

SERVE

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Paul Bryant Photo

A living tribute to Specialist Dusty Pool, 20, of the 26th Military Police Detachment rests above a mantel at Mamma Toni's restaurant in Chandler.

Afghanistan.

"Jonathan is a hero," Toni Pool said. "He killed a guy who had eight tons of explosives on his truck and was trying to come through a gate."

Unlike Other Guys

She didn't question her son's commitment to his country.

And while she still might be surprised he enlisted, the kind of man she describes might explain his decision two years ago a little better.

"Dusty is unlike other guys," she said. "He has a huge heart. Anything and everything he's tried to do he's totally succeeded at. Everything he touches turns to gold, and he's a great, big mamma's boy."

Toni Pool further described her son as a determined kid who had to try harder in school because of his size.

"He was just so little in high school, so he had to try harder than anybody. He wanted to be one of the best football players, and I think he accomplished that. He

played offense, defense, and special teams. That boy never got a break."

And he enjoyed riding horses and drag racing, she said.

"He's very hard-headed and a little crazy like his daddy at times. But if somebody needed help, Dusty would help him."

Toni Pool said she communicates with her son two to three times a week and gives little to no attention to international news.

"I figure the less I know about what's going on over there, the better off I am." Dusty Pool follows a line of military veterans in his family.

His mother's step-grandfather, niece, nephew, uncle, brother-in-law, and father-in-law have or are serving.

He is scheduled to come home in February for a two-and-a-half-week break before he returns to Iraq for at least the next five months.

Dusty Pool's father is Carl Wayne Pool. He has two sisters, Crystal, 22, and Kayla, 17.

CENTRAL

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The district has grown about 60 percent over the last 20 years, and continues to grow 3 percent annually. Enrollment at Brownsboro Junior High is about 450.

"We're doing good, but it would be nice to see things added on. And I think the district is looking 10 to 20 years down the road, looking at not just what we need right now but also what we'll need later."

A tax rollback election that would have funded district improvements was defeated two years ago, but Larkin said voters will

likely support a bond proposal in 2010.

"This community cares a lot about its kids. I don't know what it's going to take, but I think the community will support a bond proposal if they think that's what we need."

Oates, the president of Texas School Planning, said the initial three-phase planning process leading up to a possible tax election would include heavy community involvement. District Superintendent Elton Caldwell has said the election could come as early as next November.

BATTLE

companies of Infantry and a Unit of Engineers to help with the design and the building of the base camp, for a total of approx. 250 men.

Viet Nam was a very hot place to be in, probably 100+ degrees during the day and 90 at night.

So during the day while on operations it was extremely hot and at night it was impossible to sleep, you just went till you couldn't go anymore and fell asleep.

Also the mosquitoes were bad, so you had to put up with them by wetting a towel and wrapping it around your face to keep from getting bit.

After not showering for a few days the mosquitoes left you alone.

So normal routine would have been doing operations during the day and if your platoon had the duty of LP's (listening post) that means squad of men approx 6-8 guys would set up a listening post all night for the enemy in an area outside the base camp.

The night of the ground attack we had several LP's outside the base camp and had a hard time getting them back inside the wire, so much enemy movement was out there that when they came back inside the wire you couldn't see who it was until they were close.

They were very lucky they were not shot. The ground attack started at midnight and the small arms fire was horrendous.

S2, our intelligence group in our battalion estimated that we were hit by a Regimental size force (1,500) men.

Our base camp lost 22 men (kia) and (54) wounded out of a total of 250 men. The

NVA lost approx 250-300 men that we counted, and for 2-3 weeks after, we dug up graves with bodies all over the area so how many they actually lost we don't know for sure.

Our camp got over-run on one part of our perimeter with the (NVA-North Vietnamese Army), they took over 4-5 of our bunkers so we not only had enemy in front of us but they were also behind us inside of our base camp.

That night after the NVA had got inside of our base camp we were fighting bunker to bunker and we knew we had US soldiers inside some of the bunkers but we assumed they were dead.

This is when Gary came into play, he volunteered

Churches must take lead in helping food bank

Several businesses and organizations here appear to be accelerating efforts to donate food to God's Open Hands in Chandler as Thanksgiving and Christmas approach.

That's good.

And as grateful as I know the volunteers are who operate the food bank, I also know an even greater effort is needed to fund and stock God's Open Hands — and not just for the holidays.

The not-for-profit food bank requires thousands of dollars a month — and probably more — just to keep a moderate amount of food on the shelves and to maintain its building.

A trip last week to East Texas Food Bank in Tyler cost God's Open Hands over \$600.

But the center also collects food from King's Storehouse, and if it visits both food banks twice a week, its cost can run several thousand dollars.

You get the picture.

Here's another one: The need in this community far exceeds supply.

In September, more than 1,100 individuals were given 342 food boxes at God's Open Hands.

But the food bank's president, Pat Martin, says the need for food is beginning to increase each month while cash donations remain the same.

Martin was quick to acknowledge the humanitarian efforts by churches, businesses, clubs, and organizations, but seemed hesitant to ask them to do more.

I won't hesitate the same way, and I'll start with the churches.

You see, it's easy to show up a couple of times a week and talk about helping others. It's easy to quote scripture and shake your head in agreement while the pastor talks about getting involved outside the church walls.

God's servants often get in their comfort zones. As a preacher's kid, I've seen the best and worst of churches. And I've seen God's people come through in extraordinary and miraculous ways, when they open their hearts and let the Father work through them.

Quite frankly, that's exactly the way it should be. That is exactly the way God intends.



Bryant

And so I'm calling for the area's churches, especially the larger ones, to contribute more money to God's Open Hands so volunteers can buy more food, help more families, and make a larger impact on this community.

Besides, that's part of your job as a church family. It's not enough to simply show up on Sundays and go through the motions.

Church families must be involved — and quite heavily — in the progression of their communities. They must lead by example, and that very much includes helping the poor, needy, and less fortunate.

It means helping the elderly. It means volunteering your time when it's the hardest, sacrificing self to the greater good. It means doing what is Biblical.

It means doing what's right. And you know what to do.

As for businesses, I know this is a tough time for you. The economy has kicked all of us in our rear ends.

I'll simply ask you to do what you can, when you

can, especially as the holidays near.

Many of us have never gone hungry on Thanksgiving and Christmas, so it's hard to imagine those who do.

And to everyone else: Imagine being one of those individuals or families who visit God's Open Hands once a month to pick up food you can't afford to buy.

All of us have experienced tough times at some point in our lives. We must put ourselves in their shoes. We must understand no shame is found in asking for help and offering to help.

None of us are too good for either.

We must not neglect organizations like God's Open Hands, those that enrich our communities by putting the needs of others above everything else.

What the people at that center are doing every day is Christ-like, and those of us who are able to help — whether through volunteering or contributing money or food — must do precisely that.

God bless you.

Paul Bryant is managing editor of *The Chandler & Brownsboro Statesman*.

EDITORIAL

No greater honor exists than wearing uniform of U.S. military

No greater honor can be found than when an individual chooses to serve the United States in a military uniform.

And on Nov. 11 every year, government offices close and organizations and entities coordinate programs to celebrate veterans' invaluable contributions to our country.

That's fine, but Veterans Day is about more than short, feel-good ceremonies and taking off work for another national holiday.

It's about respect, honor, gratitude, and perspective. It's about understanding.

Blessed and protected by its Creator, America is

America because of our veterans, starting from those who waged war on Britain in the 18th century and continuing today. It includes the incredible men and women who served bravely in both world wars, Korea, Vietnam, Iraq, Afghanistan, and

in conflicts and skirmishes elsewhere.

And it includes those in uniform who never fired a shot during hostilities and those who served stateside.

Military veterans aren't just those who commanded troops in the field or who otherwise fought during wars. They volunteer to serve for low pay and the daily possibility they won't come home.

They leave behind wives, husbands, children, parents, and siblings. Some give the ultimate sacrifice for a great nation. Some come home wounded and disabled. And some give a lifetime of service to the U.S. military.

Indeed, no greater honor exists for an American than to wear the uniform of the U.S. armed forces. And he deserves our respect, admiration, and gratitude — not just on Nov. 11 each year, but every day.

Because, without our vet-

erans, America would not be America. We would not know this kind of freedom. Our lives as Americans just wouldn't be the same. America would not be the same.

Not everyone is made to be a soldier, and that's okay. For those who are, they're a special kind. And we say "thank you" for your service for which we could never fully repay.

This Veterans Day, take more than a few minutes during a ceremony to show your support. Do something special for our veterans.

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with a guy named Bob Norton to go down the trench line to shoot a 90 mm recoilless rifle into the bunkers to destroy them.

This was a very brave act to do since we only had the one 90 mm gun.

It is a type of weapon were it takes 2 people to operate, one to load and one to shoot at the same time.

With enemy firing everywhere and the bunker being about 25'-30' foot away you had to load the weapon and then kind of stand up to fire it.

I can say that Gary & Bob were a big part in saving our base camp that night.

Gary was killed instantly when he rose to fire the gun, he fell back onto Bob Norton and another person

Luis Pagan from Puerto Rico was with them and he starting firing the weapon into the bunkers.

The first thought is if there are any live U.S. soldiers in the bunkers, but we had to stop them where they were at.

After awhile the Company Commander of Charlie Company (Capt. Ray Pulliam) had to call in artillery on the base camp to stop the NVA from over running the base camp.

It was a very brave thing that Gary did that night, I can't say enough about him. Such a fine young man to lose his life, he is a hero in every walk of life to the platoon he was in.

He will be remembered forever.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Humane Society commends Chandler police

The Henderson County Humane Society would like to voice its appreciation for the work of the Chandler Police Department in a recent incident where an animal was badly in need of help from local officials, and that's exactly what it got.

In particular, we would like to offer many thanks to Officers Estes, Jones, and Moss, and to Judge Starnes, Justice of the Peace, for caring about the welfare of this animal, taking the time to find out the details of the case and laws concerning animals, and in the end, doing the best they could under the circumstances.

The Humane Society and others involved in this situation were pleasantly surprised at how quickly and fairly the matter was handled, all with the welfare of the animal a top priority.

We are very fortunate in a small community to have some law enforcement officials who believe that animals need and deserve their help when they are not being cared for properly!

Thank you.

Henderson County Humane Society

KBB seeks help for nativity scene

This is an open letter to the citizens of the Brownsboro area.

Last year, when Keep Brownsboro Beautiful was organized, several things fell to that group. One of

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MISTLETOE & MAGIC 2009
A TOAST TO TINSEL TOWN
NOVEMBER 12-14
HARVEY CONVENTION CENTER

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 12 NOON TO 9 P.M.
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 12 NOON TO 9 P.M.
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 10 A.M. TO 5 P.M.

Tickets available at the Door • All Sales Final • \$8 each per day
\$15 for a 3 day pass • Children 6 & under Free
*For safety reasons, strollers, carts, wagons & rolling bags are not allowed.

www.juniorleagueoftyler.org

All proceeds from Mistletoe & Magic will be returned to the community through the projects and placements of the Junior League of Tyler, Inc., 1919 South Donnybrook, Tyler, TX 75701

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