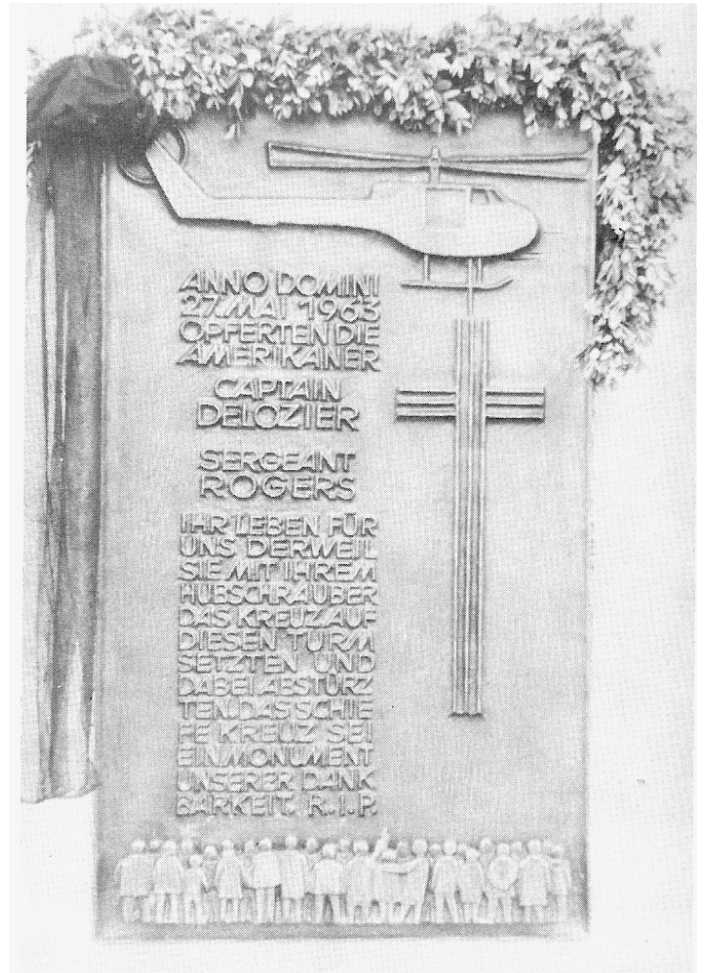
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**Samuel Don DeLozier of Chelsea**  
Born October 4, 1934, died May 27, 1963

Captain DeLozier, a helicopter pilot, was killed while placing a cross on a Catholic Church in Gropningen, Germany. He had volunteered for the good will mission, and it was to be his last assignment before returning to the United States. The 880 pound gold and silver cross was flown from Donzdorf to Goppingen, where it was to be placed on the bell tower of the uncompleted Christ the King Catholic Church.

As a large crowd and TV cameras watched, the cable holding the cross could not be disconnected and a gust of wind sent the helicopter crashing into the courtyard. A crewman was killed instantly; Captain DeLozier died 4 hours later.

As a permanent memorial to the two men, the cross was raised and left at a 45 degree angle, a marble altar was built on the spot where the helicopter crashed, and a bronze tablet was erected at the bottom of the bell tower.

Don was the youngest son of Mr. and Mrs. Harlan DeLozier. He attended Chelsea High School, Northeastern Oklahoma A&M, and graduated from O.S.U.

In 1952 he married Barbara White of Woodward. They had six children: Samuel Don, Stephen Dan, Stuart David, Denise, Richard Alan, and Kyle D.



Mural painted by Bill Rabbit at the Mayes County Court House, honoring veterans.

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***Thank You!!***

We want to thank each and every one of you who shared information with us about the people we have featured in this issue.

It is with great pride and gratitude we salute those who have served the United States of America.

.....  
***Next Issue***

December will mark the end of Hometown Oklahoma's first year in publication. In honor of our anniversary, we are going to revisit some of the towns we have featured this year. We know there are things we missed the first time around, due to limited manpower and time. If you have any additional information or stories about your hometown you would like to share with us, please contact us!

***Make sure you don't miss future issues of Hometown Oklahoma!***

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