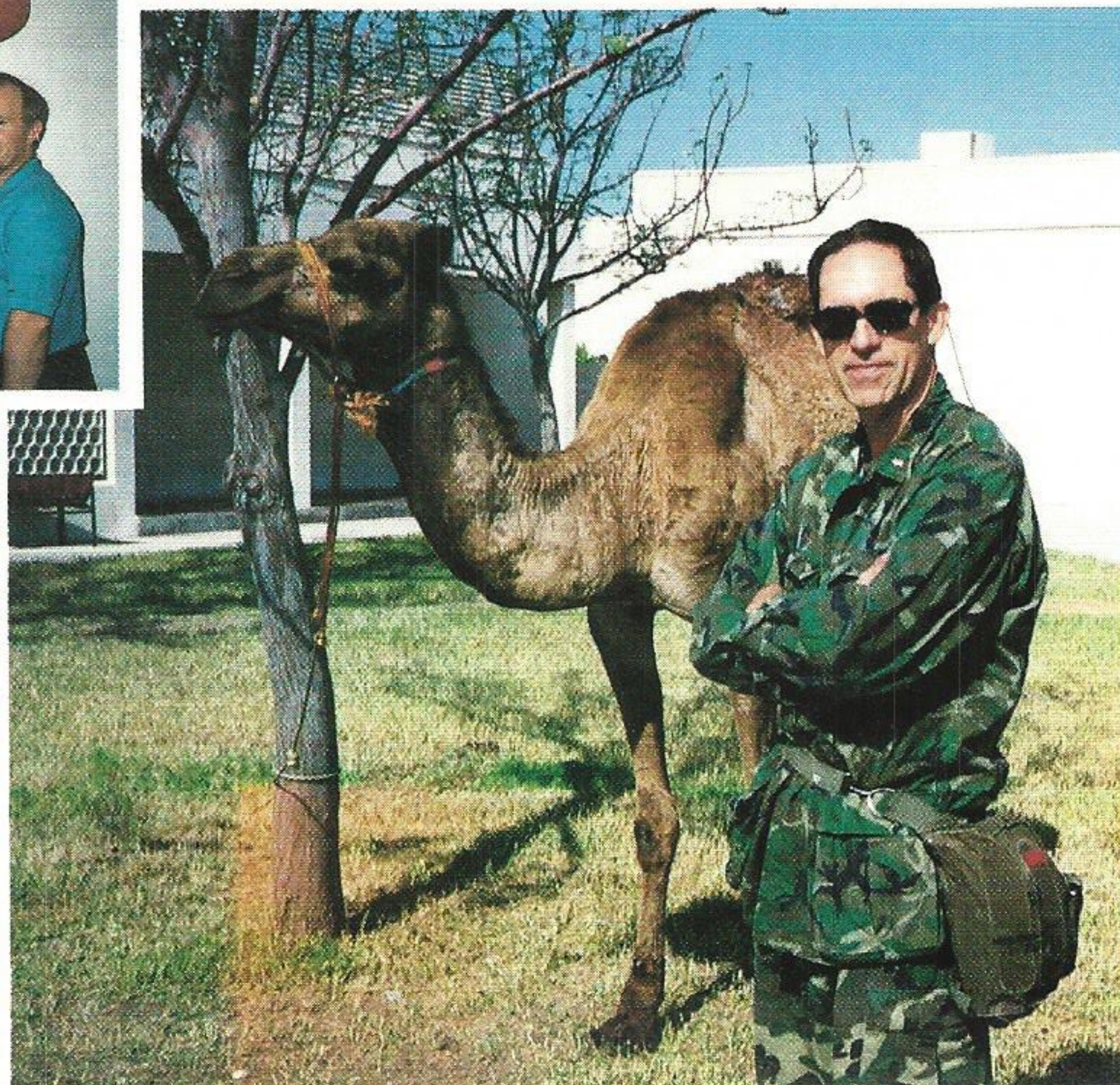
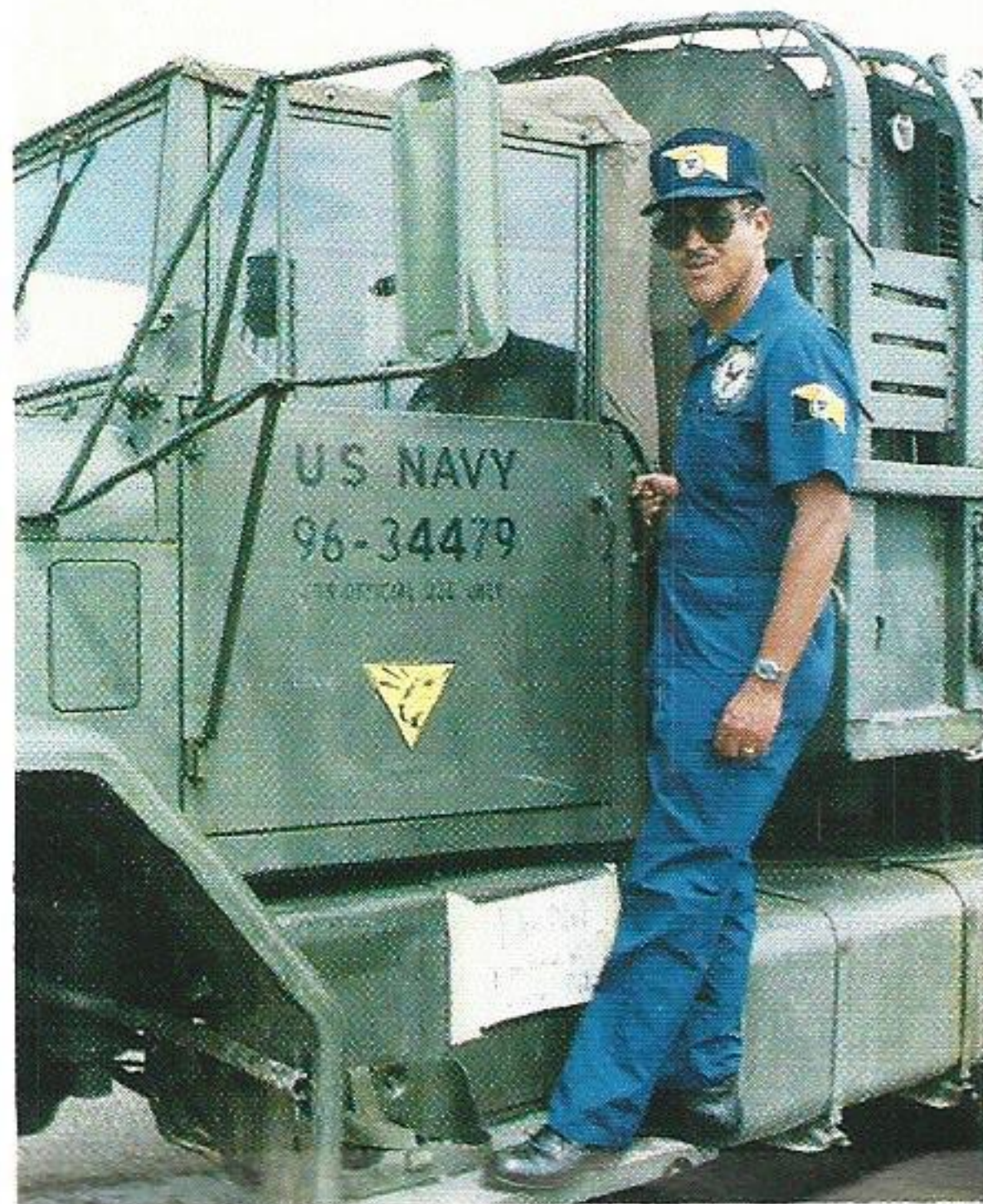
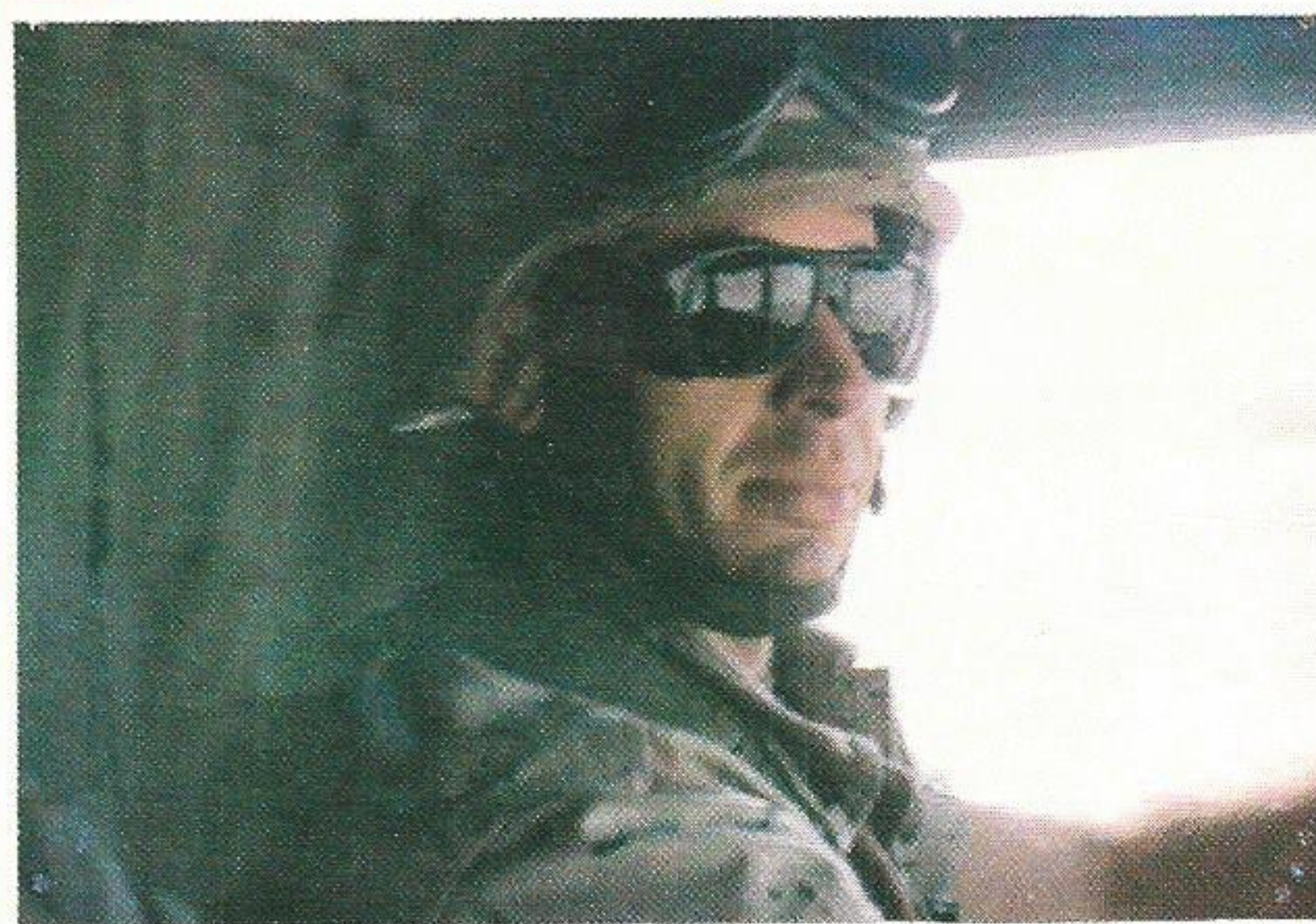


PLAIN TALKS

June/July 1991

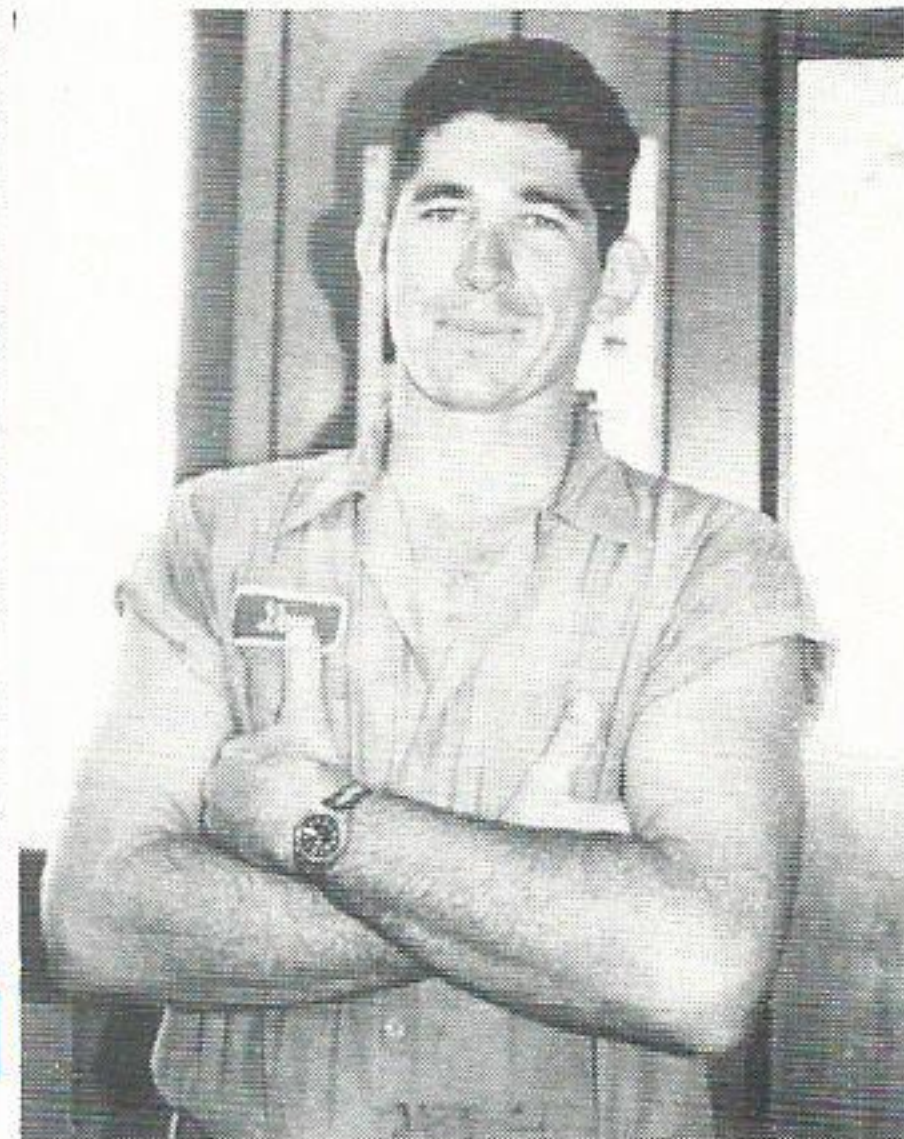
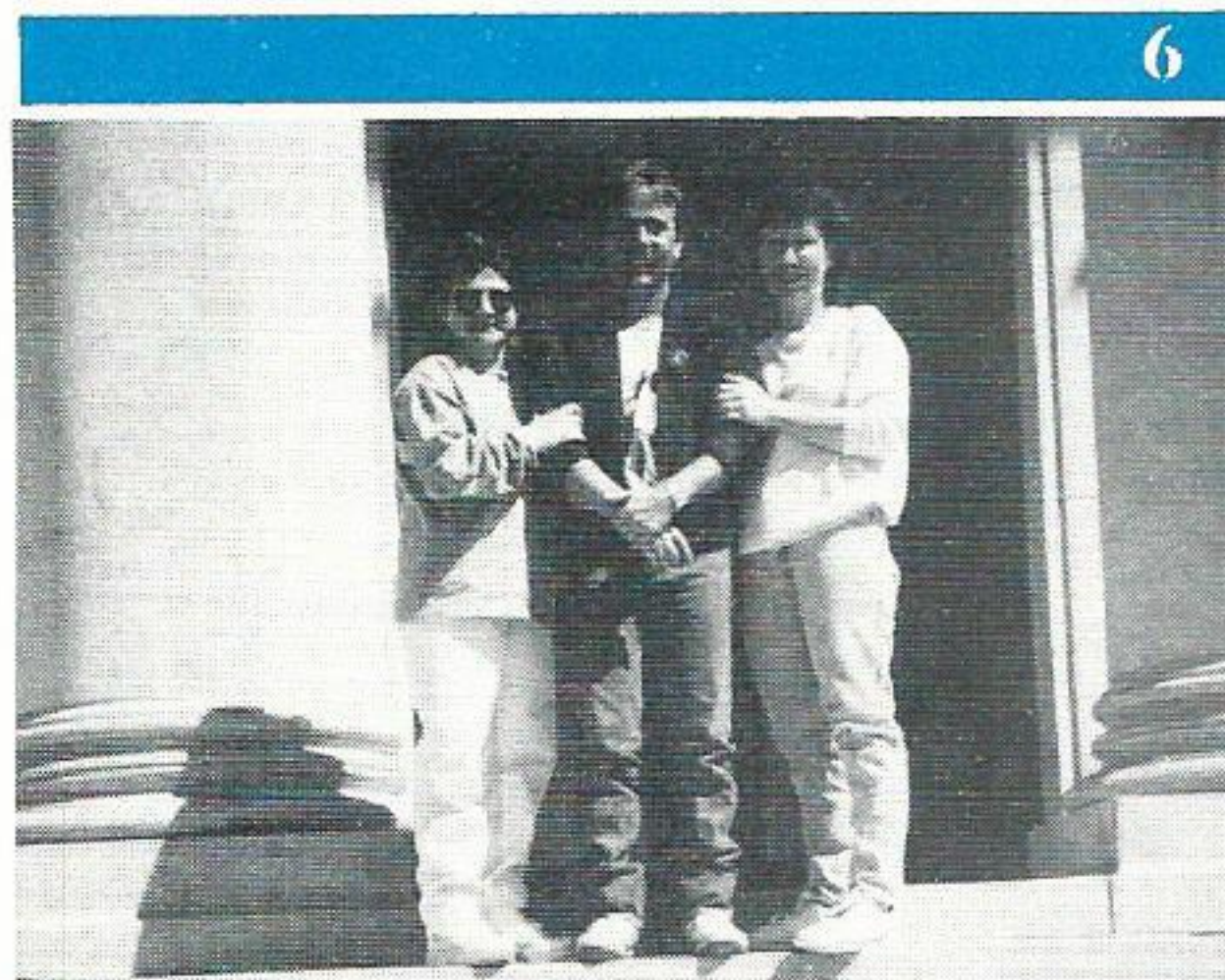
Volume 70 Number 4

Welcome Home Heroes



PLAIN TALKS

June/July 1991 Volume 70 Number 4



CONTENTS

Iraqi military officer thanks Mitchell

- 3 Reservist Doug Mitchell found himself on the front lines in Iraq. With a personal gift, an Iraqi officer thanked Mitchell for rescuing them.

Employees aid local rallies for troops

- 4 Several Western Division employees worked with "Texans For Troops," a support group that held two rallies in Montgomery County.

Lake Charles employee moves military hardware to the Persian Gulf

- 5 Harry Cormier, a Navy reservist, was activated last August and helped move tons of military equipment out of the Port of Beaumont.

Baton Rouge band remembers troops with recording

- 6 The musical group "Cornerstone," featuring Kenny Braud of Gonzales, recorded a song in support of the troops in the Persian Gulf.

Retiree Hilborn called to active duty

- 7 At 61, GSU Retiree Bobby Hilborn took off his fishing cap and put on his Army cap when called to duty with the Army Reserves.

Salute to our heroes of Operation Desert Storm

- 8 Plain Talks honors the veterans of the Persian Gulf War with a photo feature of employees and family members of employees who served.

Picture contest winners

- 10 Children of employees sent in hand-drawn pictures that symbolized the 4th of July. Seven winners are announced.

"What America means to me"

- 13 Employees and family members express their personal thoughts about living in America.

- 7 Employee Reservists' Honor Roll
- 12 We Support Our Troops
- 14 Editorial
- 15 Service Anniversaries

About the cover

Clockwise from right corner: Doug Mitchell; Jim Oliver (brother of Karen Mahlman); Horace and Jodi Brown with son Chad; Harry Cormier, Accounts Payable welcomes Vertis Malvo Jr.; Leslie C. Jones (son of Les Jones). This issue is dedicated to the brave men and women who served in Operation Desert Storm and the renewed patriotism in all of us.



Published for employees and retirees of Gulf States Utilities Company. No portion of the contents of this magazine may be reproduced without written permission of the publisher. Address all communications to PLAIN TALKS, Public Affairs Department, Gulf States Utilities Company, P. O. Box 2951, Beaumont, Texas 77704, Phone (409) 838-6631.

Manager-Public Affairs:
Kim McMurray

Executive Editor:
Betty Gavora

Editor:
Scott Harper

Correspondents:

Robert Adams
Vickie Albert
Michael Allen
Ronnie Bordelon
Mamie Burrell
Lisa Creekbaum
Betty Dickschat
Cherie Ducote
Sharon Englade
Pris Gallagher
Charlotte Gautreau
Susan Gilley
Rhonda Haskins
Rick Harvin
Connie Herford
Barbara Hopkins
Tina Hunt
Ray Jackson
Lynda Kapalski
Helen Kennedy
Ella Kirby
Clint Lilley
Doug McCormick
Audrey McDonald
Clint Moss
Gerald Nelson
Sherry Overbeck
Edith Patterson
Carol Payne
Myra Ponthier
Don Pumphrey
Joe Reine
Casey Richert
Suzanne Rigby
Mike Rodgers
Darlene Rutherford
D. W. Rutherford
Jeral Semien
Wilma Shaw
Sue Simon
Laurie Tenner
Jean Tinsley
Mark Viguet
Delores West
Robby Zeringue
Kerry Zimmerman

Employees who change residences or offices should fill out company mailing-address-forms (GSU0012-00-81) and return them to the mailroom in Edison Plaza. GSU publications, departmental mailings and other company information are not automatically forwarded; addresses must be corrected when employees move.

Iraqi military officer thanks Mitchell



Mitchell displays the watch he received from an Iraqi officer.

story and photo by Pris Gallagher

Doug Mitchell discovered that when an Iraqi offers you a gift, it's best to just accept it politely. Especially if you're a young soldier, thousands of miles from home, faced with either accepting a gift in gratitude or offending a member of the Iraqi military.

Mitchell, a mechanic's helper at the Choctaw garage in Baton Rouge, served in the 24th Infantry Division in Iraq during Operation Desert Storm. He was assigned to the Army Reserve's 299th Engineering Battalion and administered IVs to captured front line Iraqi troops, then passed out "mre's" or "meals ready to eat." The captain of some Iraqi troops, overcome with gratitude, offered Mitchell his wristwatch, which Mitchell politely refused. A commotion broke out and Mitchell was told by a Kuwaiti interpreter that to refuse a gift from an Iraqi was a sign of disgrace and a "loss of face" in the eyes of his family. Realizing the effect, Mitchell calmly accepted the gift and offered his pin-on rank in return.

Mitchell recalls thinking, "There is something wrong with this picture," as they had just taken the prisoners by force and didn't expect the hugs and other shows of gratitude by the soldiers. He said the encounter lasted only 10 or 12 minutes but will have a lasting impact.

Mitchell, who left October 10 for Saudi Arabia, just nine days

before his second daughter, Stephanie, was born, saw combat in the ground war that followed the United States air attack on Iraq January 16.

His unit was part of some 540,000 troops spread across the Saudi Arabian desert when the air war began. His unit, continuously moving to prevent the enemy from pinpointing their location, had dug in for the night. He was drinking coffee with five or six other buddies, when suddenly six F15s flew 100 feet overhead, south to north, instead of the usual west to east flight pattern of supplies deliveries. Within 30 minutes they were given official notification - the Persian Gulf War had begun.

January 25, his birthday, found him at the Iraqi border, clearing a path for American tanks, troops and supply trains to move into Iraq. From his seat in a armored bulldozer, Mitchell watched small arms fire bounce off the one and a half inch shield surrounding his vehicle. Wearing a chemical suit and carrying a gas mask, he helped clear the way into Iraq for the 32,000 men and women of the 24th Division, who helped lead our country to a swift victory in the Persian Gulf War.

The ground troops broke a record held by General Patton in World War II by traveling 236 miles in 18 hours across desert, Mitchell proudly proclaims.

Once across the border, the 24th

encountered Saddam Hussein's front line troops, and quickly emptied out bunkers and gathered the prisoners together, many of whom were suffering from dehydration and malnutrition.

It was during these encounters that he used his M16M203, a rifle with a grenade launcher attached. About 60 rounds on his M16 and about 160 rounds from the M203 were fired to capture the enemy and destroy their bunkers.

It wasn't until his division took two air bases in the vicinity of the city of Basra, however, that they encountered the Republican Guard, reported to be the toughest of the Iraqi troops. Until that time, the U. S. troops fought Hussein's front line troops, comprised mostly of Iraqi citizens, mainly of Kurdish and Pakistani backgrounds, who were forced into military service and posed little resistance to the well-trained U. S. military.

Later, when the 24th Division went behind the Republican Guard to engage in the largest tank battle since WWII, Mitchell was only one-half mile away.

He may not have witnessed a Scud attack or a Patriot missile interception as we all did back home, but he certainly saw a part of the Gulf War that wasn't captured on television, a war that will have a life-long impact on the men and women who risked their lives defending our freedom.

Employees aid local rallies for troops

by Robert Adams

One can see the success of last May's "Texans for Troops" rally in Conroe by looking at newspaper pictures of the event. Photographs in the "Conroe Courier" and other papers show the range of emotions on the faces in the crowd: the chin-up, shoulders-back staff sergeant holding his smiling, twin three-year-old daughters; the veteran, proudly displaying the American flag; and the 18-year-old widow, comforted by her father-in-law, as his wife holds the fallen soldier's month-old daughter.

This was Montgomery County's second rally for the troops. The residents held the first rally shortly after the war began last January.

Pat Dewey, labor relations representative, Conroe, says he and some other people had similar ideas at the same time to hold some type of celebration. "I called the mayor's

office and asked, 'What could we do?'" says Dewey. Afterward, he met with other local residents and the idea of a rally began.

Gulf States as a company supported the local effort. Several employees and spouses from the Conroe area also volunteered their time, including Billy Dugger, electrician-1st class; John Dix, master repairman; Gene Watkins, merit roll craftsman; Tom Koepke, substation mechanic-1st class; Richie Wright, meterman-1st class-T&D; and Doug Martin, utility foreman-substation.

One way Gulf States helped was to provide scaffolding. The company even helped to send videotapes of the event to the troops overseas.

After the war ended, the same group met to plan a "welcome home" for the returning servicemen and women. Conroe

held its "Texans for Troops" rally May 19. An estimated crowd of more than 2,000 residents honored more than 500 returning troops.

Koepke's idea to honor the troops resulted in a 48-foot wall containing the names of the local veterans, according to Martin.

Work began on the wall three months before the May rally. The result was 33 columns of 16 names written on poster board strips. The wall focused on a portrait of the one serviceman from Montgomery County killed during Operation Desert Storm.

"The best aspect of the rallies was the demonstration of community support," says Dewey. He adds the timing of the February rally was good, as the war was near its peak. The two rallies brought together about 5,000 people, he estimates.



A poster is rolled out in preparation for the "Welcome Home" rally in Montgomery County.

Lake Charles employee moves military hardware to the Persian Gulf

story by Susan Gilley
photo by Scott Harper

"Here I was — a man who usually checks Good Cents homes, checking out Patriot missiles," recalls Harry Cormier, senior energy auditor, Lake Charles, who spent 11 months on active military duty related to Operation Desert Storm.

Cormier's work logistics with the New Orleans-based Military Sealift Command Office/Fast Sealift Squadron kept him stateside throughout the war, although his unit received three separate sets of orders to report overseas. Each time, the destinations — Saudi Arabia twice and Germany once — were fully staffed before they left. He is quick to point out, however, that "somebody had to send the Patriots, the Apache helicopters, the big guns and the chemical warfare protective gear" for the campaign to succeed.

His job was not without danger, however. "More people were killed in the formation than in Desert Storm. Every piece of equipment that left out of Beaumont was 'hot,' meaning it was loaded with

ammunition and fuel," he explains.

Cormier, a Navy reservist who served in Vietnam in the early 1970s, divided his time between ports in Beaumont and Jacksonville, Fla. The two ports shipped out about 60 percent of all the military equipment that went to Saudi Arabia, he says.

As Cormier prepared to leave Beaumont for New Orleans to make the transition to civilian life, he said he expected to be "back to the real world around Aug. 5."

He calls his tour of duty "educational for us and for the public to see how we moved the equipment." By Dec. 10, he remembers, he and other logistics workers were "in the stadium watching the match — our job was just about completed" in getting the materials overseas.

Their job resumed when equipment began returning to the states after the war — a phase that logistics personnel dubbed "Desert Sorties."

Cormier says "the ultimate

cross" to bear in his military assignment was the separation from his family, although the uncertainty about where he might be sent added to his anxiety. He says he is looking forward to reuniting with his wife, Janice, and their three daughters, Michele, 15; Samirra, 10; and Megan, 7.

Although he has visited with his family during the past year, Cormier says he can tell that "the kids have grown, and my wife has grown in responsibility and independence." His children coped with their feelings of loss while he was gone, too. Cormier recalls that little Megan told a Lake Charles television reporter, "My daddy's job is to keep people from getting sick"—her way of characterizing the military equipment that would protect the soldiers.

"I've had the opportunity to grow mentally and spiritually over these months, but I'm looking forward to going home," Cormier says.



Cormier at the Port of Beaumont near a ship that was loaded with equipment returning from Saudi Arabia.

Baton Rouge band remembers troops with recording



Cornerstone band: (Standing, l to r) Bill Langdon, Billy Trux, Eric Schultz; (kneeling, l to r) Jeanne O'Leary, Kenny Braud, Denise Ricca.

by Mark Viguet

"While we were over on this side of the world, our troops were fighting in the Persian Gulf. We wanted to do something to show them our support and appreciation," says Kenny Braud, lineman-1st class in Gonzales. What Braud and his Cornerstone band did was write and record a song, "No Time To Choose," which pays homage to the men and women of Operation Desert Storm.

Written in February during the height of the conflict, the song's origin is intensely personal. Braud's wife, Jeanne, started writing the song after learning that her two brothers were going to serve in Saudi Arabia. Denise Ricca, a friend whose brother was already in the Middle East, helped Jeanne write the song.

"Jeanne and Denise had started this song, which sounded very good. I came in from work that day and started elaborating, writing additional lyrics," Braud says. "The song was written in one day, and we recorded and mixed it over two days."

The Brauds and Ricca have been writing and performing songs together for 15 years. Jeanne sings, plays guitar and keyboards; Denise sings and plays guitar. Three other band members make up Cornerstone: Bill Langdon, bass guitar; Eric Schultz, lead guitar; and Billy Trux, drums.

Cornerstone performed the song on two television stations and one

radio station in Baton Rouge. Copies of the band's song were sent to support groups for families of soldiers locally and as far away as Maine.

"We've received a lot of positive feedback about the song," Braud says. "We feel like we tried to give back to the troops and their families what we could. They said it helped them out to listen to the song, because it was expressing feelings they all

shared."

The message of "No Time To Choose" is summed up by Braud:

"We wanted everyone to know that our service men and women are loved and, as the song says, 'not abandoned like before.' After Vietnam, the veterans didn't receive recognition and were even looked down upon. That wasn't right, and we didn't want it to happen this time."

"No Time To Choose"

*Words are tight and dreams are callin'
Pictures fade as tears keep fallin'
Down my cheeks (down my cheeks)*

*What makes it right Hey you over there
Never like to fight, just doesn't seem fair
What can you do (what can you do)*

*We'll keep the fire burnin'
Keep the home light bright
You'll be comin' on home
After the fight*

*Is it all done in vain
You have so much to lose
You never questioned why
No time to choose*

*Would I know the other side if I saw them
on the street
Could we be all that different if we ever
were to meet
Look at me (look at me)*

*We'll keep the fire burnin'
Keep the home light bright
You'll be comin' on home
After the fight*

*I keep thinking this is all in a dream
And I'll wake up but when I do
You're not here*

*On hostile sands you take your stand
Can freedom be so near
Your country's called upon your courage
and your strength
You have no time left for fear*

*We'll keep the fire burnin'
Keep the home light bright
You'll be comin' on home
After the fight*

*Yellow ribbons standing tall across this
land
Taunted vigils since you're gone
You'll stay the heroes of this country once
again
Not abandoned like before*

*We'll keep the fire burnin'
Keep the home light bright
You'll be comin' on home
After the fight*

*Is it all done in vain
You have so much to lose
You never questioned why
No time to choose (no time to choose)
No time to choose (no time to choose)
No time to choose (no time to choose)*



Employee Reservists' Honor Roll

The following employee military reservists were called to active duty during Operation Desert Shield/Storm:

Dennis M. Bates

Substation Mechanic-1st class
Baton Rouge
Sgt. 1st class, Army
Served 8/24/90 to 7/15/91

David B. Chaney

Gas/Construction Worker
Baton Rouge
E-5, Coast Guard
Served 11/16/90 to 2/25/91

Harry J. Cormier

Energy Auditor
Lake Charles
SK1, Navy
Served 8/21/90 to present

Barry Hills

Lineman-1st class
Baton Rouge
Sgt. 1st class, Army
Served 9/18/90 to present

J. Bryan Lawson Jr.

Materials Coordinator
Beaumont
Captain, National Guard
Served 11/30/90 to 5/6/91

Robert Leonard

T&D Helper
Lafayette
Spc., National Guard
Served 11/29/90 to 5/13/91

Douglas L. Mitchell

Garage Mechanic Helper
Baton Rouge
Spc., Army
Served 10/12/90 to 5/21/91

David E. Walston

Industrial Hygiene & OSHA Spc.
Beaumont
Lt., Navy
Served 2/26/91 to 4/1/91

Retiree Hilborn called to active duty

by Mike Rodgers

For many, the lifestyle of a retired person conjures up images of throwing out the alarm clock, sleeping late and generally taking life easy. But at least one former GSUer traded in his retirement this year for active duty with the U.S. Army Reserves in Louisiana. Bobby Hilborn, 61, was called back April 1 for Operation Desert Storm.

"I was only a little bit surprised at the call-up," says Hilborn. "The military put out feelers asking some of us if we'd be willing to come back. Since I'm retired I said 'yes'." Hilborn is part of the 433rd Military Police unit stationed at an armory in Hammond, La. He was activated for one year, but expects to be released earlier. A Gulf States employee for 38 years, Hilborn spent his last 11 years working in

the materials section at River Bend Station. He retired from GSU in 1990.

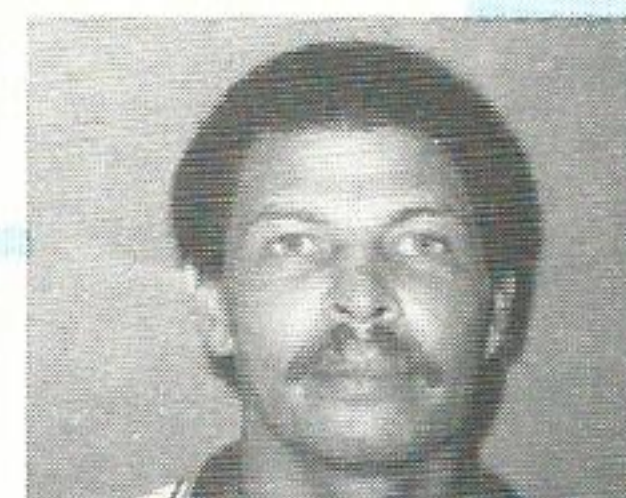
His military duties consist primarily of working with the families of Desert Storm soldiers, providing support and assistance. "I'm a troubleshooter," Hilborn explains. "Many reservists' wives are finding themselves having to be both Mom and Dad, raising the children, paying the bills and keeping up on household maintenance. We try to help them through what is often a difficult separation."

Hilborn emphasizes that while many families are accustomed to their spouse's absence for the annual two or three weeks of training, the prolonged service for Operation Desert Storm is causing them stress. On the other hand, Hilborn says that when the

reservists return, some wives may find it hard to give up their self-reliance.

Hilborn, a 35-year veteran of the Army Reserve, vividly recalls the Berlin Crisis of 1961-'62 and the tension of the Cuban Missile Crisis. He is greatly impressed with the warm reception for Desert Storm veterans and the public's willingness to offer help to their families. "Sticking together and working as a unit is a very positive experience for us. The family support is wonderful. But, we mustn't forget that there are many soldiers still on active duty in the Persian Gulf area." Hilborn reminds everyone that when they return, they will need our continued support and prayers.

SALUTE TO OUR HEROES OPERATION DESERT STORM



Sgt. Dennis M. Bates
1190th Deployment Comm.
Unit
Army Reserves
Substation Mechanic-1st
Class
Baton Rouge



Pfc. Ronnie Bernard
Army
Brother of Christi Davis
Clerk
Beaumont



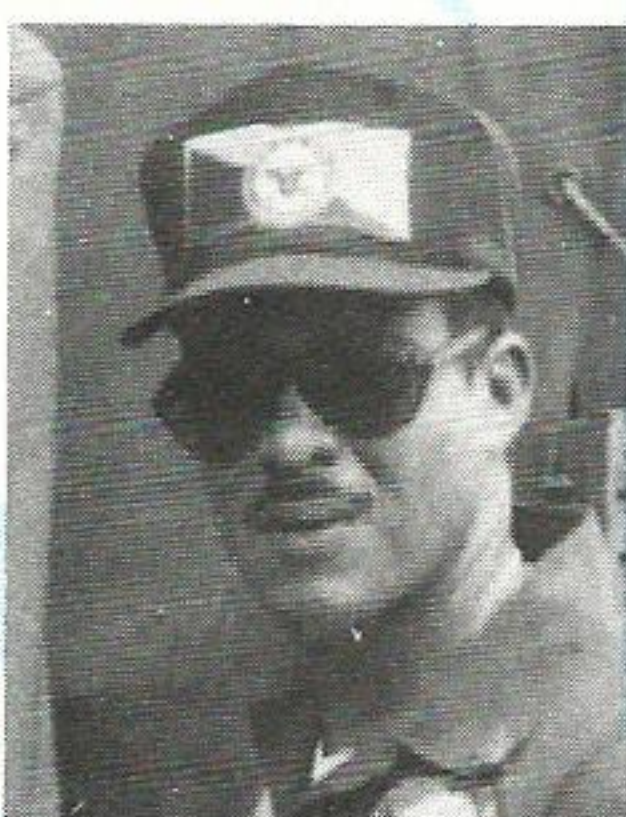
Pvt. 2 Chad E. Brown
24th Infantry Div., Army
Son of Horace E. Brown
Supervisor-Invoice
Processing
Beaumont



**Petty Officer 3rd Class
Chris Christoffersen**
USS Midway, Navy
Nephew of Jeanette
Acreman
Meter Reader
Conroe



Pfc. Billy Coplen
11th Air Defense Artillery
Brigade, Army
Son-in-law of Tom Crowe
Assistant to General
Manager-Engineering
Beaumont



**Petty Officer 1st Class
Harry Cormier**
Military Sealift Command
Navy Reserves
Senior Energy Auditor
Lake Charles



**Petty Officer 3rd Class
Chris Cosse**
USS Wisconsin, Navy
Son of Judith Clark
Utility Worker II
Baton Rouge



Spec. 4 Kevin A. Crowe
7th Transportation Group,
Army
Son of Tom Crowe
Assistant to General
Manager-Engineering
Beaumont



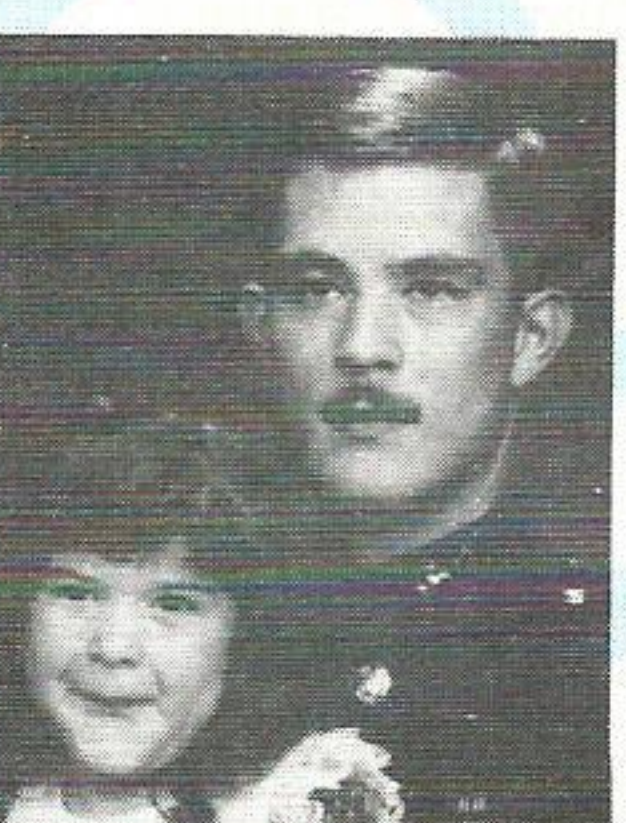
Spec. Roderick C. Dubose
1135th CS Company, Army
Brother of Cynthia Dubose
Staff Accountant I
Louisiana Station



Pvt. 2 Jason Fortenberry
11th Signal Brigade, Army
Son of Floyd Fortenberry
Section Head-Engineering
Beaumont



Pfc. J.D. Guidry Jr.
Marine Corps Reserves
Son of Sue Guidry
Consumer Affairs
Specialist
Beaumont



**Sgt. James R. Guidry and
daughter Alanna**
Marine Corps
Son of Sue Guidry
Consumer Affairs
Specialist
Beaumont



Spec. Steven Hare
Support Group 7th Corps,
Army
Son of Dale Hare
Division Substation
Operator
Beaumont

Sgt. Dwayne E. Hasten
321st Infantry, Army
Brother of Melvin Hasten
T&D Helper
Gonzales



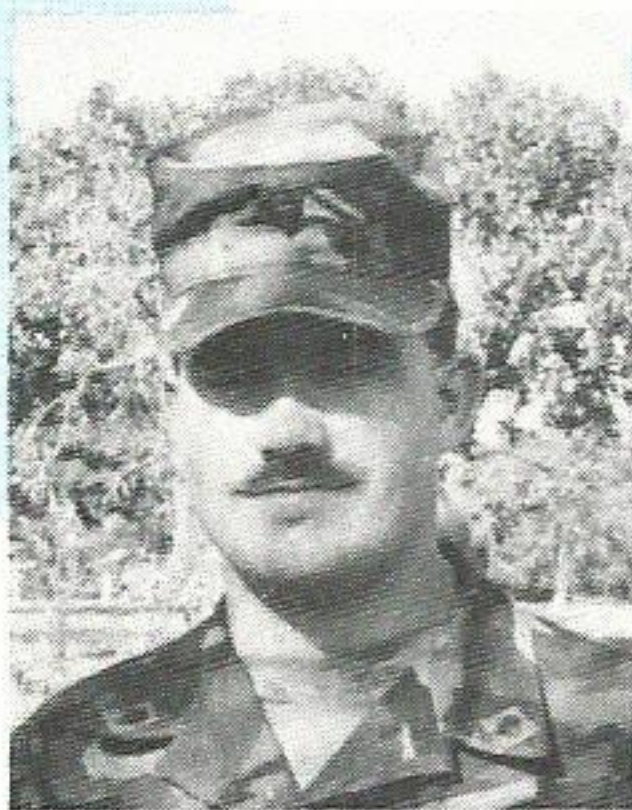
Spec. Keith Wayne Hilton
565 Med. Comp., Army
Nephew of Brenda Hilton
Haynes
Warehouse Assistant
Neches Station



Sgt. Keith Hidalgo
Combat Support, Air Force
Son of R.A. Hidalgo
Director-OIS
Beaumont



Spec. 4 Eric Huff
1083 Transportation, La.
National Guard
24th Infantry, Army
Brother of Susan Gilley
Coordinator-Media
Services
Beaumont



Spec. 5 Leslie C. Jones
101st Airborne Division,
Army
Son of Leslie E. Jones
Customer Information
Coordinator
Beaumont



Sgt. Van N. Kitchens III
1st Armored Division,
Army
Son of Van N. Kitchens Jr.
Supervisor-Service
Department
Orange



Cmdr. Jim L. Oliver
Physician, Navy
Brother of Karen O.
Mahlmann
Billing Clerk
Beaumont



Cpl. Vertis Malvo Jr.
Marine Corps
Son of Hellen Malvo
Clerk
Beaumont



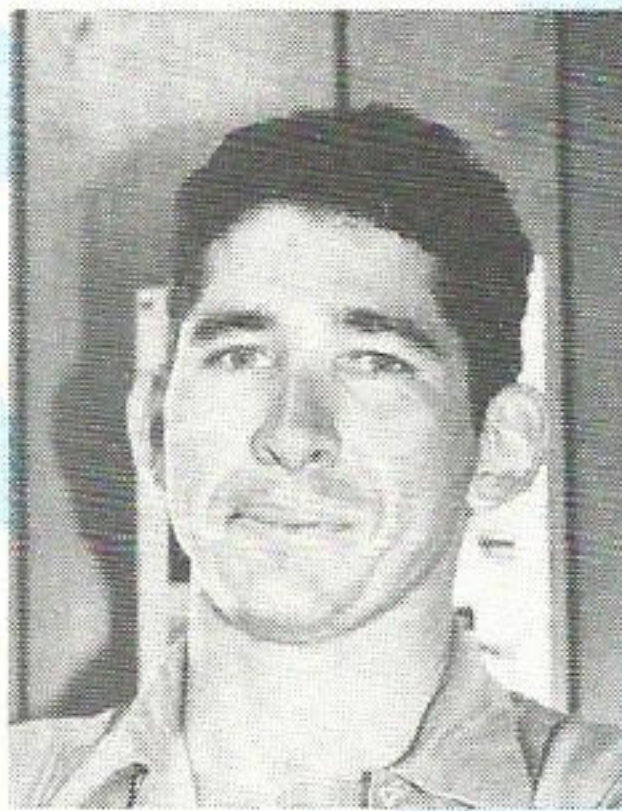
**Petty Officer 3rd Class
Eric Martin**
Medical Corpsman, 2nd
Marine Div., Navy
Son of Doug Martin
Utility Foreman-Substation
Conroe



Spec. Shirley E. McCrea
82nd Airborne Division,
Army
Son of Wanda J. McCrea
Customer Contact Clerk
Jennings



Sgt. Doug Mitchell
3rd Engineering Group,
24th Infantry Div.
Army Reserves
Garage Mechanic Helper
Baton Rouge



**Airman 2nd Class Daniel
P. Paline**
Contingency Hospital, Air
Force
Son of Carl J. Paline
Serviceman-1st Class
Denham Springs



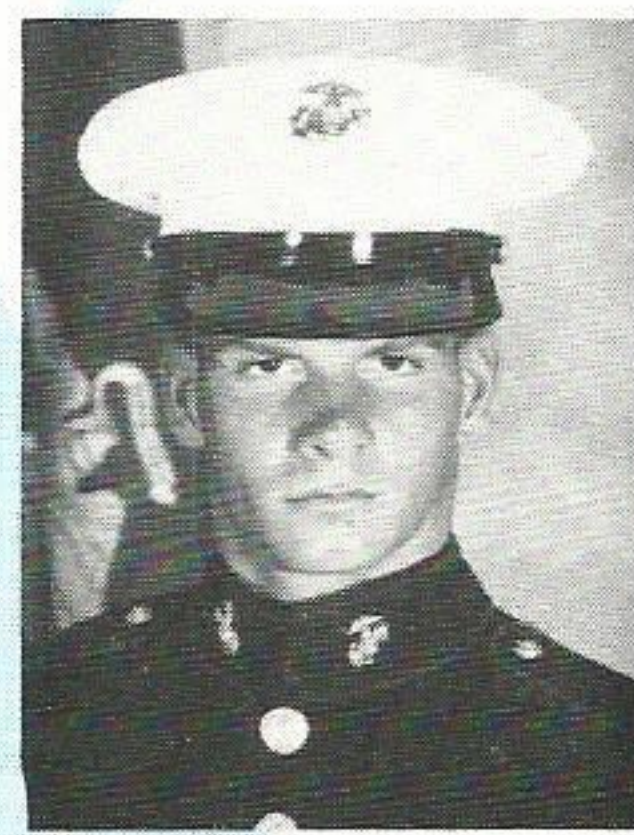
**Gunnery Sgt. Richard M.
Pitcher**
2nd Division, Marine
Corps
Brother of Barbara
Canzonetta
Systems Analyst
Beaumont

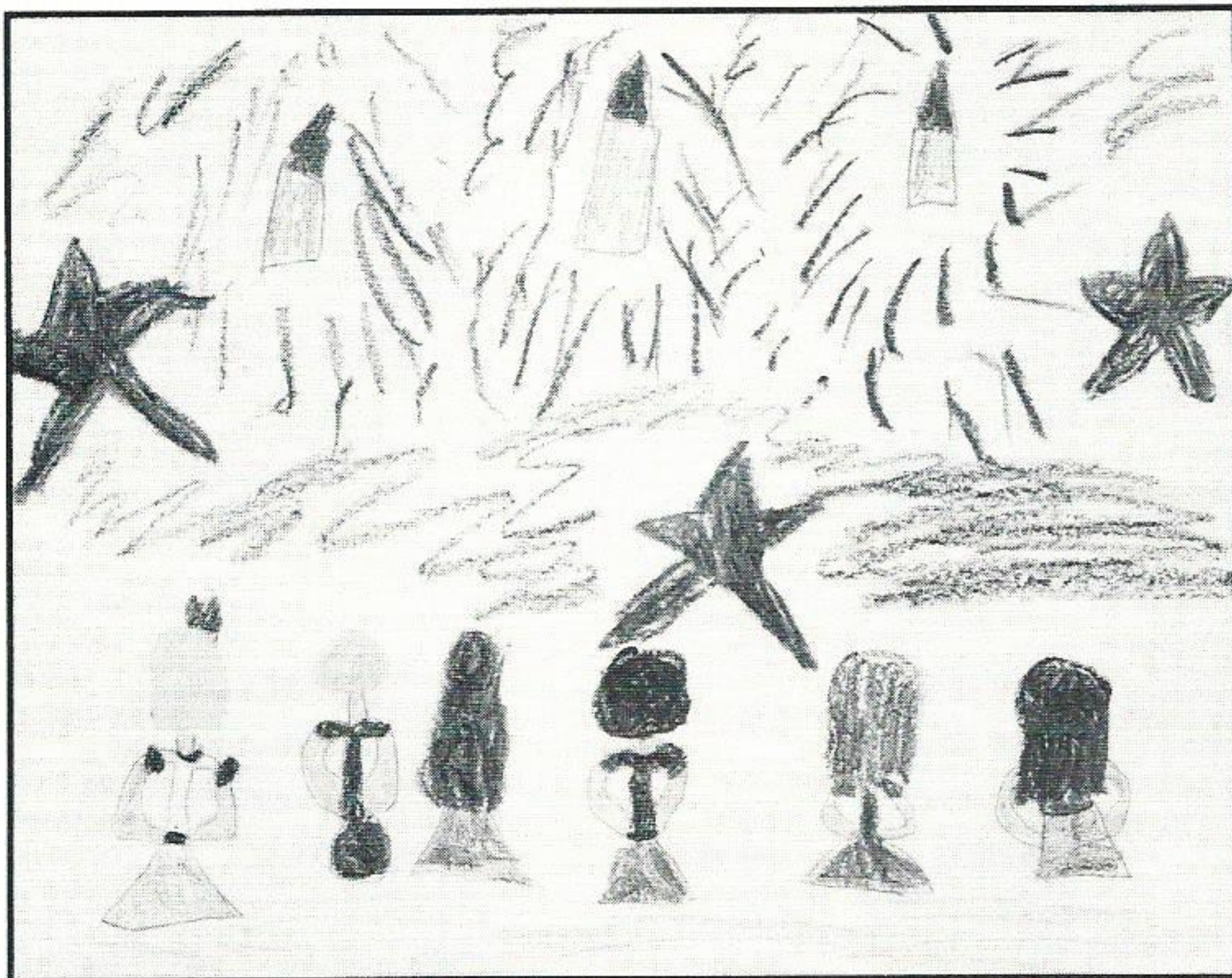


Cpl. James Robichaux Jr.
Light Weapons, Marine
Corps
Brother of Lisa Robichaux
Legal Assistant
Beaumont



**Lance Cpl. Mitchell M.
Werner**
Marine Corps
Son of Linda Werner
Secretary
Beaumont





CATEGORY I (Ages 1-7)

First Place:

Katie Smith, 6

Daughter of Jan Smith

Purchasing Agent/Beaumont

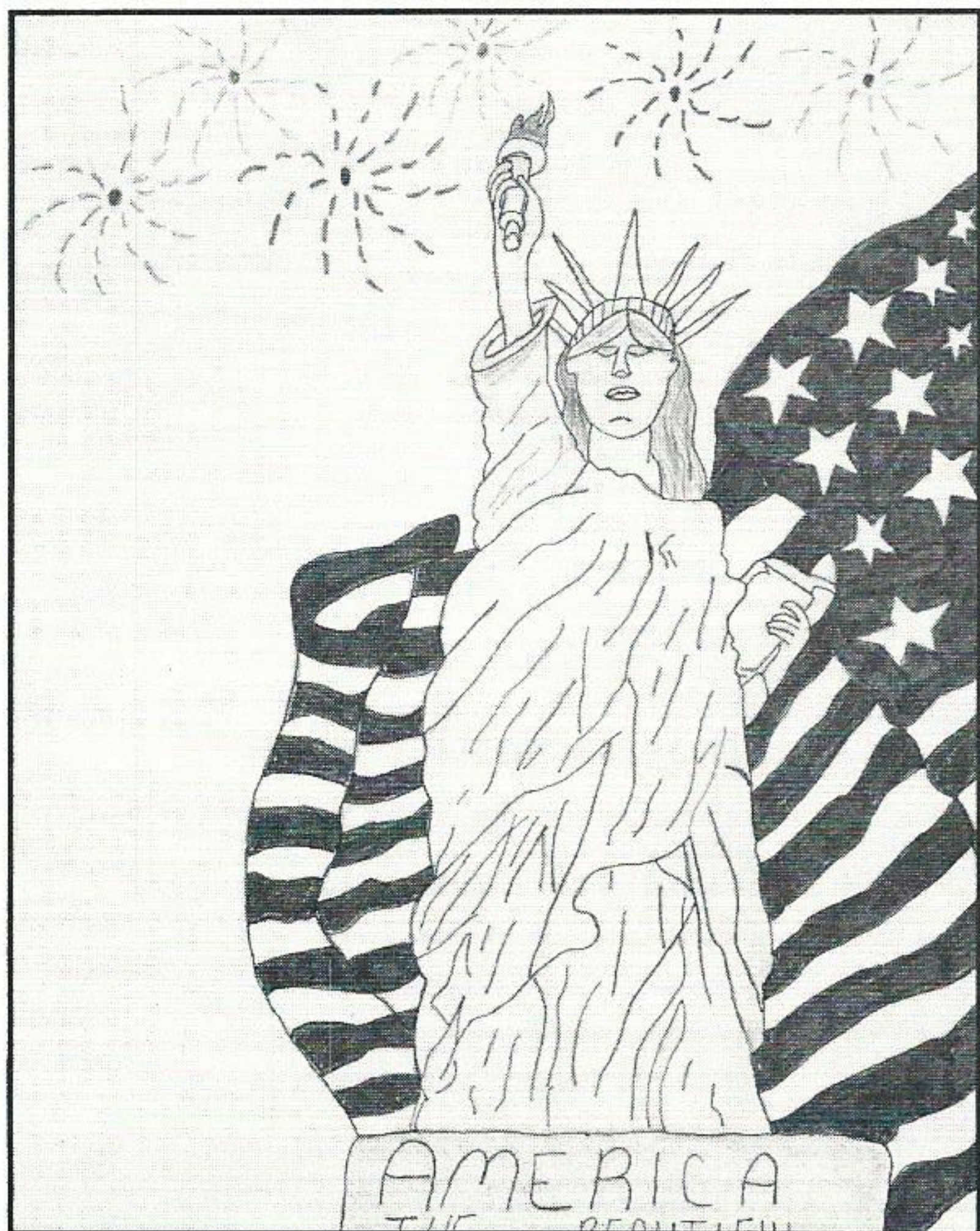
Granddaughter of Dale Jolly

Section Head-Records Systems & Services

Beaumont

Picture Contest Winners

To get a younger view of life in America, we asked children of employees to send in hand-drawn pictures that best symbolized the Fourth of July. There are three age groups with first and second place winners. In each group, first place wins a \$100 U.S. Savings Bond and second place wins a \$50 U.S. Savings Bond. Congratulations to all the winners.



CATEGORY II (Ages 8-12)

Second Place (tie):

Scott C. Smith Jr., 11

Son of Kimberly Smith

Department Clerk

Willow Glen



CATEGORY I (Ages 1-7)

Second Place:

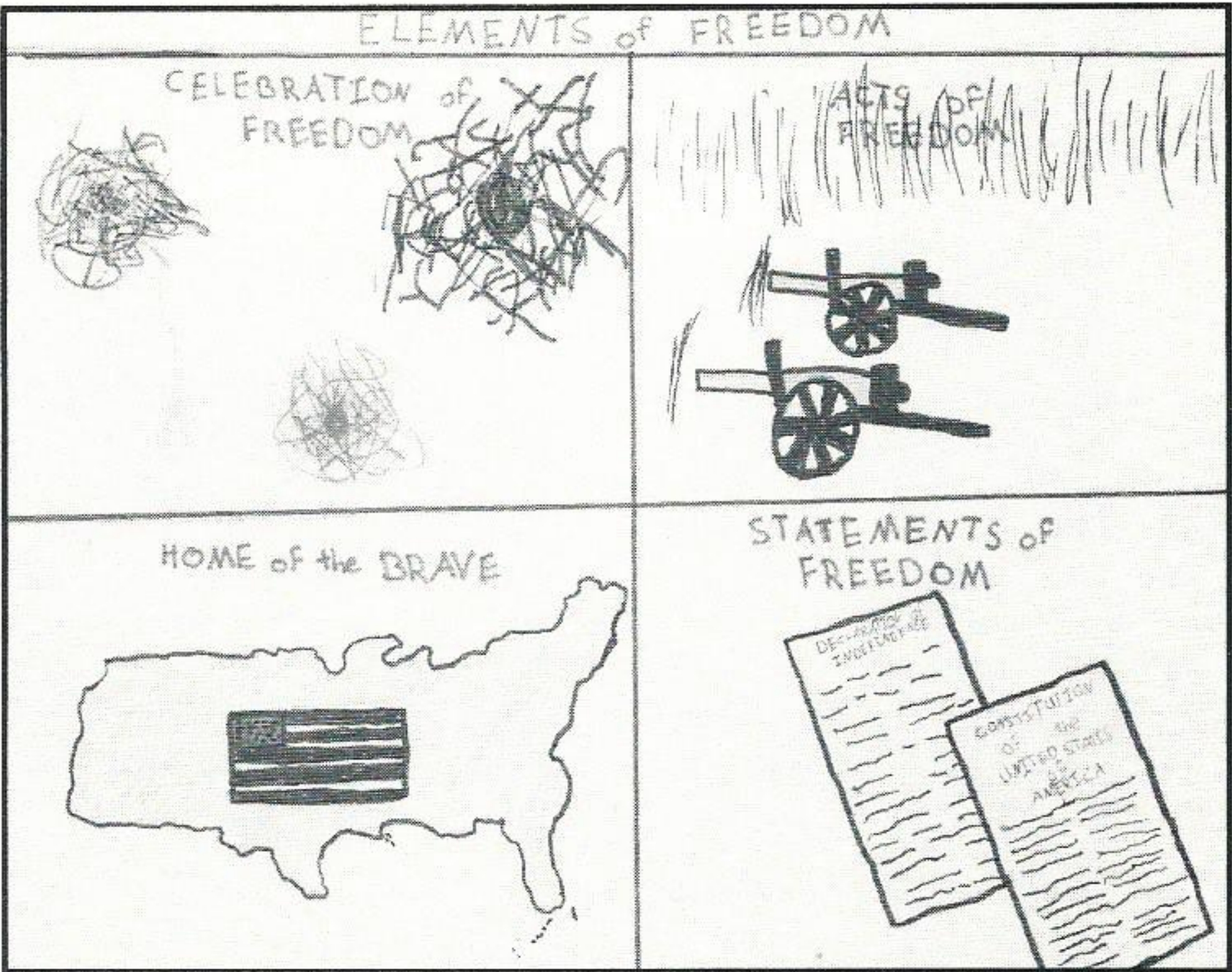
Dana Allen, 5

Daughter of Marilyn Allen

Secretary-Risk Management

Beaumont

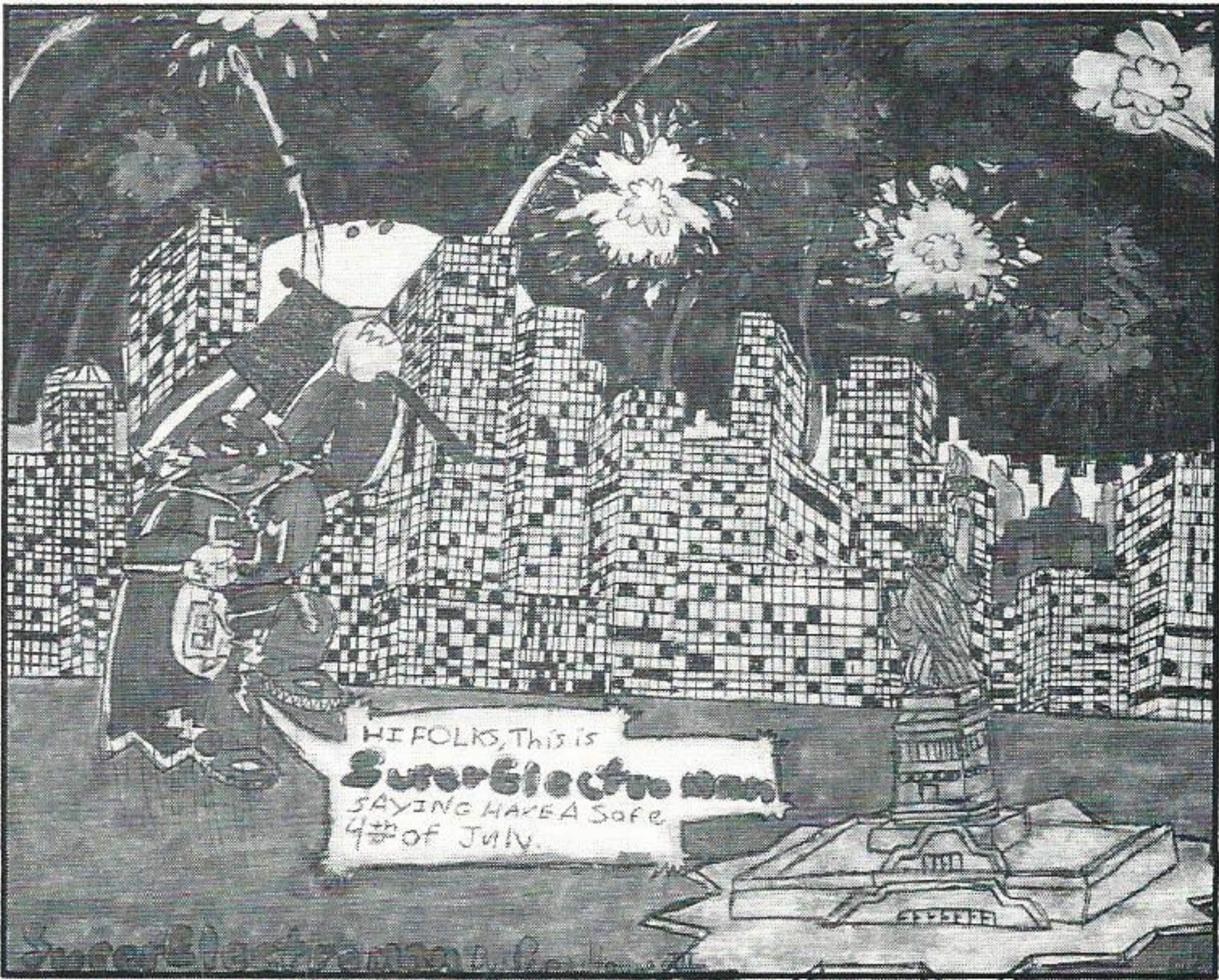
CATEGORY II (Ages 8-12)
First Place:
Steven Beach, 11
 Son of Susan Beach
 Customer Accounting Clerk
 Baton Rouge
 (See Back Cover)



CATEGORY II (Ages 8-12)
Second Place (tie):
James Breakfield III, 11
 Son of Jim Breakfield Jr.
 Administrator-Marketing Research
 Beaumont



CATEGORY III (Ages 13-18)
First Place:
Teresa Thornton, 18
 Daughter of Linda Thornton
 Customer Contact Clerk
 Trinity Office

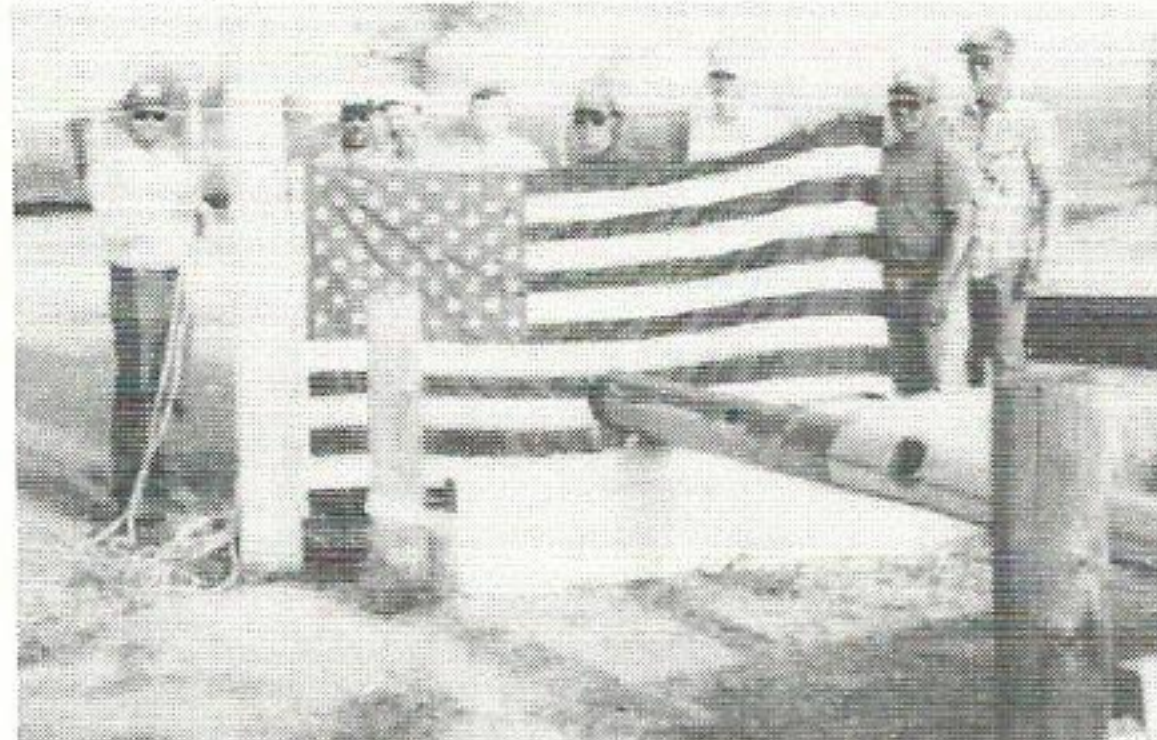


CATEGORY III (Ages 13-18)
Second Place:
Percy Haynes III, 15
 Son of Brenda Hilton Haynes
 Warehouse Assistant
 Neches Station

We support our troops



Credit and Collections, Beaumont



Line Department, Winnie



Mid County Office



Denham Springs Office



Port Arthur Office



Customer Accounting, Beaumont



GSU 4th of July float, Beaumont

Dear Dr. Draper,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank GSU and its employees for their participation in the 4th of July parade to give Operation Desert Storm soldiers a hero's welcome.

I served in Desert Storm for the past seven months...I just returned on June 15 to my home base at Fort Huachuca, Arizona...

I especially want to thank those in the Beaumont T&D Engineering Dept. for their support to my parents, Floyd and Susie Fortenberry, during that critical time of the war. My parents sent me pictures of when these GSU employees decorated their gates with yellow ribbons, flags and a note to wish my safe return. I know it meant a lot to them, but it was very heart warming to know that these people cared so much for my family during this emotional and stressful time.

I was very proud and honored to ride on the GSU float along with my father, Floyd, and the other GSU employees. I really felt a "hero." On behalf of myself and the other Desert Storm veterans who participated in the parade, I would like to express my sincere thanks and gratitude for a Great Homecoming!

Sincerely,
PFC Jason E. Fortenberry
U.S. Army

“What America means to me”

“America: The American flag swaying back and forth high up in the sky on a beautiful, sunshiny day for everyone to see, reminding us of a very special gift, freedom. Freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom to choose the type of life we wish to live...free to be me.”

Debbie Dodson
Staff Accountant II
Lake Charles



“To me, America means exactly what I am doing right now, expressing my thoughts as I want to express them. Thinking is a great way to start a journey, and when thoughts come out in written or oral form, that journey becomes something tangible.

“My thoughts may be right or wrong, and they may not be important to anyone else. What is important is that I said what I wanted to say, with no one forbidding me to do so...”

Rick Harvin
Nuclear Communications Spc.
River Bend

“The word that comes to mind when I think about America is ‘freedom.’ ‘Freedom’ is a very precious word. A word I think we are all guilty of taking for granted. We were all united during Desert Storm, something we haven’t felt for a long time. It was a good feeling and I think it made our country stronger. ‘United we stand, divided we fall.’”

Phyllis Lancon
Clerk
Beaumont

“What America means to us is freedom. Sometimes it is necessary to use our Armed Forces to keep this right. As a freedom fighting country, we are often called upon to help other countries such as Kuwait. We have proudly worn our red, white and blue during this conflict and congratulate each and every

service man and woman on a job well done.”

(left to right)
Yvonne Kennedy, sr. billing clerk; **Norma Cole**, sr. billing clerk; **George Hayes**, section head; **Carol Hamilton**, sr. billing clerk; and **Carol Richard**, sr. billing clerk, Beaumont.



“I am proud to be an American. We love America. In World War II, the soldiers fought Japan and Germany. My grandfather was wounded in this war. My father was in the war in Vietnam. The soldiers fought to get a free country. I can do anything. I want to have a career. I can pick my own church and school, too. I love America.”

Amber Weatherford
Daughter of **Bill Weatherford**
Staff Accountant II
Beaumont





Kim McMurray, manager-public affairs, Beaumont

Past or present: heroes are heroes

by Kim McMurray

This is a time for remembering heroes — and for remembering that wars produced heroes long before the Persian Gulf conflict.

Every Gulf Stater was touched in some way by the war with Iraq. For a while there, when someone talked about the Gulf region we thought of Riyadh or Dhahran instead of Sabine Pass or Cameron. Many of our friends and relatives and a few of our co-workers were called to active duty. Some ended up in or near Saudi Arabia — and, eventually, Iraq — while others stayed behind to help with key support activities.

We showed support for our soldiers with yellow ribbons, bumper stickers and prayers. Many of us became news junkies; I still consider Wolf Blitzer to be a close personal friend.

More recently, we've helped welcome the troops home in a variety of ways. Gulf Staters played a prominent role in the big July the 4th parade in Beaumont. Other employees have been active in similar recognition festivities in their local communities.

Some people say there's been too much celebrating — that all the parades and welcome-home ceremonies make it seem as if the U.S. likes to go to war. In most instances, these are

probably the same people who opposed military action in the first place.

At any rate, these naysayers are missing a very important point: These celebrations are more than a salute to those who served in the Persian Gulf region; they also are the nation's way of making amends, of playing catch-up, of saying we're sorry.

The nation is finally admitting that heroes are heroes, regardless of whether they served in Saudi, Vietnam, Korea or anywhere else. It doesn't matter how long the war lasted. It doesn't matter if the U.S. scored a clear-cut victory. It doesn't matter if some considered the war "unjust." Regardless of the circumstances, many people sacrificed and that makes them heroes.

Some Vietnam veterans suffered more when they got home than they did over there. Some Korean veterans feel as if their contributions were largely ignored because there was no clear U.S. victory.

These welcome home celebrations have given the country a chance to give belated thanks to all those who have helped defend this country and its ideals. Heroes are heroes, and let's never forget that again.

SERVICE ANNIVERSARIES

April

1991

*Service
Anniversaries*

30 YEARS

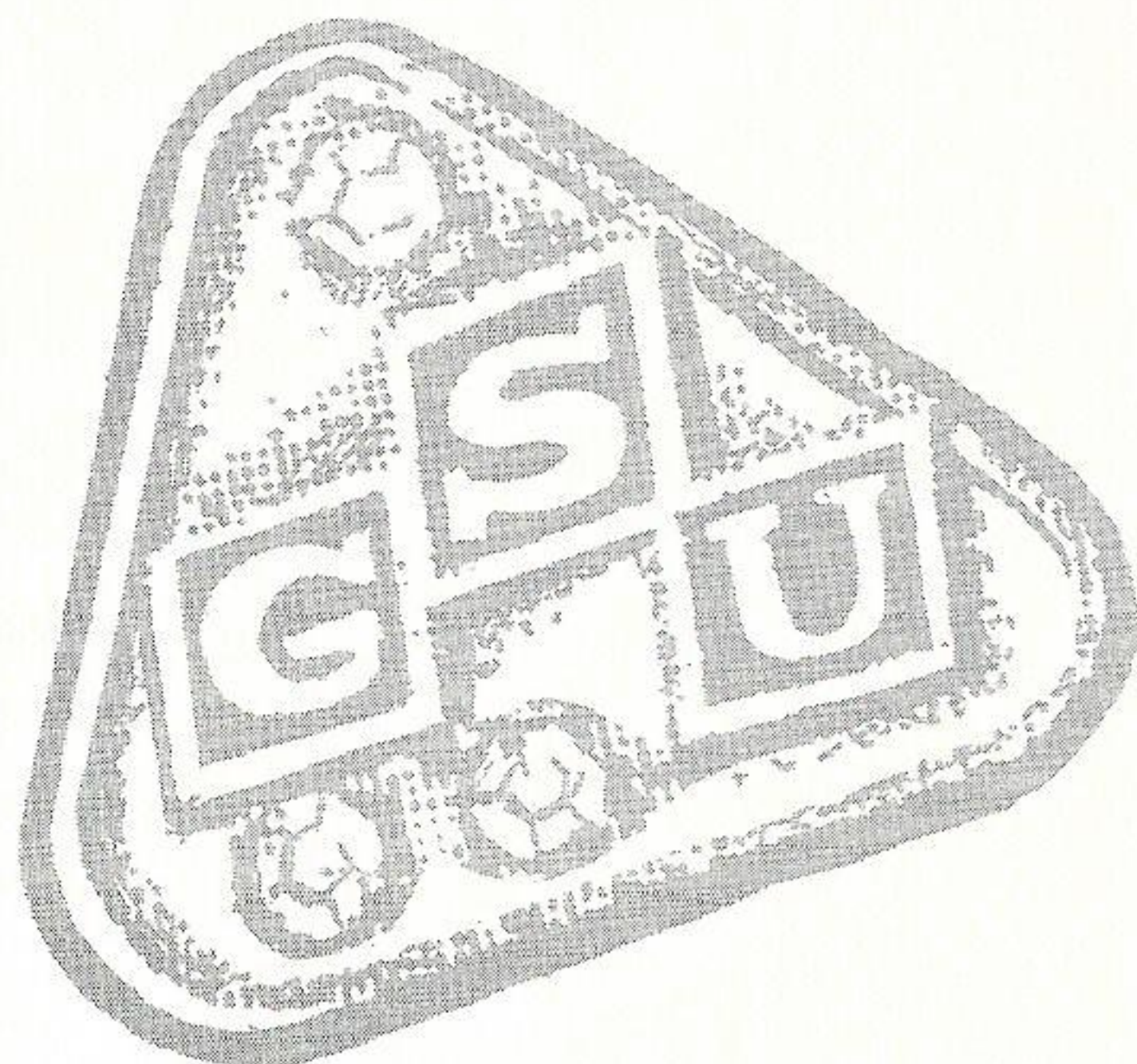
Curtis C. Leblanc
System Operations
Port Arthur

20 YEARS

Donny R. Elliott
Electric T&D
Gonzales
Rita F. Thibodeaux
Electric T&D
Lake Charles
Donna G. Evans
Division Accounting
Orange

10 YEARS

John D. English
ER/Purchasing
Beaumont
Sam Canatella Jr.
Electric T&D
Navasota
Robert P. Cambre
Plant Production
Willow Glen
Joe T. Carter Jr.
Electric T&D
Vidor
Sharon F. Englade
Public Affairs
Beaumont
Carol J. Gauthier
Electric T&D
Lafayette
Patsy Jenkins
Plant Production
Nelson Station
Arthur D. Roshto
Plant Production
River Bend
Carroll W. Williams
Plant Production
Nelson Station
Larry J. Wiltz
Electric T&D
Beaumont
James W. Frederick Jr.
Electric T&D
Lafayette
Inita M. Lively
Fuel Services
Beaumont
Kenneth W. Cockerham
Electric T&D
Baton Rouge
Gregory J. Lanthier
Electric T&D
Baton Rouge
Virginia S. Ener
Division Accounting
Beaumont
Shirley S. Godeaux
Division Accounting
Vidor
Stephen W. Hemby
Plant Production
Sabine Station
Michael R. Holmes
Electric T&D
Baton Rouge
Gertrude P. Hynes
Accounting Services
Beaumont
Danny Lee
Electric T&D
Conroe
Jeffery L. Romero
Electric T&D
Beaumont
Larry Moore
Plant Production
Willow Glen
Mack B. Bullard
Computer Applications
Beaumont
Aubrey P. Lee Jr.
Plant Production
Willow Glen
Marion G. Norman
Engineering Services
Beaumont
Judy A. Patin
RBNG Administration
River Bend
Cecilia J. Russell
Human Resources
Beaumont
Jack L. Schenk
Executive Department
Beaumont
Leonard W. Woods Jr.
RBNG Plant Operations
River Bend
Harry R. Moseley
Plant Production
Nelson Coal
David L. Anderson
Electric T&D
Beaumont
Joseph C. Andrepont
Electric T&D
Port Arthur
Patricia B. Buck
Electric T&D
Lafayette
Vernon C. Carlson
RBNG Plant Operations
River Bend
Phyllis B. Melancon
Plant Production
Sabine Station
Marshall W. Rayburn Jr.
Plant Production
Willow Glen
Stanley G. Wright
Plant Production
Willow Glen
Henderson L. Dennis
RBNG Plant Operations
River Bend
Edward J. Smith
Computer Applications
Beaumont
Mark A. Stewart
Plant Production
Willow Glen
Jessie C. James
Electric T&D
Baton Rouge
Jeffrey L. Wilkinson
Design Engineering
Beaumont



PLAIN TALKS

P. O. Box 2951
Beaumont, Texas 77704

Address Correction Requested

BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Beaumont, Texas
Permit No. 11



4th of July
Is Freedom For all

Steven Beach, II, son of Susan Beach, customer accounting clerk, Baton Rouge, won first place in Category II in the patriotic picture drawing contest. All winners are listed on page 10-II.