I’ve never been a big fan of the University of Texas. It’s too big, and the Longhorns win too darned much. But everything about the university is tops. There’s so much money poured into the school that it has a great athletic program, great business school, great chemistry labs, great law school, great medical school associations plus any other advantage you’d want from a top tier educational system.

I’ve had hundreds of close friends attend Texas, and they do bleed orange (the burnt variety). After the TRAF Waco reunion, I’ve become a fan of UT’s big boss, Chancellor William H. McRaven, the retired four-star Admiral who plotted strategy for the daring raid in Abbottabad, Pakistan, resulting in U.S. Navy SEALs entering a virtual fortress and killing Osama bin Laden.

His rank might belie his assignment. He was commander of U.S. Special Operations Command, not just of the navy, but the entire U.S. special ops community, a command made up of 69,000 servicemen and women.

McRaven was the featured TRAF speaker and gave a 20-minute parallel comparison between Navy SEALs, Army Rangers and Texas Rangers.
By Jim Chionsini
Chairman

We’ve always heard that time flies when you’re having fun.
That’s how it’s been for me since taking the helm of the Texas Ranger Association Foundation. But as it says in Ecclesiastes, “there’s a time and a place for everything.”
It’s time for me to get on down the trail and turn the reins over to capable people who also love the Rangers and what they’ve stood for since 1823.
During my tenure as Chairman, I’ve made a lot of new friends and strengthened long time friendships.
I’ve felt a sense of accomplishment, some disappointment and gleaned new appreciation of what the Texas Rangers stand for and how our foundation has generously and quickly risen to the occasion whenever there was a need.
I’m a better person for taking on this responsibility and, more than anyone, realize it’s been a team effort. Please indulge me, but I’ve got to give thanks to some great folks.
My business and life mentor and editor of the Star-Journal Bill Hartman; my wonderful friend Steve Sikes, who has already given more time to TRAF than anyone I know and for always being there with sage advice; and Gary Crawford for injecting an angle no one else thought of.
With no advance notice Dave Wilson has donated high quality pistols to every speaker and person who helped our mission and he also brought Dave Conlon to our board.
Conlon, for not only his tremendous financial help, but for all the things he’s done behind the scene for the Rangers with no expectation or desire of accolades.
All the committee chairmen did exceptional work.
Hartman, Tom Schleicher, Russell Molina and Sikes were appointed at the Winter Meeting and did an excellent job rewriting the antiquated bylaws.
Their work will result in more efficient board meetings and operations in the future.
Jerry Welborn has worked tirelessly developing the concept of fundraising through clay shoots. Because of their success we’re no longer forced to stage expensive galas.
Galas took a huge time investment and financial risk. For years Jerry and his wife Susan have headed the Reunion Silent Auction and it gets better every year.
Because of Rick Hernandez we have received sizable donations from HEB. He’s worked tirelessly heading the company D Clay shoot and has been a very good addition to the board.
Thanks to Capt. Richard Sweaney for his special friendship and many years of dedication to the Rangers and TRAF. He, along with Barry Caver and Jack Dean kept us in line when our knowledge of Ranger history and protocol fell short.
My sincere appreciation to the Executive Board for all it has done, conference calls and meetings which required trips to Waco at their own expense and unpaid time away from their jobs.
I want to wish the new administration good luck as they work to make TRAF better than it is today.
Every TRAF board member knows that without Liz Myrick none of our successes would be possible. She’s brought a level of professionalism to us we’ve never before enjoyed.
She’s patiently listened to us complain about one thing or another and at just the right moment spoke up. Maybe with only one or two words but they were always the right ones, and her timing was uncanny.
She’s taken on every project without complaint and with grace. Thank you Liz. Without you we wouldn’t be where we are today.
This go on and on but I can see the displeasure on editor Hartman’s face at the length of this, my last column as Chairman.
It’s been my privilege and honor to have served in this capacity. I am humbled by the experience. Thank You. Happy Trails to all.

Texas Ranger Association Foundation
Star Journal
Constance White, Chairman
Dave Wilson, Vice Chairman
Rick Hernandez, Treasurer
Thomas Schleier, Secretary
Liz Myrick, Executive Director
Bill Hartman, Editor
104 Texas Ranger Trail • Waco, Texas 76706
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New chairman’s report –

Constance proud to serve as TRAF Chair

By Constance White
TRAF Chairman

Thank you for the honor of electing me to serve as chairman of the Texas Ranger Association Foundation for the next two years.

As a board member since 2003, I am proud to be part of an organization that serves the retired and active Texas Rangers.

The Ranger Division of the Texas Department of Public Safety is perhaps the most elite law enforcement agency in the United States and in the not-so-distant future, we will be celebrating its 200th anniversary.

While much as changed over the years, the two aspects of the Rangers that have remained consistent are the personal integrity of the Rangers and the fact the Rangers continue to be the best in the investigative network.

The Texas Ranger Association Foundation was founded in 1981 to assist retired and active Texas Rangers and help preserve Ranger history, working closely with the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum in Waco.

In 1989, the TRAF scholarship program was established to assist college-bound children of active Rangers. Our mission is clear, and our vision moving forward is one of potential and opportunity.

I would like to thank TRAF benefactors, board members, employees and volunteers who continue to work to support TRAF’s mission.

On behalf of the TRAF Board of Directors, I would also like to thank our Past Chairman Jim Chionsini and his wife Macy for their three years of leadership. Their care and love for the Texas Rangers is appreciated.

I look forward to serving with all of you in my new capacity. God bless.

Constance White

UT’s big boss continued from page 1

Describing how they are “different” from soldiers of other countries, McRaven used an old quote from a Texas Ranger, “They do what’s right, because it’s right.”

Over the past five or six years, I’ve gotten to be friends with two Navy SEALs. Both are young men who I’m glad have huge roles in the protection of our country.

You can take what they say to the bank. Both are McRaven boosters and say the 60-year-old Longhorn boss is a great leader, with the highest integrity.

Moving up the ranks in the military is not unlike business or politics. A boost from a friend or colleague is always helpful, but in the end you’ve got to be your own man or woman and earn your credentials.

McRaven isn’t timid, though he doesn’t go looking for a fight. But he also won’t run from one either.

While in the military he spoke harshly when both Democratic and Republican senators falsely accused a McRaven ally of breaking the law.

One was the octogenarian from Arizona, John McCain, who was also on the Senate Armed Services Committee. McRaven’s friend, a rear admiral named Brian Losey, was exonerated by the Department of Defense.

He’s also taken on President Donald Trump when the president characterized the media as an enemy of democracy.

McRaven was a journalism major at UT, graduating in 1977. “The media and I haven’t always gotten along, but I appreciate that our country has the greatest media in the world,” the chancellor said.

He’s also taken on the regents at his own university. His contract expires this year, and he has said both the regents and he need to decide if they are still a good fit.

His speech at the Texas Ranger Association Foundation Reunion Weekend in Waco had active and retired Rangers ready to follow him into battle.

The best compliment I heard came from a fellow foundation director, Joey McCarty of Garden Ridge (near San Antonio), who has known McRaven more than 50 years.

“He is the same guy I knew as a kid, real and genuine, and I’d trust him with anything or anyone I have or know.”

When a guy’s known you for 50 years and still speaks that way, McRaven must be the real McCoy.

I won’t go so far as to pull for the Horns, but I surely like their admiral.

(Reach BH at bhartman@hartmannews.com)
Robert Dabney New Director ‘Emeritus’

Company A Director Robert L. (Bob) Dabney was honored in the spring by fellow directors of the Texas Ranger Association Foundation, family, friends and an outpouring of Texas Rangers at his retirement party at the Bayou Club in Houston.

The retired lawyer was one of the oldest serving directors in TRAF, having joined the board in 1983. He was honored further with a Director Emeritus plaque presentation at the annual Reunion Weekend in Waco.

A native Houstonian, Dabney is a graduate of the University of Virginia, class of 1953, and received his law degree from the University of Texas in 1956. He spent 57 years in private practice and retired in 2013 as senior partner in the Dabney and Pappas Law Firm.

In addition to his 34-year service on TRAF’s board, Dabney also has a family connection to the Texas Rangers. His great-great grandfather, John Thompson Storey, moved from Georgia to Texas in 1885, settling in Gonzales County.

Storey fought Indians and outlaws under several Ranger captains.

“I support the Rangers because of my family ties and my friendships with many Rangers who exemplify courageous and honorable traits of character,” Dabney said.

OBITS

Ranger Captain Grady Sessums dies at age 79

One of the better known Texas Rangers in Southeast Texas was Capt. Grady Sessums, former captain of Company A, who died in May in his hometown of Vernon in Northwest Texas, at age 79.

With five sisters, Grady often talked about having “six mothers” and was never able to get away with anything.

He moved to Sweetwater where he graduated from high school.

It’s reported in a shop class that he and a pal built a working cannon that blew out an entire wall in the shop. At his 35th high school reunion, classmates were surprised to learn of his law enforcement career instead of him “being on the other side of the bars.”

After high school, Grady became a jet mechanic in the air force and met his “one and only bride,” Sandra Maureen Mailliard. They were married in 1960 and he brought her home to Texas.

He became a DPS trooper stationed in Houston. He was transferred to Del Rio and took college courses from Sul Ross University.

In 1969 he passed the Texas Ranger exam and remained in Del Rio. In the mid 1970s he was transferred to Houston where he became a sergeant and several years later was named captain and assigned to Company A.

Sessums obit continued page 5
Gunn, Ranger, DPS 35 years Dies at age 86

Funeral services for Billy Joe Gunn, 86, were held in Temple with burial at Wilson Valley Cemetery in Bell County. He died in his hometown of Clifton on Tuesday following the TRAF Retired Ranger Reunion Weekend in Waco.

A native of Little River, Gunn joined the Texas National Guard in 1947, served in the 36th Infantry Division and later served in the U.S. Air Force Reserve and was eventually promoted to major.

He joined the Texas Department of Public Safety and was a highway patrolman from 1951 to 1965 at Lampasas and Georgetown. He was promoted to the Texas Rangers in 1966 and was with Company F in Waco and Waco-a-hachie until his retirement in 1986.

He then became a Special U.S. Deputy Marshal for the Western District, serving in Waco.

He was a member of the Karem Shrine AONMS of Waco, was a director emeritus of the Former Texas Rangers Association and a lifetime member of the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum in Waco.

He was named the Outstanding Peace Officer in McLennan County in 1974 by the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Ranger Gunn was preceded in death by his parents, Sheriff and Mrs. Lester Gunn; sisters, Nelda Jean Clark and Patsy Gunn; and a grandson, Jacob Lynn Pack.

He is survived by three daughters, Judy G. Gunn of Waco, Renee French of Midlothian and Penny Schulz and her husband Jeff of Fort Worth.

Four grandchildren also survive, Ian Joslin, Justin Schulz, Samatha Schulz and Caitlin Fenton. Three great-grandchildren also survive.

FTRA Chaplain Rusty Frazier handled the services.

Ranger Adolfo Cuellar Served DPS 30 years

Funeral services for Adolfo (Al) Cuellar, 71, were held May 2 in San Antonio after a four-year battle with cancer.

A fifth generation Texan, Al was the third of five children born to Adolfo and Josefa Cuellar. He attended high school in San Antonio where he met and married Maria de la Luz Hernandez, in what Al described as winning the lottery.

He joined the U.S. Navy Reserve for a six-year stint, but after three was called to active duty aboard the USS Betelgeuse as a radioman. He completed active duty in 1968.

That same year, he received his State Trooper training and was assigned to Longview. In 1978, he became one of the first Hispanic Texas Rangers of the modern era. As part of his Ranger service, he was on the security details of Texas governors Mark White, Bill Clements and Ann Richards.

He retired in 1996, but continued investigative work an additional 18 years in corporate security and working with federal agencies in the prevention of commodity theft.

He is survived by his wife, Mary; four children, Monica and husband Monty Menzel, Cristina and husband Len de la Garza, Tama and husband Alex Garza and Justin and wife Katherine Cuellar. Ten grandchildren also survive.

Son Justin followed his father into law enforcement and is a trooper in Athens.

Retired DPS Trooper Byrne Sr. Dies at 78

Retired DPS Trooper Jerry D. Byrne Sr., 78, died June 2 in Fort Worth. He was the father of retired Texas Ranger Capt. Jerry Byrne and the uncle of Ranger Major Chance Collins. He was also the brother-in-law of retired Trooper Donald Lee Collins.

Funeral services were held June 7 in Pecos. Burial with military honors was also June 7 at Fort Davis.

Byrne Sr. retired from the DPS in 1993 but went right back to work as a civilian for DPS as a motor vehicle inspection technician in Fort Stockton where he retired a second time in 1999.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Ollie and Faye Byrne.

Mother of former Ranger chief dies

Funeral services were held in early April for Mrs. Olga De La Santos, 91, with burial at Laredo Cemetery.

Mrs. De La Santos was the mother of former Texas Ranger Assist. Chief Gary De Los Santos. “We’d ask you to keep Gary and his family in your prayers,” Ret. Capt. Barry Caver, TRAF liaison director, said.
By the 1870s the Texas Rangers were no longer needed as “Indian fighters” or a militia. In 1874 they were reorganized into companies of the Frontier Battalion and Special Forces. Rangers were the only law for many frontier Texas towns.

They were constantly on the move by horse and railroad to wherever they were needed. In 1877 they were needed to catch the most wanted train robber in the Old West.

Sam Bass was an unremarkable 26-year-old baby-faced drifter. He had worked as a wagon freighter, cowboy and ranch hand, supplementing his income by robbing stagecoaches and travelers near mining districts.

He squandered most of his money in saloons and houses of easy virtue. By spectacular dumb luck, things were about to change for Sam.

Arriving in Nebraska in September 1877, Bass recruited five men to stop and board the Union Pacific Express at night near Big Spring. Their intent was to rob passengers and the mail car payroll safe.

On the way to the safe, the gang relieved passengers of their purses, pocket watches and other valuables to the meager tune of about $450.

Forcing their way inside the mail car they were unable to break into the safe. Noticing a stack of boxes nearby, they opened one and found it filled with $20 Liberty Double-Eagle gold pieces fresh from the San Francisco mint.

They had blundered into a US Treasury shipment—3,000 shiny new gold coins en route to the National Bank of Commerce in New York.

The haul was the biggest in Union Pacific history. Sixty thousand dollars was a lot of money in 1877; the average annual wage of an American was about $116.

It was the equivalent of $1.4 million dollars today, or $4.5 million at current gold prices. Each gang member left the train weighted with 500 gold pieces (or 36 pounds) of gold.

The good fortune was to be their undoing and staying under the radar was impossible. The Sam Bass gang was national news, and he was the most wanted men in the West.

Splitting their take, the outlaws headed in different directions. Unfortunately, brand new $20 gold pieces from the San Francisco mint stood out like a sore thumb and every bank manager was on the lookout.

One train robber tried to deposit his split in a Missouri bank where he was soon arrested. The rest of the gang members were captured or killed.

Bass knew he was hot and left Nebraska for Texas disguised as a farmer. He gathered a new gang, staging holdups around Dallas-Fort Worth that netted as little as $11.

Worse yet he attracted the attention of the Texas Rangers. As the net tightened, he planned an escape to Mexico or South America financed by robbing banks along the way.

An informant notified the Rangers that Bass and three men had been seen in Waco and Belton and were headed south to rob the bank in Round Rock.

Major John B. Jones sent the few available Rangers to town where they soon identified Bass. A gun battle in the streets ended Bass’ career.

Today the people of Texas own one of the $20 gold pieces likely stolen in the robbery. The story goes that in early July, on his way to destiny in Round Rock, Bass and an associate stopped by the Ranch Saloon on the square in Waco for a drink.

He paid for drinks with a $20 double eagle, a conspicuous amount to use to pay for drinks.

He reportedly was overheard saying, “Jim, there goes the last of the 1877 gold. It hasn’t done me a damned bit of good.”

The story goes that the coin was shown off in the saloon for years and stayed in the family of one of the saloon owners until it was bought by a collector.

It is now the property of the people of Texas, part of the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame collections.
Executive Director’s roundup –

Tons of help makes reunion success

By Liz Myrick
TRAF Exec Director

Another Reunion is on the books and oh what a weekend! The Reunion committee has been ably led for four years by Capt. Barry Caver, and it’s through the contributions of many that it is made possible. With multiple events going on that weekend, there is a great deal of planning and preparation. Thank you all for the support and patience as we strive to improve it every year, and a special thank you goes to all of the dedicated volunteers and staff for making the event a success and the work fun.

Of the many highlights of the weekend there was the fellowship of old friends and the making of new ones, the singing of Michelle Winters and Olivia Brownlee, and of course the speakers. From Chief Prince’s words about “standing on the shoulders of giants” to Admiral McRaven’s recounting his own childhood influence of the “Lone Ranger” and “Doing right because it is the right thing to do.”

I find their remarks echoing around in my mind. In such a time when derision is the tone to which we’re growing too accustomed, their wisdom so generously dispensed through their personal anecdotes and reflections were welcome words for this hungry heart and listening mind.

I also learned new things about the foundation through the words of Capt. Richard Sweaney on Saturday evening. Although, it seems I always learn something new from him about the history of the Rangers, the foundation, ranching, grandparenting or life in general.

While he’s decided to step away from his TRAF board duties, (but not too far away he promises) I’m grateful for his tutelage along the way, as well as that of Capt. Caver, Chief Hank Whitman, and Capt. Jack Dean, who have always been just a text or phone call away.

I’m also grateful to the many active Rangers, their spouses and the Ranger administrative assistants, who suffer my questions and requests with grace and kindness.

The World War II veterans who graced us at the Saturday lunch were another reunion highlight this year. Their stories and their legacy bring out the very best in all of us.

Being with them was humbling and you could not leave without an immense sense of gratitude. “The Greatest Generation” is as apt a moniker as could be given.

They have bequeathed to us values of personal responsibility, duty, honor and faith. Many thanks to Director Bob Stratmann for securing their attendance.

With summer upon us, another cycle of scholarship applications are pouring in reminding us that the fall semester will be here soon.

Applications are due July 1 with award letters with instructions going out later in July. It’s so encouraging to see these children finding their own paths, learning life’s lessons along the way and holding all of the promise of what lies ahead.

Some day they will tell their own stories of standing on the shoulders of giants, and the foundation fulfills its mission with each lesson and every story.

With autumn in the not-so-distant future, the Texas Ranger Classic Clay Shoot season is also fast approaching.

With a record-breaking six shoots this fall, we hope to raise lots of money to support our mission including next year’s reunion, scholarships, emergency relief and educational initiatives.

For dates, sponsorship information and registration, please see our website or www.texasrangerclassic.com. There’s also a page ad in this edition of Star Journal.

We hope to see you at the shoots!

Marilyn Tittle joining TRAF office team

Marilyn Tittle has joined the staff of the Texas Ranger Association Foundation. She will be serving as full-time executive assistant.

Prior to joining the foundation team, she served as executive assistant to the CFO, vice president of medical staff and vice president of the foundation at Hendrick Medical Center in Abilene.

She spent more than 10 years as assistant to the executive vice president of the ACU Foundation at Abilene Christian University and also served in capacities involving university events, stewardship and alumni.

“Having spent most of her life in Abilene, Marilyn made the decision to pull up roots and move to Waco to be near her three grandchildren,” TRAF Executive Director Liz Myrick said.

Marilyn has two daughters, both ACU graduates, residing in Waco and Austin. She has a passion for working with donors, events and helping people.

Much of her time in Abilene was spent volunteering with Christian Homes and Family Services with adoption and foster families, mentoring birth mothers waiting to place their children. Her leisure time is filled enjoying her family, playing golf, baking, and decorating.

“Please join me in welcoming Marilyn,” Liz added.

Tittle email is Marilyn.tittle@thetexasrangers.org.
MEMBERS OF COMPANY D in attendance were (standing, l-r) Coy Smith and Israel Pacheco. Seated are Bobby C. Pointer, Marrie Aldridge and Miguel Rameriz.

COMPANY C RETIRED Rangers attend the annual reunion weekend were (bottom, l-r) Warren Yeager, Marshall Brown, Gary Henderson and Marshall Thomas. In back (l-r) are Capt. Carl Weathers, Major Todd Snyder (active), Tony Arnold and Lt. Jimmy Hailey.


MEMBERS OF COMPANY D in attendance were (standing, l-r) Coy Smith and Israel Pacheco. Seated are Bobby C. Pointer, Marrie Aldridge and Miguel Rameriz.

RANGER HEADQUARTERS was represented by (back row, l-r) Asst. Chief L.C. Wilson, Asst. Chief Bryant Wells and Asst. Chief James L. (Jim) Miller. Seated (l-r) are Chief Tony Leal, Chief Bruce Casteel, Col. Tommy Davis and Col. James Wilson.

LYDIA AND JAMES Scoggins were among the hundreds enjoying the annual Ranger Reunion Weekend. Scoggins is the program lead for unsolved “cold cases” for Texas Ranger Company F in Waco.

RETIRED RANGERS representing Company A were Capt. Dan North, David Maxwell, Milton Wright, Drew Carter and Lt. Kevin Pullen.
TRAF Reunion Weekend in Waco


WADSWORTH BROTHERS? Nope. But many have thought Ralph and Kenny were siblings over their years as Rangers. They took time for a “brotherly type” visit at the Reunion Weekend. Kenny has a good story about how Ralph took him under his wing and showed him the ropes while he was coming through the ranks as a Ranger.

RICHMOND REUNION. Vona and Klip Morefield are flanked by Marian and retired Texas Ranger Milton Wright. They live about five blocks from each other in Richmond. After retiring from the Rangers, Wright served several stints as sheriff of Fort Bend County. Mrs. Wright has been cited by Richmond’s Morton Masonic Lodge for her community service activities. The Morefields are TRAF benefactors from Company A.
Guests given Ranger certificates –

WWII vets ‘drop in’ during Reunion

There were plenty of highlights during the Ranger Reunion Weekend. Retired and active Rangers, TRAF members and friends were treated to a luncheon special on Saturday when representatives of the “Greatest Generation,” drove over from Georgetown and shared their experiences during World War II.

Betty Schleder, who has her own special connection to the generation, served as facilitator and gave a brief background of the four guests.

Betty is a widow of a former South Dakota farm boy who enlisted after the bombing of Pearl Harbor and was sent for medical training. There were not enough medical personnel to go around in WWII, and her husband was trained in several surgical fields including amputations, when necessary.

Her husband was the only medical person on a 450-man boat and he served four and a half years in the South Pacific.

Accompanying Betty in Waco were “The Princess and the Sailor,” Irene and Ken Gromley, both veterans of the U.S. Navy.

Irene, or Renie, as she’s called, joined the WAVES (Women Accepted for Voluntary Emergency Service) and served as a mechanic on planes used by navy pilots.

Ken was a navy pilot and retired after 30 years as a Lt. Commander. He and Renie met one day on a Florida beach, and she called Ken her Mustang, which in the navy is descriptive of someone who comes through the ranks the hard way.

Capt. Howard Konetchy, Betty said, “Must have a brain that weighs at least 11 pounds. He’s really a smart man and is a member of the high IQ society known as Mensa.”

Konetchy graduated high school at age 16 and spent a year at college before enlisting in the Coast Guard.

He was trained in meteorology, and was assigned to work on weather data in preparation for the Invasion of Normandy.

“Meteorology wasn’t the exacting science it is today, and Howard had to rely on humidity and barometric pressures, plus first-hand reports from pilots,” Betty said. He was later assigned as a weather monitor from South America to Greenland as well as being on patrol in the North Atlantic.

After active duty he attended Boston University on the GI Bill and joined the U.S. Naval Reserve.

The fourth guest was the only non-vet, but not because he didn’t try to enlist — three times.

Al Blaschke was turned down by his recruiting officer because his job of providing Pratt and Whitney Aircraft with tools they needed for wartime use was considered more important than serving on the front lines somewhere.

Al is a mere 100 years old and in addition to good genes, thanks his late wife of 49 years for making him drink eight glasses of water daily and taking Vitamin C.

On his 100 birthday, Al made a parachute jump, accompanied by facilitator Betty. “Al’s feat at his age was reported all across the globe,” Betty said.

Ranger Chief Randy Prince and TRAF Chairman Jim Chionsini presented the foursome with membership certificates in TRAF in addition to a large Ranger salute for their service.
Longtime Ranger, board liaison -
Capt. Richard Sweaney ‘re-retires’ after 41 years

Capt. Richard Sweaney retired from the Texas Rangers Company B in 2008 after spending 33 years in the service of the Texas Department of Public Safety.
And after the Waco reunion, he has retired again, this time as a TRAF board of directors liaison with retired and active Rangers.
Raised in Uvalde and Eagle Pass, Sweaney attended Texas A&M from 1966 to 1970 where he got a degree in business management.
After graduation he entered the U.S. Army and attended Airborne and Ranger training schools before being assigned to the 4th Infantry Division.
He entered the Department of Public Safety Academy in 1975 and after graduation was assigned to the THP in Devine.
He was promoted to the Rangers in 1985 and assigned to Company D in Harlingen. He advanced to Company B lieutenant in 1992 and was selected Company B captain in 2003.
Richard began attending Texas Ranger Association Foundation reunions in 1985 and along with Rudy Rodriguez organized the annual reunion golf tournament. He also began working with TRAF Director Ray Hargrove on the scholarship program.
In addition to running the golf tournament, silent auction and raffle for 15 years, Sweaney also joined Capt. Bob Mitchell and Glenn Elliott as liaisons for the board to retired and active Rangers.
After his retirement from Company B, Sweaney continued in the liaison role through the just completed Waco reunion. “Like a lot of people, I figured it was time for some new people to take on the liaison role,” the captain said. “It’s important and enjoyable.”
“It has been a real joy to see the foundation, scholarships and assistance to retired and active Rangers grow into what it is today. To be a small part has been a privilege.”
With the exception of 1986, when the Sweaneys had a house fire, they have had a hand in every reunion since 1985. Richard and his wife, Donna, live on a ranch in Purmela.
The captain and son Adam are in a small group of families who have had a father and son in the Rangers, with at least one of them serving as a captain or a chief.

Contributors to Star Journal

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Capt. Barry Caver</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ken Olson</td>
<td>Rodney Marsh</td>
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<td>Capt. Richard Sweaney</td>
<td>Jim Chionsini</td>
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<td>Constance White</td>
<td>Steve Sikes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Byron Johnson</td>
<td>Cheryl Iselt</td>
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TRAFF Reunion Weekend in Waco

REGISTERING AND checking out after the Reunion Weekend silent auction doesn’t happen without the expert help of these fine ladies, who made smooth transactions possible. They are (front, l-r) Kelsey Snokhous, Barbara Pratt, Marilyn Tittle, Lorrie Tergerson and Paige Snokhous. In back are (l-r) Patti Wright, Marsha Wiley, Tanis Federwisch, Susan Mercer, Amber Perkins, Lindsay Hatfield and Tammy Snokhous. The silent auction garnered $19,000 for the TRAF scholarship fund.

ONCE AGAIN representatives of La Salle Corrections Co., which is a private jail facilities operator, were on hand to provide the barbecue lunch for everyone participating in the golf tournament. La Salle operates jails in Arizona, New Mexico, Texas (8), Louisiana (11) and Georgia. Wardens and management staff from various La Salle facilities were the cooks. Additionally, La Salle had multiple teams entered in the tournament. Capt. Bob Prince, who retired from Ranger Company B, is the La Salle governmental liaison representative. He and son, Chief Randy Prince, are on a short list of fathers and sons who have served as Texas Rangers.

YOUNG JOHNNY Palmer, 3, was at the right place at the right time at the Reunion Weekend luncheon when he ran into Ranger Chief Randy Prince. The chief pinned Johnny as a future Ranger. Johnny was with his dad, John Palmer, a board member of the Texas Ranger Association Foundation.
TEXAS RANGER Chief Randy Prince presented outgoing TRAF Chairman Jim Chionsini with a certificate of appreciation and honor from the Ranger Division of the Department of Public Safety. Chionsini was TRAF chairman an unprecedented three years. Additionally, during the Retired Ranger Friday night appreciation dinner, Prince gave his annual Texas Ranger report. Once again Prince praised the relationship between the Rangers and TRAF, and thanked the officers, directors, benefactors and members of the foundation for the myriad of effort and activities provided to Rangers.

Company C Tournament Nets $11,300

The Texas Ranger Association Foundation scholarship fund got a boost of $11,311.15 from the annual company C golf tournament in Lubbock with 116 players participating.

“According to feedback from players, everyone enjoyed playing and particularly supporting our scholarships,” Company C TRAF director Ken Olson said. “We owe a special thanks to Chief Randy Prince and Major Todd Snyder for their help and support, as well as our wonderful sponsors.

Helping make the annual Ranger Reunion golf tournament at Twin Rivers run as smoothly as possible were (l-r) Cheryl Iselt, Brandi Burson, Linda Baker, Lori Parker and Michelle Pena. These ladies made sure everyone was checked in properly and knew where they were to go when the rains let up and the tournament whistle sounded.

Rachal Foundation comes through again

One of the Texas Ranger Association Foundation’s biggest donors has come through again.

The Ed Rachel foundation of Corpus Christi has awarded TRAF another grant for $100,000, which will be used for the student scholarship program.

“Many thanks go to TRAF Director Joe McCarty, Ranger Shane Staley and Ranger Major Chance Collins for assisting in securing these funds,” TRAF Executive Director Liz Myrick said.

It’s the fourth consecutive year for the Rachel Foundation to provide funding. The foundation has contributed $350,000 to TRAF.
TRAF scholarships Hit $179,500 mark

The Texas Ranger Association Foundation funded $179,500 in scholarships to deserving children of active Texas Ranger children during the 2016-17 academic year. This represented TRAF's largest scholarship class since the program began in 1989. We are pleased to report that the average grade point was 3.5, and each student received up to $4,000 each year. Since the Scholarship program began, TRAF has awarded more than $2.1 million in scholarships. This is a significant way to say “thank you” to the Texas Rangers and their service to the citizens of Texas.

During the recently held Retired Texas Ranger Reunion three students were invited to speak about how this scholarship has helped their family in their pursuit of a higher education. In attendance were Karly Parker, Cody Vance and Morgan Prince. All three students make TRAF very proud!

Karly Parker attended the reunion with her father Texas Ranger Daron Parker, Co. A. Karly attends Sam Houston State University and is majoring in Wildlife Science.

Morgan Prince is pictured with her father, Texas Ranger Chief Randy Prince, her mother Karen, her brother Travis, and her grandfather retired Texas Ranger Captain Bob Prince. Morgan is attending Hardin Simmons University, majoring in Exercise/Kinesiology.

Cody Vance (right) attended the reunion with his father Texas Ranger, John Vance, Co. B. and his mother Cathy, and his brother Ryan. Cody attends Sam Houston State University and is majoring in Agri-Business.

RETIRED CAPTAIN Barry Caver and wife Tammy were among the many retirees enjoying the annual Texas Rangers Reunion Weekend. Caver was chairman of all weekend activities and serves as a liaison between the TRAF board and retired and active Rangers. Caver has recently become assistant chief deputy of the Denton County Sheriff's department detention facility.
Chief announces new Rangers, changes

Texas Ranger Chief Randy Prince has announced the selection of five new Rangers, internal transfers of three, an internal promotion and one retirement since the last Star Journal was published in February.

New Rangers:
- John Lingle, Lt., CID to Company F in Victoria.
- Bruce Sherman, Agent, CID to Company B McKinney.
- Antonio Leal IV, Agent, CID to Company F Hondo.
- Chad Matlock, Sgt., THP to Company D Weslaco.
- Robert Hitt, Lt., CID to Company C Lubbock.
- Jamie Downs, Lt. Company F Waco to Capt. “HQ” Austin.
- Brad Weatherford, Ranger Company F Victoria to Ranger Company F NW Austin PIU.
- Dean Fant, Ranger Company C Brownfield to Ranger Company C Lubbock.
- Michel Parker, Lt., Company D Laredo to Lt. Company F Waco.

Chief Prince announced the retirement of Ranger Danny Crawford from Company C Abilene. He has 30 years and four months with the DPS, including eight years, five months as a Ranger.

Letter to TRAF –

Dear TRAF:

When I was a little girl, every summer I couldn’t wait to go to the Ranger Reunion. The atmosphere was, and is, overflowing with laughter, love and joy. Many times I got to sit in my dad’s lap while he laughed with his brothers in the force.

No matter the age or location, it always felt like home. It was and still is one of the favorite things of which I am a part.

At these reunions, one event that always stood out was the college students speaking at the dinners. As a young girl, while listening to them talk about their future plans and thanking TRAF for helping with scholarships, I didn’t fully grasp what it all meant.

Now that I am one of those students, I have experienced the commitment, love and support it takes to ensure the uncertainties are going to be okay. The saying “family is always there for each other” holds true.

I don’t refer this only to my immediate family. It is inclusive of the Ranger families and the Texas Ranger Association Foundation. We are all one.

Foundation means “the footing or base level, the basis or principle of something.” The Texas Ranger Association Foundation has blessed so many students and families. Your commitment to assisting us to get our feet firmly on the ground and make our mark on the world does not go unnoticed or unmentioned.

Thank you for having faith in me, and always being in my corner even when you’re not recognized. Thank you for encouraging me and every student to do our best, follow our hearts and pursue our dreams.

Without TRAF’s support, many dreams may not have a chance to come true.

It fills me with pride and gives me great honor to say I am part of the Texas Ranger family and a recipient of the TRAF scholarship. I will do my best to represent you well.

Sincerely,

Morgan Prince
Hardin Simmons University
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EST. 1981

For more information regarding the TEXAS RANGER ASSOCIATION FOUNDATION, please contact:
Liz Myrick, Executive Director
254-754-1001 | liz.myrick@texasrangers.org
WWW.TEXASRANGERCLASSIC.COM

LOCATIONS

CO. “A”   CO. “E”
HOUSTON, TX   SAN ANGELO, TX
SEPTEMBER 1, 2017   OCTOBER 7, 2017
Westside Shooting Center
10120 Pattison Rd.
Katy, TX 77493
San Angelo Clay Bird Association
13525 Duncan Rd.
San Angelo, TX 76904

CO. “B”   CO. “D”
DALLAS, TX   McALLEN, TX
SEPTEMBER 15, 2017   OCTOBER 21, 2017
Dallas Gun Club
3601 S. Stemmons Fwy.
Lewisville, TX 75067
Mi Ranchito Sporting Clays
35005 County Road 4848
Linn, TX 78563

CO. “C”   CO. “F”
LUBBOCK, TX   SAN ANTONIO, TX
SEPTEMBER 9, 2017   SEPTEMBER 9, 2017
Lubbock Shooting Complex
1575 County Road 1
Lubbock, TX 79401
National Shooting Complex
5931 Rolf TX
San Antonio, TX 78253

THANKS FOR SUPPORTING THE TEXAS RANGERS!