

# HOUSTON DEAF SENIORS of TEXAS NEWSLETTER

Volume 7

October 2006

Issue 10

We are planning monthly field trips for Houston Deaf Senior Citizens



When the place and date are settled, they will be announced  
on each month of the newsletter

**October 13, 2006 (Friday) - Field trip to Houston, TX**

**REMINDER  
Oct 29, 2006**

**Turn  
One  
Hour  
Back**



## Frequently Asked Questions

### Deaf or hard of hearing persons in U.S. Civil War military service

(Excerpted 1/16/01 from the [Gallaudet University Deaf Biographies Index](#) database developed by Thomas R. Harrington, Gallaudet University Library). Reference and Instruction Librarian - June, 2002

**English, Henry Clay** - Oct. 5, 1838-Jan. 9, 1889

American - Teacher, soldier, military

Born in Pike County, MO and deafened at an early age. Attended the Missouri Institution for the Education of the Deaf and Dumb and the Illinois School for the deaf, completing the latter in 1860. Appointed a teacher in the Louisiana State School for the deaf until the school was forced to close its doors in 1862 because of the U.S. Civil War. He enlisted in the Confederate army and served through the end of the war. When the Louisiana School reopened in 1866, he resumed teaching there until moving to teach at the Missouri Institution. He remained there until his death.

Reference: *CAID proceedings*, 12th, p.336-337.

**McFarland, James H.** - July 7, 1829-Dec. 12, 1901

American - Soldier, military

Born deaf at Louisville, MO; student at the Illinois and Missouri Schools for the deaf, 1857 to sometime in the 1860s. During the American Civil War, was a dispatch carrier for the Confederate army; post-war, held various jobs.

Reference: *CAID proceedings*, 16th, p.325

CONTINUE PART 5 NEXT MONTH

*From the Editor:*



Dear Subscribers and Friends,

Here's a message for you, Houstonians from the President Earl W. Day of Houston Deaf Seniors of Texas organization. Please set your calendar.

Hello Members and Friends!

Hope that everyone had a great and safe summer. My summer was just quiet; nothing exciting. Ha...

I want to remind you all about our October Election. It is right around the corner. Time really flies fast. It is very important for all of you to be present at our October Regular Business meeting on October 11 and elect the officers for our Next Year 2007. Please do your duty for Houston Deaf Seniors of Texas organization to keep it going strong. Also, please remind your friends about it. Thank you very much!

See all of you there on Oct. 11.

Earl Wilson Day, President

Take care of yourselves and stay well.

*Audrey*



### Field Trip: Houston, TX – October 13, 2006 (Friday)

Houston Deaf Senior Citizens will meet at Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 West Gray, Houston, TX. Be there at 9 AM. The bus will depart at 9:30 AM.

10:00 AM – Sam Houston Boat Tour at Port of Houston – Tour: approx 1 ½ hours

12:00 PM – Lunch Luby's Cafeteria

2:00 PM – The Buffalo Soldiers National Museum – Group of above 10 - \$2.00 per person

If you are interested in going on the field trip, please contact Rochelle Simpson at 281-463-3645 TTY/VP or Audrey Leger at 281-437-6224 TTY/VP or Zelma Curbello at 713-941-3247 TTY before Oct 11<sup>th</sup>. Come and let's have fun together.

#### **Houston Deaf Seniors of Texas Newsletter**

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##### **The Staff**

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Mary Jo Stevens

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Nancy Krone

Rochelle Simpson

##### **Temporary**

Margie Graham

Please send any news, information, jokes, pictures, recipes, sports or anything that you want to share with Senior Citizens.

**Please keep articles at 300 words or less, due to limited space in the newsletter.** Please note that the editor may, at her discretion, edit articles or news items for brevity and to correct errors. **The deadline is on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month.** Items received after the 15<sup>th</sup> will be held until the next issue.

**NOTE:** Unpaid subscriptions are discontinued after three months. In order to serve you better, a reminder will be sent during the second month. The third month will be your last subscription.

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact us at

281-437-6224 TTY / VP / FAX or

E-mail us at [hdstnewsletter@yahoo.com](mailto:hdstnewsletter@yahoo.com)

# NEWS



**Note – Regarding Mom, Arlene Benham;** submitted by Shirleen Benham

Just a little note to let anyone who is interested know that my mom, Merna Arlene Benham is now residing in Spring Branch Health Care Center located at 8955 Long Point. She has been in and out of the hospital since July 2<sup>nd</sup> of this year, but is at the moment doing fairly well.

Fortunately, Mrs. Dorothy Curry is also residing there and Z X visits two or three times a week, which gives her someone to talk to.

If any of you can find the time, I know that she would immensely appreciate any visitors as it gets lonely there and can be depressing not being at home.

Thanks to all and take care.

**Brief News;** submitted by Nellie Bishop

I was surprised, but happy to see Z X Curry at my home on August 31<sup>st</sup>. He came to visit his good friends and met me by accident. He knows Leroy Cotton from Austin a long time ago and he knew Lowell Carroll, brother-in-law of Naomi. I showed Z X to Mr. & Mrs. Cotton and found out they had been good friends in Austin.

Z X told me that his wife, Dorothy, is now bedridden. She has Alzheimer's and is in a nursing home. I enjoyed visiting with him.

He really misses everyone at the Senior Citizen meetings as he enjoyed them so much.

**First Deaf First Place Leader, Nancy Krone:** Woodhaven Newsletter - September 2006



Woodhaven Baptist Deaf Church, Houston, Texas, began leading *First Place* sessions when they were still a Deaf Department in Houston's First Baptist Church over 20 years ago. God has blessed each *First Place* member in more ways than one can imagine. Now, under the leadership of Nancy Krone, who is Deaf, they are being very successful in weight loss, getting closer to God, and learning how to take better care of themselves and their families.

Quotes from Nancy Krone: "To tell you the truth, I know it is expensive but it is worth it. My getting closer to God is far more worthy than the money I spend for *First Place*. I also feel sooooo much better losing weight and I can feel I walk much faster and lighter. I know all of you will have a wonderful experience with God and yourself after studying a few lessons. I'm so excited about this coming Sunday and I know all of you old-timers are excited too, because we have a wonderful experience with God and we want to share that experience with others who will be joining with us for the first time. This week we start working on Week One and we will discuss more about it next Sunday. I am very excited because this lesson really impressed me. It also will help all of us not to fall into temptation with our food, and add to our fellowship with the Lord."

As most of us know, *First Place* is being used all over the world. Praise God, He's blessing so many of us here in America through this program!

Woodhaven Baptist Deaf Church - [www.woodhavendeaf.org](http://www.woodhavendeaf.org)

Congratulations Nancy!!

## **Proud GrandMa**

Marlene Hanks' daughter Michelle LeFors gave birth to a bouncing baby boy, Leon Skyler LeFors on Sept 15, 2006. He weighed 8 lbs and 4 oz. His sister, Kiva and brothers, Alec and Zeke are excited. Mother and baby are doing fine.

Congratulations Michelle & David LeFors! Also congratulations to grandparents: Marlene, and Bobbie & Nick LeFors



**80<sup>th</sup> Birthday Party;** submitted by Paul Aaron Theriot

This was the first surprise birthday party in my life. I enjoyed having 22 friends who did more work with my wife, Gracie and prepared a wonderful surprise birthday for me on August 30<sup>th</sup>. I am sure all my friends and my wife

enjoyed themselves, too. I really appreciate such wonderful friends. Thank you all.



**News** from Tennie Sessions

Denzil Fewell gave his wife, Margaret a birthday party at La Vista Community Center on Labor Day. He ordered BBQ beef, sausages, potato salad, pinto beans and cold tea for lunch. He also brought a lovely cake for his wife. She was surprised and happy. The food

and cake were really good. We all had a great time.

### **Fred Gunn, a Gum Man**

Friday, September 15<sup>th</sup> the family of Fred Gunn and friends were at his graveside to honor him. Officiated by Rev. Arthur Craig. He gave the interesting speech (below) about Fred, a gum man and his life.

"It's hard for me to express what I feel about this man Fred Gunn. Fred and his family mean so much to me. On behalf of Woodhaven Baptist Deaf Church I want to express my sincere condolence and love to each of you. I pray that God will comfort your hearts today as we are together with friends and in the presence of God.

I want to read this passage of scripture from John 8:32 "You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free." As you heard Van say, Fred's last words before he went to sleep and home with the Lord was, "I am free!" What did he mean by these words? It's obvious that Fred meant that he was free from this world and home with God, his creator. He is free from pain. When I first came to Houston I would go over to Fred and Juanita's house in the Heights and I would ask Fred how he was feeling. He would always point to the back of his neck and say, Whew! Lots of pain. Today he is free from that pain. Fred also meant that he was free from the past and safe in Jesus' arms. There was a time when Fred, like all of us didn't know the truth. But one day, I guess Miss Lillian, his brother Leslie or someone else told him about Jesus and he trusted Jesus as his savior. If Fred could get up right now and speak to us he would say, "Now I know the truth (Jesus Christ) and he has set me free. Do you want to see Fred again? You can, but you too must know the truth (Jesus) and trust him as your Savior.

When I first came to Houston... a very inexperienced and awkward preacher, Fred Gunn was always friendly and helpful. He encouraged me and gave me the support I needed. Fred was my great friend. He loved me and my family. As some of you have said... Fred used to give me gum when I was a child.... He gave my children gum every Sunday. They looked forward to finding Fred and getting their gum. I have this picture in my mind of Fred in heaven giving out gum to all the children. He would always look down at the children with a big smile as he handed them a piece of gum. Then the children would always sign." Thank you!" I imagine Fred has met my son Brian in heaven and they are talking about the gum thing.

You will have fond memories of Fred... You will see a picture, a piece of clothing or something that belonged to him and all those memories will come back to your mind. I have something to give you this morning that will cause you to remember Fred. I bought gum this morning and want to give each of you a piece of gum from Fred. Remember him.

Juanita and family, May God bless and keep you. We love you and pray that God will give you His strength to go on."

After the graveside visit, Woodhaven Baptist Deaf Church members and friends provided luncheon in the church premises. The food was good. There was a good crowd – about 60 people in attendance. They enjoyed chatting with the Gunn families and friends.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

## TSD Homecoming Events

The events will be at Texas School for the Deaf in Austin October 6 -7, 2006 in honor of 150<sup>th</sup> Homecoming. Tentative schedules for Friday, the 6<sup>th</sup>: Austin Deaf Club open from 11 a.m. to ???, TSDAA Hall of Fame ceremony at 3 p.m. and Bert's BBQ at 5 p.m. – BBQ Dinner \$10 per person (RSVP to chairman Ronny Taylor at [RonnyRTaylor@yahoo.com](mailto:RonnyRTaylor@yahoo.com) or VP (512) 921-1953 by October 2<sup>nd</sup>; send check or money order payable to Austin Association of the Deaf and mail to: Ronny Taylor, 5104 Weldemar Lane # C, Austin, TX 78745) after BBQ Dinner, admission will be \$5.00 per person and no RSVP needed, entertainment will be provided by Sprint after BBQ Dinner, TSD play in Davis Auditorium 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. Directed by Raymond Piper and Cynthia Cunningham-Piper. Admission: \$5.00 for adults, \$3.00 for non-TSD students, college students.

Austin Deaf Club proudly presents AAD's 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary & TSD 150<sup>th</sup> Alumni Reunion Party Friday, October 6<sup>th</sup> at Austin Deaf Clubhouse at 8818 Cullen Lane, Austin, TX opens 1 p.m. until midnight.

And Saturday, the 7<sup>th</sup>: TSDAA meeting (election of new officers) start at 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. in Multi-Purpose Room, TSD mall – booths by many clubs from 12 noon to 5 p.m., Volleyball game vs. Mississippi School for the Deaf in Seeger Gym, Homecoming Football game vs. Mississippi School for the Deaf on Gamblin Field, admission: Adults \$7.00, Senior Citizens over 64 and non-TSD students \$5.00, and TSD HS students \$3.00 and AAD opens at 6 p.m. till ???

**Texas Legislature Honors Tara McAvoy:** submitted by Billy Buza  
SIGNEWS – July 2006 magazine

The state legislature in Texas passed a resolution honoring Tara McAvoy, the reigning Miss Deaf Texas, who was killed when struck by a train in March. Investigators believe McAvoy was text messaging her parents while walking along train tracks in South Austin when she was struck from behind.

## Marlee Matlin

Most of us love to watch Extreme Makeover: Home Edition air on ABC every Sunday night. And have you watched the show on September 17<sup>th</sup> about a family that has deaf and blind members?? The family's life story really touches people and the crews' heart.

(SIGNews magazine of July 2006 - Written Kim Barron) Marlee Matlin (deaf actress) was filled in for Ty Pennington, and hosted Extreme Makeover: Home Edition. She and the crew helped the family with a new house the latest technology with video relay, visual alert systems and visual impairments devices. They did a fantastic job. Marlee stated that the experience was absolutely fantastic.

Marlee has started filming for TV program called "The L Word". She plays a deaf gay sculptor, and the show will air the episodes in early 2007, which will be aired on the Showtime channel. She said she was honored and excited to be asked to do such a role. She loves eager to challenge herself. The prospect of acting as a gay character appealed to her.

**Reminder: Daylight Saving Time – Date change in 2007** <http://webexhibits.org/daylightsaving/b.html>

Daylight Saving time begins for most of the United States at 2:00 a.m. on the first Sunday of April. Time reverts to standard time at 2:00 a.m. on the last Sunday of October. In the U.S. each time zone switches at a different time.

On August 8, 2005, President George W. Bush signed the *Energy Policy Act of 2005*. This ACT changed the time change dates for Daylight Saving Time in the U.S. Beginning in 2007, DST will begin on the second Sunday of March and end the first Sunday of November. See below:

| Year | DST Begins at 2 a.m. | DST ends at 2 a.m. |
|------|----------------------|--------------------|
| 2007 | March 11             | November 4         |
| 2008 | March 9              | November 2         |
| 2009 | March 8              | November 1         |

The Secretary of Energy will report the impact of this change to Congress. Congress retains the right to revert the Daylight Saving Time back to the 2005 time schedule once the Department of Energy study is complete.

## Profile of a Successful Alumni

James and Lavern Fair, TSD '48 & '52

Lone Star Journal of the Texas School for the Deaf

By Jerry Hassell, TSD '46



James Dean Fair TSD '48 and his wife Lavern Carlson Fair TSD '52 have several family members who attended both the Oklahoma (OSD) and Texas (TSD) Schools for the Deaf. In addition, other family members graduated from different schools for the deaf. James' brother Richard Fair OSD '41 had lived in Texas for several years before he moved to Akron, OH with his wife Patricia Beadles Fair TSD '58. James' sister Margaret E. Eyrich OSD '42 is presently residing in Mesa, AZ with her husband Arthur Eyrich from the New Jersey School for the Deaf. James' other sister Beverly Duncan TSD '54 is now a resident of la Vista Retirement Community for the Deaf in San Marcos, TX. Her husband is Fred Duncan TSD '52.

James and Lavern have two hearing daughters living in Houston, TX and one deaf son David Dean Fair TSD '83 and Gallaudet University '88. At first David was a pastor for Austin Baptist Church of the Deaf for several years before he and his wife Jane (from the California School for the Deaf in Fremont '84) moved to Santa Rosa, CA where he is an ASL instructor in a local high school. Prior to that he received his Masters Degree from Golden Gate Baptist Seminary in Berkeley, CA.

James at first attended the Oklahoma School for the Deaf in Sulphur from 1936 to 1943 before he transferred to TSD in 1943 till he graduated there in 1948.

After leaving TSD, James worked as a printer for Premium Printing Shop in Houston and then for the Houston Post for 33 years from 1961 to 1984. In between he had a second job as a cement mason. Eventually he became a pastor to the deaf at First Baptist Church of Beaumont, TX till he retired in 2001.

Among James' various religious activities were for the Texas Baptist Conference of the Deaf of which he was president for three terms, for the Southern Baptist conference of the Deaf when he also served as president for three terms. He founded the Texas Baptist Athletics of the Deaf in 1975 of which he was president for two terms. During all these times he served as a perpetual Sunday School teacher in various programs for almost 50 years, training union director for the First Baptist Church in Houston where he was ordained as a deacon in 1954. He was also a coach and player of volleyball, softball, basketball and was on the bowling team for both Houston and Beaumont Baptist Churches.

In addition to his religious activities, his many accomplishments in the secular area included his being on the "Second Team All American" football player at TSD in 1947, was a basketball player for the Houston Association of the Deaf affiliated with the Southwestern Athletic Assn. of the Deaf (SWAAD) from 1948 to 1954. SWAAD presented him with the "Most Valuable Player" award in 1953, "All Star Player" from 1949 to 1953 and finally voted into the "SWAAD Hall of Fame."

He won first place several times in "Southwest Golf Assn. of the Deaf." To this day he is still playing golf with his friends. Lavern Carlson Fair TSD '52 had a sister named Beatrice Carlson Lindgren TSD '41. Upon graduation from TSD, Lavern won a scholarship to attend Massey Business College in Austin for one year before moving to Houston in 1953 to work as a typist for Dexter Diaper Co. In 1969 she attended Sam Houston Sate College in Huntsville, TX before working for Clark and Courts Inc. in Houston for 20 years when she retired in 1987.

In extra-curricular activities, Lavern was president of Women's Mission Union of the Deaf under First Baptist Church, Houston, chairperson of Texas Baptist Conference of the Deaf's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary agenda, chairperson of Southern Baptist Conference of the Deaf's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary program, and was voted twice as the "Most Valuable Softball Player" for Texas Baptist Athletics of the Deaf (Women's Division). She was initiated into the "Hall of Fame" as a counselor at Texas Baptist Youth Camp in 1975. She served as a Sunday School teacher within several Baptist organizations mostly with youth activities for many years.

One cannot help marveling at how on the earth could both James and Lavern have time to be involved in highly too numerous aforementioned activities in addition to their raising three children plus their full time employment? Not surprisingly, their devotion to improve the lives of their fellowmen is truly a remarkable feat.

*Jerry*, thank you for permission to let us reprint this in HDST Newsletter.

P.S. James Fair is now Vice-President of Houston Deaf Seniors of Texas (HDST) organization and Lavern Fair is on the election committee of HDST.

# REST IN PEACE

## OBITUARIES



Following a three month struggle with Colon Cancer, **Robert Edward Sias, 34**, fought with courage and dignity. Robert waged a heroic battle which he never lost but only ran out of time.

He passed away August 9, 2006.

He leaves to cherish in his memory his mother Ellen Sias-Thompkins; one sister Priscilla Sias-Marsh; brother-in-law (Robert S. Marsh, Sr.); three nieces: Marquette A. Riles, Prenesha L. Powell, and Shakira R. Marsh. Two nephews: Robert S. Marsh, Jr. & Jamal Marsh; a host of family members and close friends.

Services were held on Saturday, August 12, 2006 with Pastor Ellis D. Powell Officiating at The Daily Bread Church, 5399 W. Richey Rd. Interment was followed at Paradise North Cemetery.

**Charles Archer, 62**, passed away September 4, 2006. He was born October 9, 1943 to Ora Lee Collins and Meachum Archer in Huntsville, TX.

He leaves to cherish his memories: Mother, Ora Lee Collins, Stepdaughter, Debra Hunt (Houston), 5 Aunts: Helen Prophet, Fannie Jenkins (Houston), Maurine collins (LaMarque, TX), Aline Harris and Helen Garrett (Houston); 1 Uncle: Thurman Allen (San Francisco, CA) and a host of cousins and friends of Madisonville, TX and Houston, TX.

Preceded in death by: Father, Meachum Archer and Stepfather, Tom Collins.

Viewing 10:00 – 11:00 AM and funeral 11:00 AM Saturday, September 9, 2006 at Frazier-Mitchell Funeral Home, 5002 Hershe St., Houston, TX 77020.

Interment at Paradise Cemetery North West Montgomery Road.

### I'm Free

Don't grieve for me, for now I'm free;  
I'm following the path God laid for me.  
I took His hand when I heard Him call,  
I turned my back and I left it all.  
I could not stay another day  
To laugh, to love, to work, or play.  
Tasks left undone must stay that way.  
I found that place at the close of day.  
If my parting has left a void,  
Then fill it with remembered joy  
A friendship shared, a laugh, a kiss  
Ah, yes, these things I, too, will miss.  
Be not burdened with times of sorrow;  
I wish you the sunshine of tomorrow.  
My life's been full; I savored much  
Good friends, good times, a loved one's touch.  
Perhaps my time seemed all too brief;  
Don't lengthen it now with undue grief.  
Life up your heart and share with me  
God wanted me now;  
He set me free.

Author Unknown

Quotes from a booklet of  
Celebrating the Life of Robert E. Sias

**Fred Gunn Sr., 95**, passed away Saturday Sept. 9, 2006 in San Marcos, TX. He is survived by his wife Juanita, his three children, Fred Jr., Sue and Van; five grandchildren, six great grand - children and two great great - granddaughters.



Graveside services to be held Friday Sept. 15th at Memorial Oaks Cemetery, 13001 Katy Freeway at 10:00 A.M.

**Shirley Plaster, (Nellie Bishop's daughter), 59**, passed away early Tuesday morning, September 12, 2006.

She is survived by her three children, 12 grandchildren, mother, sister Doris & brother-in-law, brother Ray & sister-in-law, and numerous nieces & nephews.

Visitation was held Thursday, September 14<sup>th</sup> from 5:00 to 9:00 p.m. at the American Heritage Funeral Home, 10710 Veteran's Memorial Dr, Houston, TX.

The Funeral service was held at 1 p.m. Friday, September 15<sup>th</sup> and the burial followed at Earthman Resthaven Cemetery on I-45 North.

## LAUGHTER, THE BEST MEDICINE

### Pet Parrot

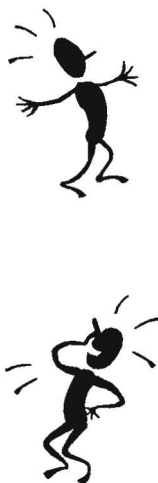
A man buys a pet parrot and brings him home. But the parrot starts insulting him and gets really nasty, so the man picks up the parrot and tosses him into the freezer to teach him a lesson. He hears the bird squawking for a few minutes, but all of a sudden the parrot is quiet.

The man opens the freezer door, the parrot walks out, looks up at him and says, "I apologize for offending you, and I humbly ask your forgiveness."

The man says, "Well, thank you. I forgive you."

The parrot then says, "If you don't mind my asking, what did the chicken do?"

[www.swapmeetdave.com/Humor](http://www.swapmeetdave.com/Humor)



### SENIOR HUMOR

#### Hard of Hearing

Morris, an 82-year-old man, went to the doctor to get a physical.

A few days later the doctor saw Morris walking down the street with a gorgeous young lady on his arm.

A couple of days later, the doctor spoke to Morris and said, "You're really doing great, aren't you?"

Morris replied, "Just doing what you said, Doctor, 'Get a hot mamma and be cheerful.'"

The doctor said, "I didn't say that. I said you got a heart mummer and be careful."

[www.swapmeetdave.com/Humor](http://www.swapmeetdave.com/Humor)

## HOUSTON DEAF SENIORS of TEXAS

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