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Locals honor memory of Bobby Travis

By GINA KINSLOW

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GLASGOW — Robert Samuel “Bobby” Travis of Glasgow, a community leader and veterans’ advocate, died Saturday at his home after an illness. He was 76.

The Glasgow native retired as a major from the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve and was a Vietnam War veteran, according to obituary information received by the Daily Times. Along with his brother, Freddie Travis, he owned and operated Ideal Hardware-Glasgow Trading Center for many years.

Travis did a lot for the community but didn’t necessarily want recognition for the work.

“He did it because he wanted to and not because he had to,” said Joel Wilson, the Daily Times’ editor emeritus.

Travis was involved with the Fort Williams Restoration Committee, the U.S. Marine Corps League, the Barren County Veterans Association, Veterans of Foreign Wars and the American Legion. He also served as executive director of the Barren County Chapter of the American Red Cross and worked to develop the Glasgow-Barren County Veterans Wall of Honor on the south side of Glasgow’s public square in Beula C. Nunn Park.

Wilson served with Travis on the veterans wall committee.

“That was very important to Bobby. That was his baby,” Wilson said.

Former Glasgow Mayor Darrell Pickett appointed Travis to that committee.

“I needed people in there who knew the military,” Pickett said. “Bobby was the type of person, if you asked him to do something, it was going to be done the right way. He did an excellent job. He was good at what he did. I will never forget him. “

Pickett knew Travis for several years and the men had grown to be close friends.

"I went by and saw him Friday morning," Pickett said. "I was pleased because he knew who I was and that was exciting to me. I told him I wanted to thank him for being a friend."

Travis Lyle, who worked with Travis for several years in coordinating veterans programs, including the annual Memorial Day Service at the Glasgow Municipal Cemetery, said he was sorry to learn of Travis' death.

"The last time I saw him was about 10 days ago," he said. "I told him I would do the Memorial Day service and for him not to worry about it. I saluted him and he saluted me."

Lyle described Travis as being "all Marine" and a man who was proud of his military service.

"He was very active in supporting military veterans and those on current military service," Lyle said.

James Crow served with Travis in the local chapter of the U.S. Marine Corps League, an organization Travis helped to start.

"Bobby was a fine man. When he believed in something, he worked for it. He was a good Marine," Crow said.

Jim Hyatt, former director of the Mary Wood Weldon Memorial Library, also served with Travis in the U.S. Marine Corps League. Travis, meanwhile, served as chairman of the library's board of directors while Hyatt was director of the library. Hyatt had known Travis for about 40 years.

When Travis took on a community project, he worked hard because he wanted the community to be proud of it, Hyatt said.

"He was a perfectionist. He was a real nice person, but he was a Marine. He was a strong person. As we used to say in the Marine Corps, he was the kind of person who would take care of his men," Hyatt said.

Glasgow businessman Doug Isenberg had known Travis for more than 50 years and worked closely with Travis on coordinating local veterans events.

"He paid particular attention to detail for every ceremony and every project we worked on, including the veterans wall of honor. He was just a detail person right down to the letter," Isenberg said. "If it was a ceremony or Veterans Day dinner, he would publish the program at military time. When he saw that clock move to that minute on that program, you can bet it was going to start."

Travis did not receive much publicity for soliciting gifts for veterans who were hospitalized during the holidays in Louisville and Nashville, Isenberg said.

"He had connections with those hospitals. If Barren County veterans were there, they he would collect gifts at Christmas time and he and others would travel to Louisville and they would visit with those veterans," Isenberg said. "He was just a true, true patriot."

Travis served as chairman of the Housing Authority of Glasgow's board of directors at the time of his passing. He was appointed to the board in 2007 to fill the unexpired term of the Rev. Fred Haynie. He was elected vice-chairman in 2010 and chairman in June.

"We lost a good one. That's for sure," said Sheri Lee, executive operations officer for the housing authority. "He was just one of those genuine people who really cared about his community. We are really going to miss him here. We are very heartbroken about his passing."

Glasgow Mayor Rhonda Riherd Trautman served with Travis on the housing authority's board of directors.

"Bobby Travis was dedicated to service to his country and to his community," she said in an emailed response to a call from the Daily Times. "He was the force behind the Veterans Day activities and much, much more that he didn't want credit for. I am honored to have had the opportunity to work with him on these many activities. His passing is a loss to our community and the city of Glasgow – he will be greatly missed by many."