

City names street to honor medalist

by Roger White

Shorthorn Staff

In addition to the usual sewer project and street improvement discussions, there was an item last week on the Arlington City Council agenda that hadn't come up in more than 15 years.

By unanimous vote, members renamed Midway Road in North Arlington to Randy Snow Road, honoring the city's first Olympic medalist since Doug Russell in 1968.

Snow, a 25-year-old marketing major here, captured the Olympic silver medal in the men's 1,500-meter wheelchair race in Los Angeles. Snow moved from seventh to second place in the exhibition race's final 100 yards, bringing the LA crowd to its feet.

"I feel firstly this was a victory for the individuals in the race and secondly a victory for wheelchair athletes everywhere," Snow said after accepting the council's honor. "Thirdly, it was a victory for able-bodied people, who have had such a hard time accepting the fact that we can be athletes."

Councilman Ken Groves called Snow "perhaps the top wheelchair athlete in the nation" before the council voted to name the street after the UTA senior.

"In times past, when Arlington had another Olympic winner, we renamed a city park Doug Russell Park (after the gold medal swimmer)," Groves said. "The council and the entire city are proud of Randy, and we hope as the city

grows, we will have many more winners in the future."

The council's decision to rename Midway Road also conveniently eliminated confusion about the road's location. One section of Midway, extending from Lamar Boulevard to Baird Farm Road, does not connect with a northern section.

In February, a Lone Star Gas Co. emergency vehicle responding to a gas leak call was delayed while the driver tried to locate the 2300 block of Midway Road. The truck was on the southern section of the road, which does not include the 2300 block. The council renamed the southern half of the road after Snow.

"I really don't even know where the road is," Snow admitted outside the council chamber. "I told Jim (Hayes, UTA Handicapped Student Services director) that we should go looking for it pretty soon."

Hayes, who this summer won a gold medal and two bronze medals in the World Wheelchair Games in England, accepted an additional honor from Councilwoman Dottie Lynn.

"Without question this is a great victory for us," Hayes said. "This is the first time a governing body has officially recognized an athletic achievement by a wheelchair athlete. It's something we've been working for for years. Randy is an Olympic hero and should be treated as



Randy Snow

one, just like any Olympic winner."

Snow, the nation's top-ranked wheelchair tennis player and a three-time member of the national wheelchair basketball squad, gave much of the credit for his success to Hayes.

"I think they should really name (the road) the Jim Hayes Handicapped Services Road," Snow said. "I probably would have gone into competition eventually, but it was Jim who introduced me to it. His approach to me was very open. He said it's here if you want it — he didn't push me."

"The whole program Jim has put together here has opened a lot of doors. We've broken an old stereotype."