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Shlachter, Nishimura & Baker: A volunteer effort in Tillman's memory

Sean Connelly and Pat Tillman — Californians, football players and Arizona State University grads — took different paths after leaving college.

Connelly went to work for Lockheed Martin in Fort Worth and pursued an MBA from the University of Texas at Arlington. Tillman entered the NFL, then selflessly gave up his football career to enlist in the Army in 2002. On his second combat deployment as an Army Ranger, he was killed in April 2004 in Afghanistan.

In late 2007, Connelly, 32, stopped at a monument to Tillman near San Jose while on a Lockheed business trip. He recalled their days in college, where they shared a class and a conditioning group for a time, and hit on an idea while standing there.

"He was very humble and approachable," Connelly told *Star-Telegram* reporter Chris Vaughn. "You knew about his accomplishments but never from him. He would never talk about them. I just felt inspired to do something to further his name and promote what he believed in. He was big into service and very giving of his time."

The outcome of Connelly's inspiration was 42 in 42, a campaign of service and volunteerism across Lockheed, from California to Georgia. He envisioned 42 projects in 42 days, based on Tillman's Sun Devils jersey number. But it's been so much more than that, he said.

"We didn't know what kind of participation we'd have last year, and we ended up with 130 projects," Connelly said. "It almost got too big to manage. This year we ended up with about 75 projects. So it was smaller this year, but by design."

The campaign, which received the blessing of both Lockheed CEO Robert Stevens and the Pat Tillman Foundation, officially ended Sunday. About 1,000 employees nationwide put in 8,000 volunteer hours on the projects and raised thousands of dollars for charity.

The volunteers have raised money for breast cancer research, cleaned up a river in Syracuse, N.Y., planted trees and built a ramp and porch for a disabled veteran in Burluson, among many other projects.

Now Connelly is trying to figure out how to protect the name of his campaign and whether to pursue nonprofit status.

"We're proud to say that this is a Lockheed Martin initiative," he said.

... oh, and the taxpayers

When Jerry Jones opened Cowboys Stadium on Wednesday, he thanked a lot of people.

His wife, Gene, and their family.

Cowboys players Michael Irvin and Bob Lilly.

And Jimmy Johnson, even though the former Cowboys coach wasn't there.

He even remembered to thank his bankers, who helped finance over \$300 million of the construction costs.

But Jones did not thank the Arlington taxpayers, who voted in 2004 to give the Cowboys \$325 million to build the

stadium and are paying that money back with an extra half-cent sales tax.

That responsibility was evidently left to Arlington Mayor Robert Cluck, who did say he was "proud of the citizens of Arlington for letting us build this in a partnership with the Cowboys because without their support this building wouldn't be here."

Of course, Arlington residents may not have cared about the slight, as the ribbon-cutting ceremony was open only to about 1,500 VIPs.

Temporary (or not)

The owner of Daired's Salon and Day Spa said he may have found a better solution for clients and staff until he can get his business back into its highly visible Interstate 20 location in south Arlington by January.

Daired's was forced to close after an electrical fire in February caused extensive smoke damage. This week, crews should begin gutting the interior for a rebuild, Daired Ogle said.

Meantime, clients and staff have been spread among four locations. Ogle has leased a 7,562-square-foot spot at 915 Skyline Drive, just east of Collins Street near Lincoln Square in north Arlington. It will be ready in July.

Ogle said the location allows him to move services back under one roof, but he realizes it's a little inconvenient for customers who are used to traveling to south Arlington.

"We've been pretty fortunate. Our clients are very loyal," Ogle said. "It's been a lot of work. I have a great staff, and everyone's doing their part. Once we're back to I-20, we'll be whole again."

Ogle, though, has not yet ruled out staying in north Arlington, too, where his salon and day spa was. Depending on how things go, Ogle said he has an option to extend the lease and may do so to expand the business.

Major overhaul

The Hyatt Regency DFW, at Dallas/Fort Worth Airport, has just completed a six-year, \$50 million renovation.

"Hyatt Regency DFW is literally new from the inside out," General Manager Larry Daniels said in a statement.

The four-phase project includes new restaurants, a zero-edge pool and upgrading 92,000 square feet of meeting space, 74 individual meeting rooms and 811 guest rooms. The renovations have already garnered the hotel company eight design, industry and reader's choice awards.

Phase one was the pool; a new lobby and front desk; Jett's coffee bar, ACE'S lobby bar; Jacob's Spring Grille; the 4,832-square-foot Innovation ballroom, which overlooks the pool; VIP suites; a new front drive and Made-in-Texas exhibit hall upgrades, the hotel said.

Completed in 2005, phase two involved renovating the meeting space and installing wireless high-speed Internet access, Janus electronic displays and a permanent Texas business exhibit throughout the hotel. The presidential suite was also upgraded, the hotel said.

Phase three was completed in 2007 and included renovation of all 811 guest rooms with 32-inch flat-screen HDTVs, desks on casters, iHome stereos and Hyatt grand beds. Guest baths were renovated with marble and tile. Guest corridors were also upgraded.

Just completed was the renovation of the 21,120-square-foot Enterprise ballroom and the 11,600-square-foot Executive Conference Level, offering reconfigured spaces that can be used as 12 individual boardrooms. Four rooms for dinners or receptions now overlook airport runways, with a choice of views of Fort Worth or downtown Dallas and Las Colinas.

AW (or not)

Was it an honest mistake or a revealing slip of the tongue?

That was the question last week after a presentation by an executive of Italian helicopter manufacturer AgustaWestland at the American Helicopter Society meeting in Grapevine.

James Wang, a noted aerospace engineer and vice president of the U.S. arm of AgustaWestland, was making a presentation on the company's products and new aircraft development efforts. When a picture of the BellAgusta 609 civil tilt-rotor aircraft came up, Wang called it the "AW609," AW being the prefix for AgustaWestland's aircraft models.

More than a few eyebrows were lifted and looks exchanged as Wang spoke, and afterward the comments were the subject of hallway conversations. Had AgustaWestland finally taken over the program?

AgustaWestland spokeswoman Jacqueline Ferko said later that Wang, who she said seldom spoke in public forums, had simply misspoken. "He wasn't implying anything," Ferko said.

As the *Star-Telegram* reported in July, AgustaWestland has taken a significantly larger role, financially and otherwise, in the development of what's always been called the BA609.

Since then, Bell officials have said the two companies were discussing the best management and ownership structure for what was once a 75-25 joint venture, with Bell taking the lead role.

Bell's ardor for the BA609, sort of a smaller, sleeker-looking offspring of the military's V-22 Osprey, has cooled considerably since the program was officially launched more than a decade ago.

Bell Chief Executive Dick Millman has said he doesn't see a U.S. market for the aircraft, which could cost \$20 million each.

But AgustaWestland CEO Giuseppe Orsi is a big fan of the aircraft and has continually pushed Bell to devote more money to speeding up development and testing.