

## Rites set for Tulsa clothier Ed Beshara

Ed Beshara, whose fine clothing stores outfitted Tulsans in tuxedos and wedding dresses, died Saturday. He was 91.

A rosary will be recited at 4:30 p.m. Monday and a funeral Mass is set for 10 a.m. Tuesday, both at Church of St. Mary, under the direction of Fitzgerald's Southwood Colonial Funeral Home.

As a boy, Beshara worked at Nessler's General Store in Haskell, before leaving to attend school. He returned in 1947, after being a Washington University football quarterback and serving in the military, and worked at downtown Tulsa department stores. Beshara also operated ElMar, a sports shop.

In 1960, he opened Ed Beshara's Fine Clothing store at 36th Street and Harvard Avenue. Soon after, he opened a tuxedo rental store. His daughter, Margo Dunbar, said her father had "always been a dresser" and loved working in men's clothing. Beshara also opened a bridal store that Dunbar operated but that the family has since sold.

Beshara told the Tulsa World in 1991 that he was proud he made sure his customers were properly fitted. "I tell people 'If it looks good and feels good, tell your friends. And, if it doesn't, tell me.'"

Beshara turned one of his favorite pastimes, golf, into a fun-



Beshara

draiser when he began holding Ed Beshara's Charity Golf Tournament in 1970. The tournaments featured local celebrities, as well as some of Beshara's good friends. He said in 2001 that it was his way of giving back to Tulsa.

"I feel like I owe the city something. If you can't be happy in Tulsa, buddy, you can't be happy anywhere," he said. The tournament continues as the Gatesway Golf Classic.

Beshara, the son of Lebanese immigrants Olga and Anton Beshara, was born Jan. 25, 1916. He married Laura Beshara on Jan. 24, 1942.

He is survived by his wife, Laura; a son, Edward Beshara Jr. of Tulsa; three daughters, Joanne Goff of Houston, Texas, Marian Davis of Pittsburgh, Pa., and Margo Dunbar of Tulsa; two brothers, Maurice Beshara and Wade Beshara, both of Dallas; six sisters, Marguerite Beshara, Madeline Beshara and Antoinette Beshara, all of Haskell, Olga Garner of Tahlequah, Jeannette Fidel of Muskogee and Viola Aidel of Wilmington Beach, N.C.; 10 grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

## Two die in accidents on state roadways

Two Oklahomans were killed in area accidents Friday, including a Stroud teenager who was killed in an all-terrain vehicle accident.

Killed were Tinch Arnold Cole Jr., 46, of Pond Creek; and Langston Lee Gordon, 15, of Stroud.

The OHP said Cole was driving a 2003 GMC Envoy on U.S. 60 two miles west of Burbank in Osage County at about 2:50 p.m. Friday when he attempted to pass a 1979 Ford pickup driven by William Anthony Box, 48, of Burbank.

Box apparently was attempting to make a left turn when Cole's pickup hit Box's vehicle in the rear, causing Cole to lose control and drive off the side of the road and overturn twice.

Cole and six passengers in his vehicle were ejected, troopers said. Cole was pronounced dead at the scene.

Passengers from Cole's vehicle who were injured included Brittany Nicole Howard, 18, of Pond Creek, who was taken to St. Francis Hospital and listed in critical condition with head, internal, arm and leg injuries; Lurena Dawn Cole, 31, of Pond Creek, who was taken to a Wichita hospital in critical condition with head, internal, arm and leg injuries; Lauren R.

Shriver, 12, of Pond Creek, who was transported to a Wichita hospital and listed in good condition with head, arm and leg injuries; Savanna R. Ryan, 9, of Pond Creek, who was taken to a Ponca City hospital and listed in good condition with head, arm and trunk injuries; Abbe B. Cole, 5, of Pond Creek, who was transported to a Ponca City hospital and listed in good condition with head, arm and leg injuries; and Midair D. Scott, 12, of Pond Creek, who was taken to a Ponca City hospital and listed in good condition with head, arm and leg injuries.

Box was not injured. Troopers said both vehicles were equipped with seat belts but they were not used.

Gordon was driving a Honda four-wheeler at about 10:20 p.m. Friday on a Lincoln County road west of Stroud when he was thrown from the ATV. Gordon was pronounced dead at the scene, the OHP said.

Troopers said a second ATV with two other 15-year-olds was also involved in the accident, but the OHP is continuing to investigate.

Cody M. Stewart, 15, and Daniel Hodge, 15, both of Stroud, were taken to a Stroud hospital with head, neck, trunk and chest injuries. Both were listed in critical condition.

## State history group hosts cemetery-appreciation tour

By ALTHEA PETERSON  
World Staff Writer

Some historic areas of cities don't last long.

However, nothing seems to be preserved as long or tell history as well as a cemetery, said Cathy Ambler, Preservation Oklahoma board vice president.

"I think by just looking at the symbolism, looking at the dates, looking at the choice of stone, they are trying to tell a story about themselves," Ambler said. "It's this desire to leave something good about yourself, even though we know we aren't perfect."

As part of its Most Endangered Historic Places Program, Preservation Oklahoma hosted a tour Saturday of Oak Lawn Cemetery. As she led the group, Ambler offered tips on the preservation and observation at cemeteries.

**Choose a hardy stone:** While passing beautiful new marble markers in the cemetery at the corner of 11th Street and Peoria Avenue, it is easy to see that some stone wears out more than others. Ambler pointed to a white-bronze, or zinc stone, which ironically was less expensive than beautiful marble stones.

"While it started as a cheap material, it's crisp, clean and lasts a long time."

Ambler recommended granite over other types of stone because it will not wear away as

quickly. Marble, while quite beautiful when new, should be avoided, she said.

**Care for a stone sparingly:** Frequently washing a stone or using wire brushes or shaving cream to brush up a stone is a bad idea, Ambler said. She said she recommends only cleaning a stone when it becomes illegible. Then, dampen the stone first and use a soft plastic brush. For slate, marble, limestone and sandstone, a non-ionic detergent with water can be used. However, all stones age over time and will never look "new" again.

**Treat all markers with respect:** Vandalism is a common problem at cemeteries, Ambler said. She recommends looking at symbolism, fraternal organization notes and flowers around cemeteries to gain an appreciation for markers.

"Vandalism is just a crime," she said. "These really are artifacts of our past. Most of our children have not come to cemeteries to visit their ancestors."

She said one solution would be to have youth take part in cemetery upkeep and memorial days. "I feel it is extremely important to pass along appreciation of cemeteries to the next generation. It's up to us to help others realize how important this is to us."

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## Group helps residents in need

► Volunteers make homes safe, secure and weatherproof.

By ALTHEA PETERSON  
World Staff Writer

Beatrice McConnell has lived in her Tulsa home since the 1950s but because of her age and income couldn't get a wheelchair ramp.

Enter Rebuilding Together Tulsa, a nonprofit volunteer group that specializes in making homes safe, secure and weatherproof.

By Saturday, McConnell had a new wheelchair ramp, as well as new back steps and an improved laundry room.

"I just love this ramp," she said. "It looks beautiful. I cry every night because I can't say thank you enough."

McConnell is among about 70 homeowners who will receive help from Rebuilding Together Tulsa this year, with 650 volunteers donating labor, supplies and time. Saturday marked the 10th annual workday for the group, which has helped repair 157 homes in Tulsa as of 2006, said Deanna Boston, executive director.

Services include repairing roofs, electrical work, plumbing and other maintenance projects that some homeowners could not afford, Boston said.

For those homeowners who learn they can receive these services for free, it is a blessing, McConnell said.

"I just knew that I wouldn't qualify," she said. "I've never gotten anything free. I just knew that there was a catch to it."

"It's strange to me because nobody's ever done anything for me before. I'm grateful, I feel so humble."

The title sponsor this year is Bank of America. Brad Burkhal-



CORY YOUNG/Tulsa World

ter, team captain at one of the work sites and a Rebuilding Together Tulsa board member, said he and his bank co-workers just "have fun" by giving back.

"When you come out and work, the feeling you get from doing work for a homeowner gives you an incredible peace of

mind," he said. "It really means a lot to see how friends and co-workers really step up to help the community."

It means a lot to the homeowners as well, said Tay Clare, whose house Burkhalter and other bank employees worked on for 2½ months.

Barry Helms, owner of Renovations by Helms, uses waterproofing wood protectant on a ramp that was built at a house at 1716 E. Young Place. He was among about 400 volunteers who helped repair 14 homes for low-income Tulsa homeowners on Saturday.

## City likely to extend deal deadline

► The One Technology Center purchase could lead to a consolidated City Hall.

By P.J. LASSEK  
World Staff Writer

The city will likely extend its May 1 deadline to execute a contract to purchase the One Technology Center, which could become the new consolidated City Hall.

Any delay "will be a couple of weeks, not months," said city Economic Development Director Don Himelfarb.

"At the end of the day, whether we close on July 15 or Aug. 1 is immaterial in the scheme of things," he said about the city's falling behind on its proposed timeline.

"Nothing is wrong; it's just more difficult than either party had anticipated in trying to understand the engineering issues relative to the building," Himelfarb said.

The city has an agreement with the building's owner, Leucadia National Corp. of New York, for a time extension, "if we need it, but we should take only what we need, nothing more," Himelfarb said.

Last month, Mayor Kathy Taylor announced that the city had entered into a purchase option with Leucadia on the downtown building.

The 15-story glass facility at 100 S. Cincinnati Ave., formerly the WilTel building, is fully furnished and equipped with state-of-the-art technology.

The plan would have the city lease the building from a city trust authority. There would be a building manager and space would be leased to other governmental and private businesses. The current tenants, Level 3 Communications and Deloitte & Touche, would remain.

A proposed timeline released by the city showed that on May 1 the contract would be executed. The contract would automatically terminate if it is not executed by June 1. Closing on the deal was projected for July 15 with a revenue bond issuance to be proposed in the summer or fall.

"The thing I like best about this City Hall consolidation is that not only is it going to make sense financially, which will be clear to citizens when we show the numbers, but it is something the city can do from a developmental standpoint without taxing the citizens," Himelfarb said.

The city announced last

month that it had already negotiated a price, but would not release the amount. Himelfarb would say only that it is "substantially lower" than the current \$80 million market price, which includes 742,000 square feet of space, furnishings and a parking garage.

Late last year, when rumors began to circulate that the city was looking at the center, Angela West, broker for the building said the price was \$75 million. In November 2005, the asking price was listed at \$65 million.

A preliminary study indicated constructing a new building with 250,000 square feet of space and a 1,000-space garage would cost a minimum of \$82 million.

Himelfarb said that the city's transaction is going to pay for itself, "and we're not asking anyone for a nickel."

"This is something we can do using our resources by just utilizing them in a better way than they have been used in the past. That's the beauty of this transaction," he said.

The city is considering consolidating as many as 12 facilities, freeing up prime development sites currently occupied by the City Hall building, the Public Works facilities at 23rd Street and Jackson Avenue, and the Hartford Building in east down-

### To qualify

To qualify for help from Rebuilding Together Tulsa:

- Must be a homeowner.
- Must live within Tulsa city limits.
- Must be over 60 or living with a disability.
- Must meet income guidelines.

On the Web: [www.rebuildingtogetherthetulsa.org](http://www.rebuildingtogetherthetulsa.org)

"When I moved in, I was totally able," Clare said. "Now that I'm 75 and disabled, I really appreciate that they do this."

"Every old person should have something like this. By the time we're on Social Security, our income just isn't high enough."

Unfortunately, not everyone can have Rebuilding Together Tulsa volunteers at their doors. While the group has a goal of repairing 400 homes annually by 2011, they lack the volunteers and resources to meet requests, Boston said. More than 30 homeowners are on a waiting list.

"The No. 1 thing is we need people who have specific skills — plumbers, electricians, carpenters and engineers," Boston said. "There's also places for people who have a passion to help."

District 4 City Councilor Maria Barnes took a tour Saturday morning with Rebuilding Together Tulsa leaders and sponsors. She said the projects are clearly worthwhile causes and need community support.

"It's about helping these people who can't fix their homes," she said. "It's a big need for the area. It also benefits the neighborhood overall."

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