

CLEARY

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- Navy Corpsman Chris Ross of Trucksville, who suffered burns during action, received a cash grant.
- The Fisher House at Walter Reed Medical Center received a grant.
- An officer from New England, who lost a leg and has been undergoing treatment to save one of his arms, received a grant.
- A faith-based group that does rehabilitation for wounded soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines, were given a portable bathroom.
- Dallas student Mike Race received the inaugural Michael J. Cleary Scholarship.
- A former college football teammate of Jack Cleary raised a substantial amount of money for the Foundation, enough to endow an annual scholarship.

"The Foundation might not be doing glamorous, earth-moving things, but we're doing a lot of little things to help people," said Jack Cleary. "We'd rather do a lot

of smaller things rather than one or two large things. If someone needs money for their heating bill or part of their tuition, we want to be able to help."

And there have been lot of other activities taking place in the community.

- The Dallas School Board voted to name the high school soccer field "Cleary Field" in honor of the former all-star player and team captain.

- Lake-Lehman school board member Jim Welby came up with the idea of giving the Cleary Trophy to the winning team from the boys soccer game between rivals Dallas and Lake-Lehman. The trophy is similar to the Old Shoe Trophy awarded to the winner of the football game between the Back Mountain schools.

- A Back Mountain man compiled all of the local and national television coverage about Cleary and made a CD for the family.

- Cleary's former fraternity at Hamilton College - Sigma Phi - hired an artist to paint a portrait of Mike for the former fraternity house, which now houses administrative offices. The portrait shows Mike hold a bass he caught during one of his many local fish-

ing trips with his family members and friends

- Retired Dallas teacher Lew Isaacs helped create a Wall of Honor at the high school for Dallas students who were killed in action.

- In memory of Cleary, the Dallas Post Office planted a tree with a brass plaque on the office grounds on Route 415 in downtown Dallas.

- Also in memory of their neighbor, a family on Glendale Road built a country platform and flagpole.

"A man who lost a child was asked if it ever gets better," Jack Cleary said. "He told them it doesn't get better, it gets different. Our family has reached the different part yet."

"But we've had so many calls from friends. People who knew Michael from high school, college and the Army check on us. We hear from at least five or six people from each of those (categories). There are a lot of wonderful people who care."

The Clearys are traveling to Florida to spend the holidays with one of their daughters, Kelly. On the way, they're going to attend a special service at Fort

Stewart, Ga., home of the Third Infantry Division - and Mike Cleary's unit. Last May, members of the unit planted a tree and placed a stone marker in memory of Cleary and other soldiers from the unit who have been killed in action in Iraq.

When they're not talking to their son Patrick or daughters Erin, Shannon and Kelly, Jack and Marianne Cleary keep up to date with Kavanagh, who recently took a job working with a relative in Manassas, Va. And the couple also keeps busy with the Foundation.

"We're going to continue with the stated mission," Jack Cleary said. "The Foundation wants to help people and the families who have affected by the War in Iraq. We also want to help special people, who had a special place in Michael's heart."



TIMES LEADER FILE PHOTO/S. JOHN WILKIN

White ribbons and flags were found throughout the Back Mountain a year ago in memory of 1Lt. Michael J. Cleary.

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