



TARRANT COUNTY DEPUTY SHERIFF'S ASSOCIATION



Mack West, President

March 1996

Dear Tarrant County Resident:

The Tarrant County Deputy Sheriff's Association (TCDSA) is a non-profit, voluntary organization existing under, and by virtue of, a Charter from the State of Texas.

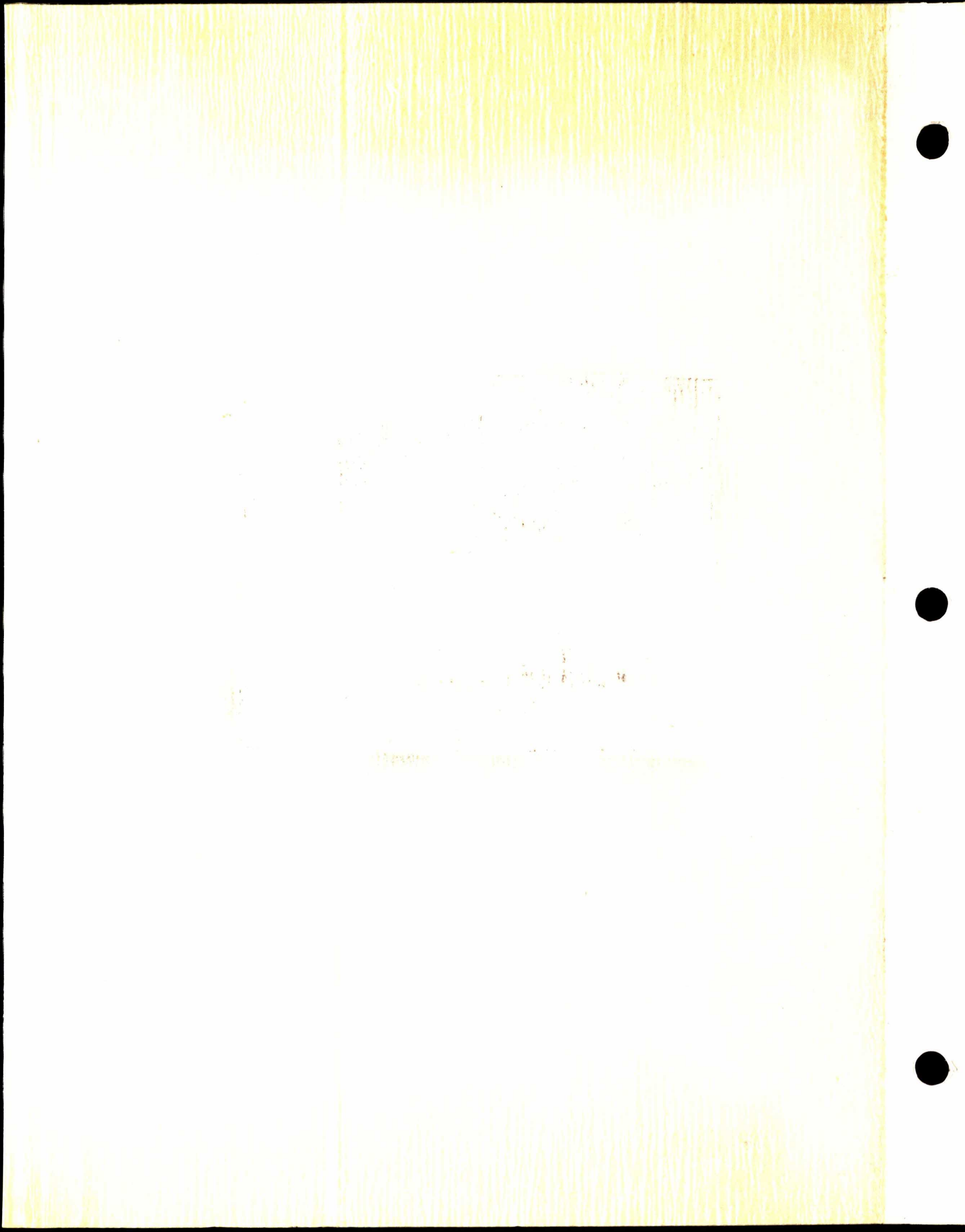
We are composed of deputies, detention officers, and civilians employed by the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department. The members of our Association have been in your area, and around the County, fingerprinting children. We have also sponsored numerous "Kid Safe" days. Perhaps we have fingerprinted your child at one of these occasions.

Today, we are asking for a few minutes of your time to consider the Candidate for Sheriff which our Association is endorsing - W. F. "Bill" McLendon. As employees of the Sheriff's Department, we feel Mr. McLendon would improve and enlarge the Community Service opportunities of the Department, as well as foster a much greater cooperative effort among the various law enforcement groups within and adjoining Tarrant County. This would enhance the crime-fighting abilities of all groups.

Mr. McLendon's experience and administrative talents make him our choice for the next Sheriff. Please consider this as you go to the polls on Tuesday, March 12th, and mark the #1 spot on the Democratic ticket for W. F. "Bill" McLendon. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Mack West,
President



Friday, March 8, 1996

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Burnam is the man

Voters are often asked: "How can our state modernize its Legislature, get better public servants, reduce special-interest pressure on them and still save money?"

Surely the answer lies in our ability to elect representatives who aren't afraid to meet the tax-dollar challenge that awaits in Austin — individuals with the stamina to reflect and bolster the political views of their constituencies.

I believe Lon Burnam, who is running for state representative for District 90, to be such a candidate. He would be a constructive asset in the search for solutions to such problems as juvenile offenders, equal access to quality education, and critical issues affecting senior citizens who have passed the torch of experience on to the youthful visionaries of this great state.

His work toward revitalization of our neighborhoods, a safer environment for children, and protection for the aged fully qualifies him for the job.

The stakes in the fight for the orderly modernization of our state government couldn't be higher. They involve the preservation of the citizen's voice in government. I urge my fellow Democrats to let your voices be heard by marking your ballots for Lon Burnam on March 12.

FLOYD F. CLARK
Fort Worth

Thank You! Thank You! Thank You!

Mr. Clark,

What a wonderful surprise it was to read your letter among the "Letters to the Editor" on Friday morning. The letter was so well written and, of course, I agreed with what you wrote. Your support is truly appreciated.

Delma Burnam

Elect

Sue Maddock



Sheriff

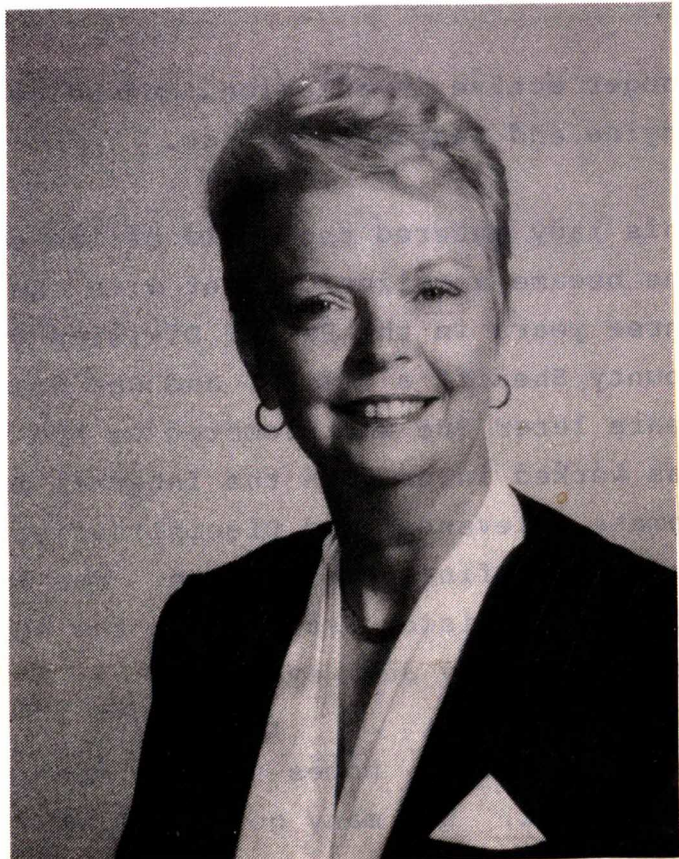
Pol. Ad. Sue Maddock · P.O. Box 14176, Arlington, Tx 76094-1176 · 277-5928

CANDIDATE PROFILE

SUE MADDOCK

FOR

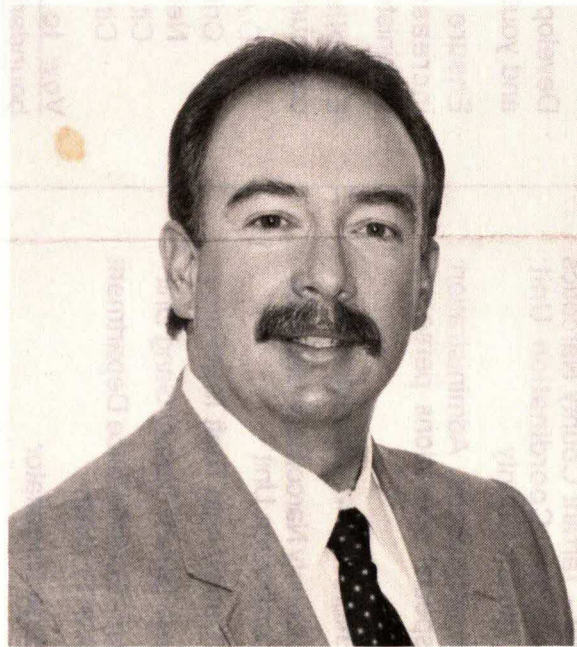
SHERIFF



TARRANT COUNTY'S

M O S T W A N T E D

W.F. "BILL" McLENDON



FOR

SHERIFF

Sunday, March 10, 1996

Democrats in sheriff's race criticize incumbent

By JACK DOUGLAS JR.
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

FORT WORTH — In the race to become the top cop of Tarrant County, the Democratic hopefuls have spent more time criticizing the performance of the Republican incumbent sheriff than they have each other.

After a recent forum sponsored by the League of Women Voters,



the Democratic contenders smiled and shook hands. And then they continued to complain about Sheriff David Williams, who faces Sue Maddock, a Sheriff's Department lieutenant assigned to the Tarrant

County Jail, in the GOP primary.

On the Democratic side, the candidates are Glen Allison, Jim Minter and W.F. "Bill" McLendon — all veteran police officers.

Minter, 51, spent 24 years with the Sheriff's Department and served as acting sheriff until Williams took office in January 1993. He was captain over training when he resigned in October 1994 to be-

come a lawyer.

Allison, a 10-year veteran of the Sheriff's Department, has always been assigned to the warrants division. He is attempting to unseat his boss — Williams.

McLendon, 41, a patrol lieutenant and watch commander who has been with the Euless Police Department for 20 years, boasts that he has never worked for the Sher-

iff's Department. He said that as an outsider, he can better identify and fix what he thinks is wrong with the department.

The Democratic candidates and Maddock all say that morale is low in the Sheriff's Department and that it is not managed as well as it could be.

Williams was out of town and
(More on SHERIFF on Page 26)

Sheriff

From Page 25

could not be reached for comment, but the allegations of the Democratic contenders were rejected by Tom Wilder, Tarrant County district clerk and a co-chairman for the sheriff's re-election campaign.

"This is just election-year rhetoric from political opponents which

has no basis in fact," Wilder said.

Minter disagreed. He said Williams has ignored his main responsibility of efficiently running the county jail and, instead, is only "playing chief policeman." The sheriff's administration has countered by saying the jail has, for the first time in years, been found in full compliance with the Texas Commission on Jail Standards.

Minter also said that drug-seizure money that Williams is using to maintain the department's "Vietnam-era" helicopters could be better spent on other jail and law enforcement functions. Williams' people say the copters have proven useful.

If elected, McLendon said he would seek grant money to develop a system that would allow patrol officers throughout the county to talk to one another on their radios.

It would enable police from Bedford, for instance, to contact a

neighboring police department quickly when a fleeing criminal crosses city borders, McLendon said. Currently, he said, police dispatchers must intervene in multi-city police chases, causing costly and potentially dangerous delays in alerting officers on the street.

Allison, 50, said he would work to create a career path for Sheriff's Department workers and initiate an equitable promotion system. The goal: to make deputies and other employees happier and more efficient in their work.

Allison said he would also streamline the warrants division and place greater emphasis on sponsoring youth programs. And, he said, he would install a new work schedule in which employees would work four 12-hour days and then be off for four days. That schedule would eliminate one of three work shifts and save the county money, Allison said.

Saturday, February 17, 1996

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Rebuilding virtues

I sense a common thread in the rhetoric of President Clinton and that of the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. A free democracy and government must be based upon a religious foundation. America's strength, growth, material well-being and social progress will not flourish without a renewed religious faith in those virtues — our God-granted unalienable rights — without which we could not be a free society.

Regardless of one's religious convictions, a great deal is required of all Americans who believe as the president believes and who want for America what he wants.

It is not too soon for these Americans to make it clear that, for them, November will mean more than just time for another election, and that the man they elect must believe in something deeper than mere political objectives and ambition. He must be willing to let history pass on the effectiveness of his administration.

I firmly believe that the loss of "family value" virtues is proof enough of what has happened to this country.

FLOYD F. CLARK
Fort Worth

TARRANT COUNTY'S MOST WANTED

W. F. "BILL"

McLENDON FOR SHERIFF

BRINGING VISION, ETHICS AND EXPERIENCE TO THE OFFICE OF SHERIFF

POL. ADV. PAID BY THE 'BILL McLENDON FOR SHERIFF' CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE, JAY HEILMAN, TREASURER, P. O. BOX 238, EULESS, TEXAS 76039, (817) 354-0410

Dear Fellow Democrat,

It appears as if the Republicans are trying to place two candidates in November's General Election, David Williams AND Jim Minter. The Republicans are trying to buy it both ways! I need your help and support in order to stop this before it's too late.

Jim Minter addressed the membership of the Tarrant County Democratic Women's Club at their candidate's forum on February 10, 1996, by stating, "I've got to be honest with you. The Republican's tried to recruit me but I just couldn't do it. I've been a Democrat and I've always been a Democrat".

The truth is that Jim Minter is not what he would have you believe him to be, as attested by the following FACTS:

- "In an interview yesterday, Minter said he has not ruled out the possibility of running against Williams in the 1996 Republican primary. 'I am moving in that direction, but I'm not ready to announce'. *Fort Worth Star-Telegram article "Ex-interim Sheriff quits after being reassigned", September 21, 1994*

- "Minter told reporters that he is thinking of opposing Williams in the 1996 Republican primary". *Fort Worth Star-Telegram article "Gossip aside, Tarrant County Sheriff says he'll run again", September 23, 1994*

- Jim Minter's public voter history information revealed the following:

- Voted in the 1988 Republican primary;
- Voted in the 1992 Republican primary; and
- Voted in the 1994 Republican primary.

- And as recently as this election year, in November, 1995, Jim Minter supported and endorsed the Republican Party and at least 4 Republican candidates for office!

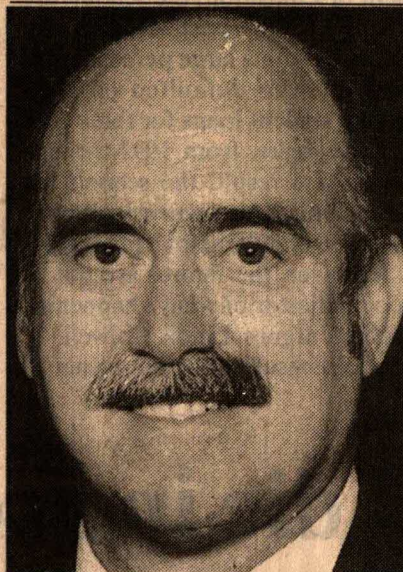
We must put a stop to the Republican campaign being run in our Democratic Party. Won't you please help me? Won't you please help the Democratic Party?

As I have said many times I am not a politician. I do not believe politics should play a major role in the Sheriff's Department. But I do believe in being proud of who you are and what you are. I am W.F. "Bill" McLendon, a career law enforcement officer, a political novice, and a DEMOCRAT running for Sheriff. I need your help!

Saturday, March 23, 1996 /

OBITUARIES

Charles T. Manchester



FORT WORTH — Charles Thomas Manchester, 52, a retired Army captain, died Thursday at a Fort Worth hospital.

Funeral: 10 a.m. Monday at All Saints Episcopal Church. **Burial:** Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery. **Visitation:** 2 to 4 p.m. Sunday at the funeral home.

Capt. Charles Thomas Manchester Jr., U.S. Army (retired), died Thursday. He was born May 19, 1943, in Memphis, Tenn. A hero of the Vietnam War, Capt. Manchester served with distinction and was awarded the Silver Star, Bronze Star, Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm Unit Citation and four Purple Hearts. He was also commander of the Fort Worth Chapter of the Military Order of World Wars.

A member of All Saints Episcopal Church, he was currently a captain in the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department.

He received his degree in art from the University of Texas at Arlington and was a creative and imaginative artist and sculptor. A warm, compassionate person, he was loved by all who knew him.

Memorials: The Youth Leadership Fund of the Fort Worth Chapter of the Military Order of World Wars.

Survivors: Wife, Sandra S. Manchester; father, Charles T. Manchester Sr.; children, Charles T. Manchester III; Michael Sean Matthews, Ellen Manchester Henry, Virginia Sandra Robertson, James T. Matthews II; and 11 grandchildren.

Thompson's Harveson & Cole
702 Eighth Ave., 336-0345

Inmate sues Tarrant sheriff over denied abortion access

BY VERONICA PUENTE
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

FORT WORTH — A pregnant prisoner is suing Tarrant County Sheriff David Williams, alleging that he violated her constitutional rights by refusing to allow her to leave the jail to have an abortion.

Tonya Caples, 24, contends that she requested an abortion on March 7, a month after she had notified county jail employees of her pregnancy. Soon afterward, she was advised that Tarrant County Sheriff's Department policy did not allow jail personnel to take inmates for abortions.

In a suit filed last week, Caples states that her rights to privacy and her "right to appropriate medical care while incarcerated" were violated. She said she is about 12 weeks pregnant.

Tarrant County Jail records

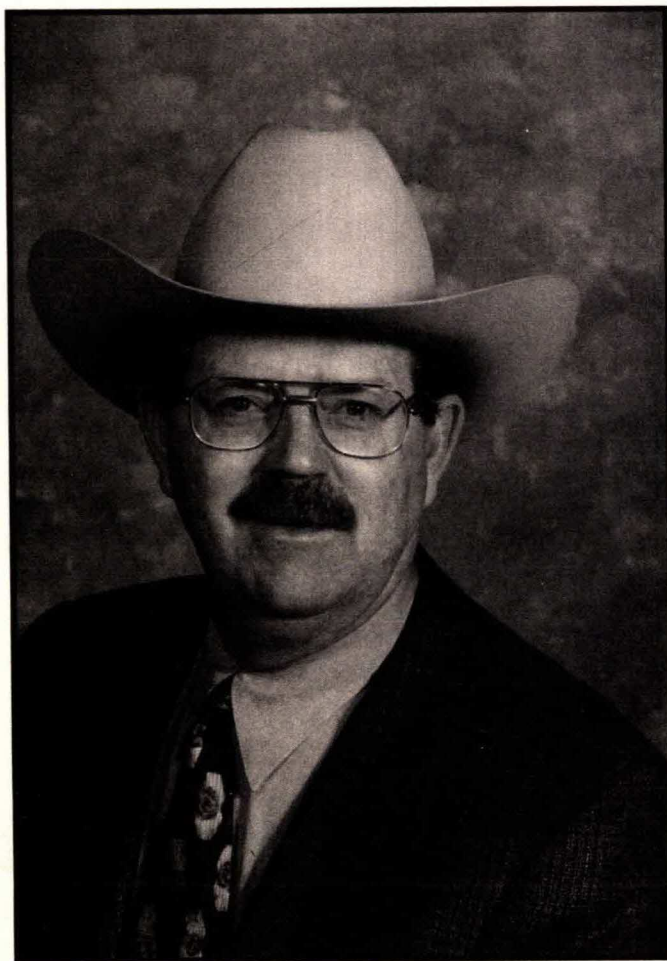
show that Caples was convicted of aggravated possession of a controlled substance and was sentenced to 10 years in prison.

Her attorney, B.C. Cornish, declined to discuss the case.

Assistant District Attorney Pat Dohoney, who represents the Sheriff's Department, said yesterday that the state filed a petition Monday in U.S. District Judge Terry Means' court to remove the suit from the state level, which temporarily halts all state proceedings.

He said the state wants to move the suit to federal court because it involves a claim of violation of constitutional rights.

"The sheriff's policy is that Tarrant County should not be responsible for the cost of facilitating an inmate's elected medical care," Dohoney said. He said that includes reconstructive and dental surgery.



JIM MINTER

FOR
TARRANT COUNTY SHERIFF

EDUCATION:

- ★ TCU - 1967
- ★ TWU - 1995 LAW DEGREE-LAW REVIEW

QUALIFICATIONS:

- ★ 1967 WORKED WITH SHERIFF LON EVANS
- ★ 1970-94 WORKED IN SHERIFF'S OFFICE
- ★ 1972-94 HOMICIDE DETECTIVE
- ★ 1990-93 JAIL ADMINISTRATOR
- ★ 1992-93 ACTING SHERIFF -
ELIMINATED THE FENCING OF PRISONERS
WITHIN THE FORT WORTH POLICE DEPT. -
MAINSTREAMED THESE PRISONERS INTO
THE TARRANT COUNTY JAIL.

Dear Tarrant County Voter,

I urgently need your vote in the Democratic Primary Run-Off Election for Sheriff on April 9th. With your help, we can restore honesty, pride and integrity to the Office of Tarrant County Sheriff.

Thank you for your vote to help me "Polish the Badge."

Jim Minter

Democrats square off in bid for sheriff

BY JACK DOUGLAS JR.
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

A Euless police lieutenant and a lawman-turned-lawyer will square off in Tuesday's Democratic primary runoff to determine who will challenge Tarrant County Sheriff David Williams in the general election.

Each man says he is better qualified and more apt to beat Williams, a Republican who easily outdistanced his opponent in the GOP primary.

Lt. W.F. "Bill" McLendon, a watch commander and 20-year veteran of the Euless Police Department, received 46 percent of the Democratic vote in last month's primary, matching him up with Jim Minter, a lawyer and a former acting Tarrant County sheriff, who received 35 percent of the vote.

McLendon, 41, has said he is confident he will hold his lead over Minter through the runoff. He said that as an outsider looking in, he is best qualified to determine what is wrong and what is right at the Sheriff's Department.

McLendon said that he has vast
(More on SHERIFF on Page 26)

Sheriff

From Page 21

experience in applying for government grants for law enforcement and that, if elected, he would seek such a grant to improve and expand a radio system that would allow for quick multiagency communications during police pursuits.

McLendon has six children ranging in age from 7 to 17. He is a native of Bedford and spent his first three years with the police force there before joining the Euless department.

According to county campaign records, Williams raised more than \$33,000 and spent more than \$14,000 leading up to the primary; McLendon raised more than \$7,600 and spent about \$8,000; and Minter raised only \$500 and spent just over \$700.

Minter said he has picked up the financial pace in preparing for the

runoff by shelling out between \$10,000 and \$12,000, and that he has mailed campaign literature to about 20,000 potential voters. He hopes the effort will send him over the top.

Minter, 51, spent 24 years with the Sheriff's Department and was acting sheriff for about a year until Williams took office in January 1993. Minter held the rank of captain when he resigned in October 1994 to finish law school and become an attorney.

Minter said his years with the Sheriff's Department and his experience as an administrator makes him the best choice. He said his first priorities as sheriff would be to make the department more fiscally responsible, change the way people are promoted and work on improving morale.

McLendon and Minter both say they are eager to take on Williams, a former Haltom City policeman who is completing his first term as sheriff.

WARNING!

**The Republicans have
a candidate in the **Democratic**
Sheriff's Run-off Election.**

Jim Minter voted in the '88, '92 and '94 Republican Primaries. He did not vote for Bill Clinton in the 1992 Primary. He did not vote for Ann Richards in the 1994 Primary — and don't forget that was the year Republicans took control of Congress and gave us their "Contract on America."

Jim Minter even declared his intentions to vote in this year's Republican Primary when he signed not one, but three Republican Judicial Candidate Petitions.

W.F. "Bill" McLendon
**is the only true Democratic candidate for
Tarrant County Sheriff:**

McLendon is a 22-year veteran of the Euless Police Department.

McLendon has the endorsement of the Tarrant County Deputy Sheriff's Association.

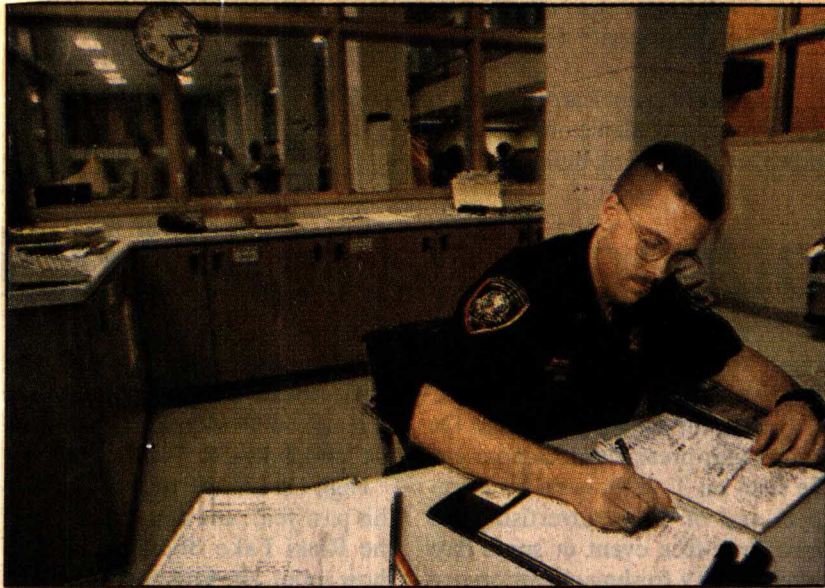
McLendon needs your vote in the April 9th Democratic Run-off election.

Vote April 9th

Democratic Primary Run-off

**W.F. 'Bill'
McLendon**

For Sheriff



Star-Telegram / KEVIN FUJII

Chris Norris, Tarrant County Sheriff's deputy detention officer, adds another inmate into his pod, raising his total to 68.

Tarrant jail population is up by 1,000 in the past 6 months

BY JACK DOUGLAS JR.
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

FORT WORTH — In just six months the Tarrant County Jail population has grown by about 1,000 prisoners, forcing a need to pump at least \$4.5 million in additional staffing into the jail, officials said yesterday.

Scott Shepherd, a jail commander with the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department, said the increase is mainly because of more arrests of parole violators and misdemeanor offenders named in warrants.

In December, the jail was far below capacity with an average population of 2,094 prisoners, Shepherd said. Yesterday, the jail was 91 percent full with 3,034 prisoners behind bars, he said.

To handle the increase, the Sheriff's Department will ask the Tarrant County Commissioners Court in the next two weeks for 75 more staff members, mostly jailers. To pay their salaries for the rest of this fiscal year, the county will have to free up an estimated \$454,000, Shepherd said.

In the 1997 fiscal year, beginning Oct. 1, an additional 141 staff members will be needed at the jail, he said. The county will likely have to pay "in excess of \$4 million" next fiscal year for new employee salaries, he said.

LETTERS

Ambulance-chasing

It is certainly encouraging to learn from a very informative *Star-Telegram* article that the State Bar of Texas is finally taking action against "ambulance-chasing" attorneys who violate state statutes by contacting individuals involved in traffic accidents without being asked.

After an accident late last year in which I was not at fault, I was bombarded with solicitations from attorneys, physical therapists and "knee-jerk" clinics from every direction. Telephone calls seemed endless, some coming as late as 9 in the evening.

The counsel to the State Bar claims that the practice is "pervasive" and that of the 60,000 to 65,000 attorneys in the state, only seven were cited or reprimanded last year for such activity. I received twice that many contacts within a two-week period.

When I contacted local law enforcement authorities, I was told that the information involved was considered "open records" and that nothing could be done. Now the State Bar has launched "a major new initiative" to combat this practice. All I can say is, "It's about time."

Floyd Clark
Fort Worth

Tarrant County may house Missouri inmates, officials say

BY JACK DOUGLAS JR.
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

FORT WORTH — Several months after a similar deal with New Mexico ended in failure, Tarrant County is now considering whether to play host to "medium security" prisoners from Missouri, officials said yesterday.

Precinct 2 Commissioner Marti VanRavenswaay said, however, she has reservations about accepting the prisoners because of a report that they are potential troublemakers who do not get along with other inmates in the Missouri prison system.

"I can't think of any reason why I would want to invite somebody else's problems into my community," VanRavenswaay said yesterday.

Officials with the Missouri state corrections department could not be reached yesterday for comment.

VanRavenswaay said she questioned whether there would be room and adequate

"I can't think of any reason why I would want to invite somebody else's problems into my community."

— Marti VanRavenswaay
Precinct 2 Commissioner

personnel to handle 250 state prisoners from Missouri when reports show the local inmate population to be rapidly increasing in the County Jail.

The Tarrant County Jail was 91 percent full last week, with 3,034 prisoners.

VanRavenswaay said that despite her initial concerns she will withhold final judgment until she learns more. In its regular session today, the Tarrant County Commissioners Court was to be briefed on the legal ramifications of a prisoner-transfer contract with Missouri.

(More on JAIL on Page 6)

Jail

From Page 1B

Tarrant County Sheriff's Commander James Skidmore said a jail deal with Missouri "appears to be favorable," but that negotiations are still in the early stages. If a contract with Missouri is approved, the county will be better prepared to screen out-of-state inmates than it was when state prisoners were

transferred here from New Mexico, Skidmore said.

A seemingly lucrative, multimillion-dollar jail deal with prison officials in that state ended in February when Tarrant County officials realized that they had received what was described as the "worst of the worst" killers and rapists.

In its original understanding with New Mexico, Tarrant County officials believed that they would receive only "medium security" prisoners, such as check forgers and petty burglars, but, instead, re-

ceived rowdy "high-risk" inmates, Skidmore said. The last of the 91 New Mexico prisoners were transferred out two months ago, he said.

Learning from the past, Tarrant County Administrator G.K. Maenius said certain guarantees will have to be made before the county agrees to hold out-of-state inmates again. Most importantly, local officials and Missouri prison officials will have to agree on the definition of a medium-security prisoner, Maenius said. It will also have to be determined ahead of time that the

prisoners are free of infectious diseases, he said.

Skidmore said that the proposed contract is for one year and that Missouri has tentatively agreed to pay Tarrant County \$38.50 per day per prisoner — \$6.50 more than what the county estimates it pays each day to house regular inmates.

If the deal goes through, 35 to 40 additional employees will have to be hired, most of them as jailers, the commander said. Their positions would probably be eliminated once the contract expires, he said.

Inmates who caused riot may be moved to Tarrant

BY JACK DOUGLAS JR.
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

FORT WORTH — Out-of-state prisoners targeted for possible transfer to Tarrant County include inmates who sparked a brief riot at another Texas jail this year, officials said yesterday.

The disturbance in February involved about 40 inmates — all felons from Missouri — at the Crystal City Detention Center in South Texas. No one was seriously injured but fire broke out in a control room, briefly interrupting the security system at the privately run jail, according to officials in Texas and Missouri.

... JAIL on Page 13

Jail

From Page 1

An official with the Crystal City Detention Center said he would expect the Missouri prisoners to cause problems if they are transferred to the Tarrant County Jail.

Tarrant authorities are thinking about doing just that.

Yesterday, Commissioners Court was briefed on a proposed contract that would transfer as many as 250 of the 460 Missouri prisoners to Tarrant County.

County Judge Tom Vandergriff said the matter must be explored further before any decision is made, on a jail deal with Missouri. "It certainly has not been rejected out of hand, but we need considerable more research done," Vandergriff said.

Pct. 2 Commissioner Marti VanRavenswaay said she is worried that the out-of-state prisoners might cause problems if booked into the Tarrant County lockup.

Pct. 1 Commissioner Dionne Bagsby said that she has not ruled out the possibility of a contract to house out-of-state inmates, but that it's never really been an industry that I've wanted to see develop in Tarrant County."

Bagsby and VanRavenswaay said the failure of a jail contract

with New Mexico prison officials that involved the transfer of 91 inmates to Tarrant County. That contract was severed in February when local authorities found many of the prisoners to be rowdy complainers and high security risks.

"Certainly, I'm sure we learned a great deal from that," Bagsby said.

If a contract with Missouri becomes reality, the agreement would be for one year and the county would make about \$6.50 daily profit for each prisoner, officials have said.

Scott Shephard, administrative commander of the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department, said each Missouri prisoner would be carefully screened and his criminal history would be carefully studied before the county would accept him.

Whether Tarrant County would get any of the prisoners directly involved in the Crystal City riot was not immediately known, officials said.

Two causes were cited for the hourlong conflict: The prisoners were homesick for Missouri, and their televisions were turned off early in the evenings.

Mike Klumpp, chaplain of the Crystal City Detention Center, said that the Missouri inmates have "settled down" but that they still complain about being 1,500 miles from their families and about having to make expensive long-distance phone calls — "things that

can't be remedied by moving them elsewhere in Texas."

For the past year, 460 Missouri inmates have been at the Crystal City facility.

Klumpp said the prisoners, convicted of crimes ranging from theft to sexual assault to murder, do not want to come to Fort Worth; they want to go back to Missouri.

"In Tarrant County, they would find ways to create problems that would give officials reasons to send them back home," he said.

Maj. Mike Spurlock of the Crystal City Detention Center said the Missouri prisoners are considered "medium risk."

One escaped last month.

"He went through the fence," Spurlock said. The prisoner, convicted of theft, was captured quickly, he said.

Tim Kniest, spokesman for the Missouri Department of Corrections, said the prisoners were transferred to Texas a year ago to relieve prison overcrowding in Missouri. They are considered either "medium" or "high" risks, Kniest said.

Because the contract with the Crystal City Detention Center is expiring this month, Missouri prison officials are considering whether to move any inmates to another Texas jail. "We have an obligation to evaluate any opportunities that might be available to us," Kniest said.

Arrest made in deputy's slaying

Mexico-Texas effort hailed in 10-year case

BY FRANK PERKINS
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

A Mexican national on the run for almost 10 years has been arrested in Mexico in the 1986 slaying of Tarrant County Sheriff's Deputy Frank Howell, who was shot four times, once with his own gun, Attorney General Dan Morales said yesterday.

Enrique Moreno Casas, 29, a former Fort Worth resident who had "Grim Reaper" tattooed on his right arm, was listed among Texas' most wanted fugitives.

Casas, who was featured in a segment on *America's Most Wanted* in 1989, was picked up by Mexican police in Nuevo Laredo at the request of the Tarrant County district attorney's office and Morales' International Prosecutions Unit.

Morales said his office and Tarrant County prosecutors had asked Mexico to arrest Casas and try him under a Mexican law that allows U.S. prosecutors to present evidence to Mexican officials when Mexican nationals are suspected of committing crimes in the United States and then fleeing to Mexico to escape prosecution.

The attorney general said that the team presented evidence to the Mexican attorney general's office, and that a Mexican judge then is-

(More on HOWELL on Page 17)

Howell

From Page 1

sued an arrest warrant for Casas.

FBI officials said Casas was arrested without incident at an abandoned hotel and was taken to a Mexican jail. He had fled to Mexico the day after Howell's death to live with relatives in Nuevo Laredo, the FBI said in a statement.

Howell was attempting to serve an arrest warrant on a Hispanic male who drove a brown Monte Carlo on Nov. 3, 1986, when he spotted Casas, then 19. Casas and a 16-year-old companion were in the parking lot of a Fort Worth American Legion post, changing the oil in

seven U.S. law enforcement agencies, including the FBI, the Texas Rangers and Tarrant County authorities.

The FBI said that investigators in both countries were aware of his whereabouts after he fled to Nuevo Laredo, and that the Mexican state of Tamaulipas issued an arrest warrant in 1988, based on information provided by Tarrant County authorities.

"But it was not until today that Casas was arrested by Mexican authorities," the FBI said.

Nevertheless, Howell's friends and relatives said they were relieved that Casas had been arrested.

"I feel that for my family, this arrest is closure of an event that has been hanging over our heads for 10

stick his head in the door and say, 'Good morning, sheriff.' It's a shame what happened to him."

Carpenter said Howell's death was instrumental in breaking loose the budget dollars necessary to outfit his deputies with bulletproof vests.

"He might've lived if he'd been wearing one of those vests," Carpenter said yesterday.

Tim Gilpin, now a North Richland Hills police officer, was a sheriff's deputy in 1986 and was serving warrants with Howell on the night of the shooting. As usual, they had split up that evening in order to serve more warrants, Gilpin said.

"I'm relieved that [Casas] is caught," Gilpin said yesterday. "I would like to see him pay for what he's done. Frank was a good man, a

a brown Monte Carlo.

According to the 16-year-old's statement to police, Howell asked to see their identification papers and Casas pulled a .32-caliber pistol and shot the officer in the chest. He fired three more shots into Howell and then took Howell's .357 Magnum service revolver and fired a final shot into Howell's head.

The deputy's body was found behind the American Legion post near his still-running unmarked car, a bloody handprint on a nearby sign. Casas' wallet and student ID cards from Trimble Tech High School and Morningside Middle School were found near Howell's body. Casas' car was found the next day a short distance away.

The arrest ended a decadelong investigation that involved at least

years," said Penny Howell, the officer's widow. "I hope that he is brought to trial quickly and that justice is served in this case as we understand justice being served, but it is a comfort just to have him in jail."

Former Tarrant County Sheriff Don Carpenter, who now lives in Wise County, also was pleased.

"I'm tickled to death that they've arrested Casas and I hope they give him the death penalty because he is a coldblooded killer who shot down one of the best men I ever knew and then took his own pistol from him and shot him with it," Carpenter said in a telephone interview.

Carpenter said Howell was "one of the finest guys who ever worked for me. Every day he was on duty he would come by my office and

good policeman."

The victim's brother, Pat Howell, now chief deputy for operations in the sheriff's department, was relieved.

"It has been a long dry spell," he said. "I am very appreciative when I reflect on the long, long hours the other officers have spent trying to find this man. I'd rather see him captured on this side of the border, but having him in jail anywhere is a step in the right direction."

Officials had circulated fliers across the state in their search for Casas, but Gilpin credits agencies in Tarrant County with continuing to pursue the case.

Capture closes a chapter in 1986 slaying of deputy



Casas

Tarrant's most hunted fugitive faces murder trial in Mexico

BY KATHY SANDERS
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

FORT WORTH — Within 24 hours after Tarrant County Deputy Frank Howell was executed on Fort Worth's south side, a 19-year-old street tough named Enrique "Ricky" Moreno Casas was headed out of town.

Because his billfold and identification were found near Howell's body, Casas, known then as a petty thief and small-time dope dealer,

was the prime suspect.

From that moment nearly 10 years ago, Casas became the most hunted fugitive in Tarrant County's history, gaining near legendary cult-hero status among local gangs who believed that Casas had gotten away with killing a cop, and adroitly fooling all who pursued him.

"There was more than a couple of times when I considered giving the whole case file to someone else for a fresh perspective. I mean we

exhausted every lead we ever got," said Bill Foster, a Tarrant County district attorney's investigator who has worked on the case for nine years.

"At the lowest points, I thought this was just going to be one that went off to never-never land and this guy was not going to be caught, at least not during my career."

Intelligence data, much of it from informants, indicated over the (More on CASAS on Page 14)

years that Casas was living the good life in Mexico, protected by powerful drug lords, and that he frequently returned to Fort Worth with bodyguards to visit sick relatives or conduct illicit business.

But when Mexican authorities arrested Casas, now 29, in Nuevo Laredo on June 7, a strikingly different picture began to emerge. Officials described Casas as pathetic, living in squalor in an abandoned apartment building and washing cars on the street for 50 cents a pop.

He will be tried in Mexico on the U.S. charges and can receive up to 50 years in prison, said Robert Foran, the Tarrant County prosecutor assigned to the case.

Local, state and federal investigators who have tracked the elusive Casas for years want to know one thing: Did Casas remain free for 10 years through cunning tactics and a network of protectors, or did he avoid capture through sheer, dumb luck?

"At one point, I thought he was dead," said John Ladd, a member of a multi-agency task force assembled by the Tarrant County district attorney's office in 1994. "I didn't understand how a 19-year-old, two-bit punk could stay on the run for so long and not get caught."

Task force members, culled primarily from the district attorney's office, the Fort Worth Police Department, the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department and the Texas Department of Public Safety, chased hundreds, if not thousands, of false leads.

Among the most notable goose chases the detectives recounted were:

- El Doctor, a *curandero*, told officials that he and Casas shared a passion for beer and young women, and he promised to lure the fugitive to a Laredo gas station so Laredo's SWAT unit could swoop down on him. Neither Casas or El Doctor showed up.

- In July 1994, a detective spotted a Casas look-alike at a Fort Worth carwash. But after pursuing the man and holding him at gunpoint, police learned that they had the wrong man, who eerily matched an age-enhanced likeness of Casas.

- Later that year, a tipster said Casas would travel across the international bridge in Del Rio to go to a supermarket and dope house. Four carloads of investigators rushed to the border town, where they watched a grocery store in vain all day.

- Word came that Casas was going to be crossing the Rio Grande at a particular spot one

night, so investigators hurried to the border and staked out a roadside park, despite signs warning of poisonous snakes.

Each time, investigators on the case rode the adrenaline rushes when they thought that they had finally cornered Casas. Then, they sunk to the devastating, yet familiar, lows when they realized that they hadn't.

"So what they'd do," said Capt. Greg Givens, a supervisor in the task force, "is pick themselves up, dust themselves off and pick up another lead."

Ultimately, it took only one phone call at the end of April to an international fugitive expert in Dallas with connections in Mexico, and the assistance of top-ranking Mexican officials, to end the pursuit and bring Casas to justice.

The killing of Frank Howell

HOWELL WAS A 38-year-old father of three, an experienced lawman who was serving criminal warrants for the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department on Nov. 3, 1986.

Although he normally worked with a partner, the two had split up earlier in the evening and Howell was searching for a man wanted on drug charges. He came upon Casas and Sammy Flores, 16, sitting in a brown Monte Carlo, officials said.

In a statement to Mexican officials after his arrest, Casas said the two were in the parking lot of the American Legion hall at 400 W. Felix St. to use drugs and sell some guns, said Tarrant County prosecutor Foran, who was assigned to the case in 1994.

When Howell approached the two, Casas was in the driver's seat, sitting on a stolen .38-caliber handgun. He was nervous because there were drugs in the car, investigator Foster said.

"When Frank approached them, they had just finished smoking some pot and sniffing some cocaine," he said. "Ricky was so nervous, Sammy said, that when Frank asked for his identification, he just gave him the whole billfold."

Howell asked the teens what they were doing in the parking lot and then ordered Casas to get out of the car, Flores later told investigators.

At that point, detectives surmise, Casas leveled his gun at the deputy and shot him. They aren't certain whether the first shot struck Howell in the back, the chest or in his hand, Foster said.

But Casas kept shooting, and Howell, though mortally wounded, "was able to get well away from Ricky," Foster said. Flores told investigators that he bailed out of the car and started to run away, but looked back and saw the final moments.

As Flores described it, Foster said, Casas walked over to the struggling Howell, straddled the deputy's body, took the service revolver from Howell's waistband, put it flush against the deputy's left ear and pulled the trigger.

"Sammy said [Casas] later told him that he felt like it was the humane thing to do, like you would do to an injured animal," Foster said.



Enrique "Ricky" Moreno Casas

Casas and the Chase

CASAS' IDENTITY WASN'T SECRET very long. His billfold and identification from Trimble Tech High School lay scattered on the ground where Howell dropped it.

The day after the shooting, a warrant was issued for Casas' arrest. Investigators threw out a dragnet and raked in Casas' family, friends, girlfriends and enemies. Then they came up with Flores.

From his family and associates, Foster said, police learned that Casas drove to some friends' house where, covered in blood, he told them that he had killed a police officer and needed money to get away.

Then he called his mother, told her what he had done, asked for money and then apparently ignored her advice to stay put, Foster said.

The friends, Foster said, got in Casas' car and drove toward the killing ground, but were frightened

off by the large number of police cars screaming to the scene.

At one point, the friends hid the two guns in some bushes, got rid of some dope and abandoned the car about two miles from the American Legion hall, Foster said.

Although police at the time believed that Casas was in town, Foster said, witnesses later said that "within 24 hours, they knew he was well on his way."

Information quickly began filtering in that put Casas in Mexico, possibly in the Nuevo Laredo area. After five months, the district attorney's office decided to seek an indictment against Casas even though no arrest had been made.

"We had a policy back then," said district attorney investigator Juan De Leon, "that you couldn't indict anyone unless they were in custody. [District Attorney Tim] Curry made an exception in this case."

A capital murder indictment was returned in May 1987 and though gains were made in the case — such as the recovery of both guns in February 1987 — there was not a coordinated effort to track down Casas.

"Everyone was pretty much doing their own thing," said Charlie Johnson, also an investigator with the district attorney's office.

Every police officer in the region — local, state and federal — wanted to nab Casas, not only because they believed that he had killed one of their own but because of the execution-style in which it happened.

And Howell's brother, Pat Howell, now a chief deputy at the Sheriff's Department, kept a constant vigil with detectives.

"Pat was a driving force in all of this," Johnson said. "Pat kept in touch with us weekly, if not daily."

For Foster, interest in catching Casas was more personal. He and his brother grew up with the Howell brothers in Fort Worth.

In 1988, prosecutors filed an extradition request with the Office of International Affairs of the U.S. Department of Justice to start proceedings against Casas.

Four years later, prosecutors learned that the request hadn't been submitted to the Mexican government because of "some difficulties due to the translations," Foran said.

"Apparently, the extradition request had not been fruitful and we decided in February 1994 that we would proceed with an Article 4 request," he said, referring to a provision in Mexico's law that allows fugitives to be prosecuted in that country for a foreign offense.

Mexico traditionally will not send fugitives back to face trial in other nations if they face the death penalty.

At the end of 1993, Foster began pushing for a revitalized task force that would reinvestigate the case.

"We reinvented the wheel and went back to everyone we'd talked

with before and talked to them again," said Johnson, who last week sat down with Foster, De Leon and Ladd, a Fort Worth police major-case detective, to talk about the search in the "war room" where maps and photographs still dot the walls.

The new task force included officers and agents from law enforcement agencies across the spectrum, including the FBI, DEA and Immigration and Naturalization Service.

"We had 30 people on the task force full time for 60 days," De Leon said.

"If anyone even said they knew Casas, we were on them," Ladd said. "We jumped on anything that was anything."

Occasionally, they thought that the tips were going to pay off. But none did.

"When you got your lowest, you resigned yourself that you'd never catch him," De Leon said.

At least a dozen trips were made to Laredo — an area which continually cropped up as Casas' hiding place — and tips also sent them to others parts of the U.S.-Mexico border to watch roadside parks, gas stations, grocery stores, carwashes and even a place called The Casas Bar.

"We spent all day in the bar just to see if he'd come in," Ladd said. "We figured we've tried everything else, maybe we'll get some good old-fashioned luck."

The arrest and the end

THEIR LUCK FINALLY came in the form of Gary F. Lachman.

A Dallas County sheriff's deputy for 22 years, Lachman specializes in finding fugitives who have fled the United States, and in the past two years he has forged a productive working relationship with law enforcement officers and officials in Mexico.

"They have the same problems. They have fugitives, too," said Lachman, 52. "If it goes to the normal channels, it won't fly. It's networking on a one-to-one basis."

Although Lachman was a mere 32 miles away, it wasn't until Foster talked with an Interpol official in Mexico that he learned of the Dallas investigator's existence.

"He told me, 'You got one of the best fugitive guys in the Southwest, if not the United States, up there,'" Foster recalled. "He said we needed to get in touch with Gary Lachman."

On April 25, Foster asked Lachman for help. Lachman agreed to take a case file with him on an already scheduled trip to Mexico City. Lachman told Foster that he would ask for some help from Mexican Attorney General Antonio Lozano Gracia.

On April 29, Lachman handed over the case file to Mexican officials, and by June 2, an elite unit of Mexico's Federal Judicial Police had located Casas in Nuevo Laredo, Foster said.

"He had changed so much, they kept him under surveillance to make sure it was him," Foster said. "He'd grown up . . . he didn't look anything like the age-enhancement photo we had."

The Mexican federal police said Casas always wore a shirt, so they couldn't see any of his tattoos — "Grim Reaper" on his upper right arm, "Virgin Mary" on his left arm. He had been seen several times, but always with a crowd, Foster said.

Also, the man Mexican police had pegged as Casas was a street person, not someone of whom legends are made. He had no visible source of income other than toting 5-gallon buckets of soapy water to wash cars with, Foster said.

Finally, the Mexican police swarmed Casas at the abandoned apartment where he slept and arrested him. Casas told them, Foster said, that he had been living on the streets and had been off drugs for some time.

An FBI agent stationed in Laredo made the positive identification of Casas, who at some point had tried to disguise some of his tattoos. He had a panther tattooed over the "Casas" tattoo on his stomach, and had a parrot tattooed over the "Ricky" tattoo on his leg, Foran said.

"The people in Mexico did what they were asked to do," said Lachman, who lauded the Mexican attorney general's office, particularly the regional attaché in San Antonio, Jose Luis Cervantes Martinez.

"Everyone is chaseable. If you can find the weak link, and there's always a weak link, you've got them," Lachman said.

When Foster got the first phone call June 7, signaling the end of a case that consumed "10 years of my career and my life . . . I had a big old lump in my throat to be honest with you."

The second phone call came from Pat Howell.

"I asked him if he'd heard that they had Casas and he said he'd heard," Foster said. "Then there was just a silence. What can you say?"

As other investigators learned of the arrest, they gravitated toward the war room and waited cautiously for word that Casas had been positively identified.

Casas began talking to Mexican investigators, telling them that he was present when Howell was shot, but that Flores was responsible for the slaying.

As he gave more details of the slaying, they knew that they had the right person.

"We'd had so many look-alikes and been up and down so many times. It was an emotional roller coaster," Johnson said.

"I woke up at 4 a.m. Saturday and realized that the chase was over."

OBITUARIES

Monday, June 17, 1996

Walter E. Caywood

FORT WORTH — Walter E. Caywood Sr., 49, a law enforcement jailer, died Sunday in Fort Worth.

Funeral: 11 a.m. Wednesday at Greenwood Funeral Home. Entombment: Greenwood Mausoleum.



Mr. Caywood was born Dec. 23, 1946, in Columbia, S.C.

He worked for the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department for 16 years. He served in the Army during the Vietnam era. He was a member of Elks Club and Masonic Lodge.

Survivors: Three sons, Pat Caywood of Euless, and Benjamin Caywood and Walter E. Caywood Jr., both of Haltom City; two daughters, Elizabeth Buck of Paradise, Betty Jay Vigiano of South Carolina; three brothers, Wesley Caywood of Fort Worth, George Caywood of South Carolina and M.L. McCormack of South Carolina; three sisters, Helen Pippin of Fort Worth, Betty Ray Frick of Illinois and Sara Sharpe of South Carolina; six grandchildren; several nieces and nephews; and several great-nieces and great-nephews.

Greenwood Funeral Home
3100 White Settlement Road, 336-0584

Constable, sheriff feud over citations

BY JACK DOUGLAS JR.
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

FORT WORTH — Pct. 5 Constable Jim Palmer says he is tired of "chasing" Sheriff David Williams around town to serve legal papers to the sheriff.

Williams said he is not running from anyone.

If there were a chase, it would amount to little more than an elevator ride and a walk down the hall.

Both men have their main offices in the old Criminal Courts Building at 300 W. Belknap St. in downtown Fort Worth, with Williams on the first floor and Palmer on the third.

Palmer said yesterday that Williams and his staff are "less than cooperative" whenever a deputy constable attempts to hand-deliver routine court citations to the sheriff. According to Palmer, that slows down the state-required process of personally notifying someone when they have been named as a defendant in a lawsuit.

In Texas, sheriffs and other top law enforcement officers are frequently sued, often by prisoners who feel they have been mistreated or by errant motorists who have a beef with a traffic cop. Constables and deputy constables are often required to deliver notification of those lawsuits.

Palmer said his deputies have repeatedly been turned away when they have gone to the third floor to deliver a court citation to Williams. Usually, they are told that the sheriff is not in, forcing them to go look for him, according to the constable.

Sometimes it takes two or three weeks to serve Williams with court papers, Palmer said.

"We have better things to do than chase the sheriff around," said Palmer, adding, "We're used to people hiding from us. I just don't think it should be the sheriff of the county."

Williams said he is not attempting to duck anyone. But he is usually busy with administrative matters, he said, and he often leaves orders that he is not to be disturbed.

The sheriff said he does not have time to personally accept every court summons delivered to him. "It would be really wonderful if I could just open up the doors and let people walk in, but we would never get any work done," Williams said.

He said he has offered to designate another sheriff's department official to accept the court papers. The county's seven other constables have agreed to do so, but Palmer has declined the offer, the sheriff said.

Palmer said he is bound by law to deliver court citations directly to the people named as defendants.

Williams disagrees.

Marvin Collins, chief of the civil division of the Tarrant County District Attorney's Office, said citations and legal summons are usually delivered directly to the people named in the papers, but he added that there are special exceptions.

But, Collins said, "No one who is being sued or who thinks he's being sued has a duty to make it easy" for the process server.

The breaking point for Palmer and Williams apparently came last week when a prisoner charged with assault and theft filed a lawsuit, alleging that he was subjected to "cruel and unusual punishment" in jail because he had been bitten on the hand by a spider.

Gun-law fears are unfounded, Tarrant County sheriff says

By JOHN GONZALEZ
Star-Telegram Austin Bureau

AUSTIN — Those who predicted that mayhem would be the result of Texans carrying concealed handguns have been proven wrong, Tarrant County Sheriff David Williams told lawmakers yesterday.

Law enforcement agencies have seen few

problems associated with concealed handgun permits during the more than six months they have been available, Williams and other officers told members of the House Public Safety Committee.

"As we had seen in other states and had predicted would occur in Texas, all the fears of the naysayers have not come to fruition."

Williams said.

Texas Department of Public Safety officials testified that out of 23 reported incidents in which permit holders fired shots, 15 licensees were arrested and charged with 19 offenses, ranging from murder to technical violations.

Since permits became valid Jan. 1, there

have been at least two homicides, two suicides and three woundings involving permit holders. At least 67 shots have been fired, said DPS Lt. Col. Dudley Thomas. But a target shooter in a Garland park harmlessly squeezed off 40 of them.

A Dallas homicide after a traffic mishap
(More on GUNS on Page 11)

Guns

From Page 1

was ruled justifiable by a grand jury, and a fatal shooting in Houston remains under investigation, officials said.

Of the three woundings recorded, two occurred in homes and a third in a business. Although permit holders were involved, home and business owners are not required to have a concealed-carry permit to possess a gun at their home or business.

As a result of the 40 shots fired Feb. 11 in a Garland park, a 57-year-old target shooter's two pistols were confiscated and his permit will be revoked for shooting inside a city, Thomas said.

In Chambers County, nine shots were fired at tin cans in a municipality, resulting in another special police report to DPS as required by the gun law.

Williams said, "A lot of the critics argued that the law-abiding citizens couldn't be trusted, nor were they responsible enough to avoid shooting a stranger over a minor traffic dispute. But the facts do speak for themselves. None of

these horror stories have materialized."

Officials said that with more than 82,000 permits in circulation, gunplay has been minimal. However, the law's positive effect on public safety is impossible to measure.

Thomas said the DPS issued 338 licenses a day last month. He added that snafus in the application process have been reduced, but that some requests still get hung up on legal questions. Nearly 500 applications have been denied for two common reasons: criminal convictions and deferred adjudications in the applicants' past, or delinquent taxes, Thomas said.

Reps. Bill Carter, R-Fort Worth, and Ray Allen, R-Grand Prairie, who serve on a subcommittee overseeing the new law, said they are well aware of complaints about the application process, especially during start-up.

They plan to submit several technical changes to the law in 1997 and may seek to clarify the list of places where guns may and may not be carried.

"There will be some modifications," Carter said. "We need to settle the constitutional issue that it's the place of the Legislature, and the Legislature alone, to decide where guns can be carried."

Sheriff requests a drug division

Commissioner balks at additional funds

BY BOB MAHLBURG
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

Tarrant County Sheriff David Williams, who has added drug-sniffing dogs, surplus helicopters and a SWAT team to the sheriff's office in the past three years, is pushing to establish a formal 14-officer "Special Operations Command" to investigate drug dealers and repeat criminal offenders.

The sheriff's request to transfer 14 staffers to the special division and to buy new furniture and equipment for them drew fire yesterday from County Commissioner Bob Hampton of Hurst.

The proposal for the special operations command comes on the heels of the Republican sheriff's plan to boost his budget by 20 percent. On Monday Williams scaled back that proposal, dropping a request for 110 new jobs, after even his strongest supporters, such as Commissioner J.D. Johnson, said taxpayers can't afford it.

Williams' current \$41 million budget accounts for nearly one-quarter of county spending.

Maj. Scott Ramsey, the sheriff's director of financial services, said the proposed special operations division would target illegal drug activity and violent criminals who have committed at least three offenses.

The commissioners accepted Hampton's proposal to consider the request as part of their budget deliberations.

Ramsey said the unit has operated informally for 18 months.

The unit would incorporate 14 officers from five Sheriff's Department divisions, he said. The plan originally called for two new positions, but that was dropped after commissioners objected, he said.

Hampton questioned whether the sheriff's drug investigators would work only in unincorporated areas of the county, or in cities, where Hampton said they would duplicate the work of police.

"The sheriff sees the need to see some of that [drug] activity investigated that's not necessarily in unincorporated areas," Ramsey said. In a later interview, Ramsey said that the plan had not been discussed with Fort Worth Police Chief Thomas Windham and that he did not know if Windham supports it.

Hampton said, "We're being asked to create a task force that we're going to devote a lot of money to and I don't see the need. Five years ago, under a different sheriff, we decided that a separate drug task force was unwarranted."

Ramsey said that he could not estimate how much money would be needed for the division, but that it would need money for furniture and equipment.

"Since taking the agency's reins in 1992, the sheriff has acquired souped-up Camaros and submachine guns for a tactical weapons team, bolstering his deputies' duties as law officers over their traditional role as jailers. Along the way, the sheriff has come under fire from Hampton and other critics, who say he is too enamored of law-enforcement hardware.

Williams has consistently said that he ran for sheriff on a platform of aggressive law enforcement and that that's what voters want.

Drug-Fighting Dreams

TARRANT COUNTY Sheriff David Williams apparently fancies himself as the scourge of drug traffickers in the county, if only he can get a reluctant Commissioners Court to finance his newest proposed commando squad.

Williams, whose penchant for military-style firepower has become legend, wants to create a 14-person Special Operations Command to take on narcotics dealers and repeat drug offenders.

The proposed narc squad would supplement the drug-sniffing dogs, the SWAT team, helicopters and supercharged squad cars added by the sheriff to the department's crime-fighting arsenal since he took office three years ago.

Maybe Williams finds his primary duties (running the jail properly and efficiently serving writs) to be less exciting than donning commando garb and deploying high-tech gear to chase criminals.

Too bad. Better that he be bored while doing his job than burden Tarrant taxpayers with paying the tab to support his costly "Rambo" fantasies. At ease, sheriff.

Opponent accuses Tarrant sheriff of cronyism, bad management

BY KRISTIN N. SULLIVAN
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

EULESS — The race for Tarrant County sheriff heated up a notch yesterday when Democratic candidate W.F. "Bill" McLendon sharply criticized the performance of the Republican incumbent, saying he has unnecessarily increased administrative staff and inflated his role as an urban county sheriff.

At a news conference for the "grand opening" of his campaign, McLendon accused Sheriff David

Williams and his administration of cronyism and said the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department has been poorly managed.

"Everybody just has a sense that there is something wrong in the Sheriff's Department," McLendon said. "If the Sheriff's Department was in the private sector and if the sheriff was a CEO of a corporation, the board of directors would have fired David Williams years ago."

Williams was not available to respond, said James Skidmore, a spokesman for the sheriff's re-

Democratic challenger W.F. McLendon says GOP Sheriff David Williams has overstaffed administration and inflated his role in an urban county.

election campaign and a commander in the Sheriff's Department.

"It's obviously political rhetoric," Skidmore said.

Gesturing with a white binder of newspaper clippings, McLendon said it contained "a chronicle of the faux pas and fiascoes" of Williams'

administration.

Former Sheriff Don Carpenter, a Republican, attended the event in a Euless office park to say he is backing McLendon, a Euless police lieutenant, in the Nov. 5 election.

"I've had too many phone calls from employees saying they can't get in touch with Williams, saying

he's never around," Carpenter said. "I'm unhappy that he hasn't had an open-door policy."

"We won't have any doors," McLendon said.

McLendon, 42, of Euless, has been on the city's police force for 23 years. He is a former commander of a Northeast Tarrant County narcotics task force.

He pledged to appoint a nonpartisan committee to study the "real role a Sheriff's Department should play in an urban county." Asserting

that Williams has presided over the highest turnover rate ever among sheriff's deputies, he pledged to start an educational training and professional development program for employees.

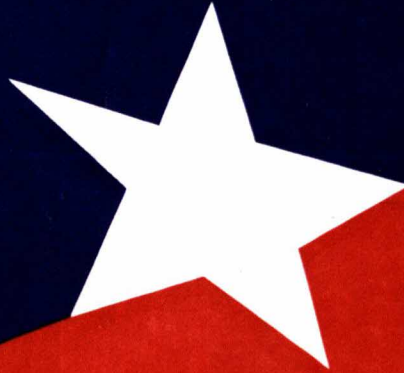
McLendon said he would streamline the department by cutting the "fat" from the command staff.

"There are too many chiefs and not enough Indians," he said.

Staff writer Jack Douglas Jr. also contributed to this report.

TEXAS DEMOCRATS

**WELCOME PRESIDENT
CLINTON**



**FRIDAY
SEPTEMBER 27, 12:00 NOON
SUNDANCE SQUARE**

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Felons freed in parole confusion

BY JACK DOUGLAS JR.
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

FORT WORTH — A convicted killer is among several criminals released from the Tarrant County Jail during the past two months because of a bureaucratic squabble between state and local officials over how to keep parole violators behind bars.

County officials aren't sure how many felons are on the streets because of the confusion.

A killer is among several Tarrant criminals released in a bureaucratic squabble

"I don't have an exact count. I would have to guess at this point . . . probably 10 to 12," said Cmdr. James Skidmore, a top supervisor at the county jail.

At issue is a change in state parole rules. In the past, the state

served an arrest warrant when it learned that a suspected parole violator had committed another crime and was in police custody. The suspect would be held simultaneously on the local and state charges.

But in a controversial policy change, the parole division began asking local jails July 1 to hold those prisoners on "detainers" rather than on traditional warrants. (More on PROBATION on Page 7)

They also want 10 days' notice before the prisoner is released so they can execute an arrest warrant or opt to drop it.

The problem is that many jailers, including those in Tarrant County and at the Travis County Jail in Austin, are balking at the procedure, saying they don't think it's legal to hold prisoners only on the detainer.

In Dallas and in Houston, county jail administrators say they also question whether the changes are legal. But they said they are reluctantly doing what the parole division has asked — for now — until the constitutional merits of the rules are tested in court.

"We have not gotten into a situation where we've had to release somebody, but we've gone down to the wire pretty routinely . . . and we're on the verge of releasing people," said Capt. Don McWilliams with the Harris County Jail, the largest county lockup in the state.

Melinda Bozarth, director of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice Parole Division, said the changes were made in an attempt to streamline the state's handling of parole violators and to weed out cases in which local and state authorities duplicate the processing of new prisoners.

"What we're doing is consistent with what the feds do, and what other states do," Bozarth said, adding, "It's simpler and it's ultimately quicker."

State and local law enforcement officials said they are concerned

that other prisoners, including killers and child molesters who have violated the terms of their parole, could be released if the debate is not settled soon.

Bozarth said that the policy fits the legal parameters of a recent U.S. Supreme Court ruling, and that the Texas Attorney General's office examined the procedures before they went into effect.

But Attorney General Dan Morales said he was not aware of the changes until the *Star-Telegram* asked him about them last week.

Morales questioned whether the changes should have been made without the participation of the Legislature.

"Clearly, I think the prospects for parole violators being able to

"For us to incarcerate an individual in the jail for . . . 10 days while we're waiting for an actual arrest warrant . . . would be false imprisonment."

— James Skidmore
supervisor at the Tarrant County Jail

essentially fall through the cracks in a system such as this is very troublesome," Morales said.

"I think the Legislature would come to the same conclusion. My sense is that the Legislature would consider it a real priority," he said.

Skidmore, with the Tarrant County Jail, said it is not feasible to warn the parole division 10 days before a prisoner is to be released.

"For us to incarcerate an individual in the jail for . . . 10 days while we're waiting for an actual arrest warrant . . . would be false imprisonment," he said.

He said the county was forced to release seven prisoners in early July, including a man who beat and strangled his wife, because parole officials wouldn't execute arrest warrants. The convicted killer remained at large at week's end.

Skidmore said he did not know the specifics of each of the freed prisoners' convictions.

But among them was Sammie Lee Johnson, 56.

Johnson's crimes on July 6 were small. He was standing under the dim street lights in the 5600 block of East Lancaster Avenue in Fort Worth when he took a swig of beer.

A policeman watched, inquired, and found what was described as a crack cocaine pipe in Johnson's back pocket.

The officer wrote two tickets, one citing Johnson for drinking in a public place and the other for possession of drug paraphernalia.

A routine police check revealed that Johnson was a wanted fugitive.

On Oct. 24, 1982, Johnson and his wife, Bobbie Jean, began to fight at their home in Littlefield, in West Texas. She slapped him. He beat and strangled her.

He was convicted of murder, and entered the state prison system on April 6, 1983 to begin a 15-year sentence. He was paroled on Jan. 16, 1987.

On April 16, 1992, Johnson was back in trouble, this time in Midland, where he was charged with and ultimately convicted of delivery of cocaine. His parole on the murder conviction was revoked and he was returned to prison on July 13, 1993, to complete his sentence and begin serving a five-year

term for drug trafficking.

He was paroled again on Oct. 31, 1995, and ordered to stay at Esmor Correctional Services, a halfway house at 600 N. Henderson St., near downtown Fort Worth.

On Jan. 7, he walked away and did not return.

According to a police report, Johnson was booked into the county jail in July for repeatedly violating the terms of his parole. But when Tarrant County did not receive an arrest warrant from the state parole division, Johnson was released on July 18, 12 days after he was picked up.

"Booked in error" is the way county records describe Johnson's latest stay behind bars.

Bozarth, the state's parole division director, said a breakdown in communications contributed to Johnson's release. She said a detainer was issued for the parole violator only after Tarrant County officials said he was in jail on charges of possession of a controlled substance, a felony.

She said Tarrant County authorities never indicated that the drug charge against Johnson was a Class C misdemeanor, which is as easy to dispose of as a traffic ticket, and "they did not call my staff before they released him."

Skidmore gave a different account of what happened. He said his staff met with local parole officers on July 16, two days before Johnson's release, to warn them that Johnson and six other parole violators would be freed if the state parole division did not immediately execute valid arrest warrants.

So where is Johnson now?

"Who knows," said Bozarth. "Hopefully, somebody else will find him and arrest him again."

OBITUARIES

Star-Telegram / Friday, August 30, 1996

Tarrant jail inmate, 29, dies after apparent heart attack

By MICHAEL S. LEE
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

FORT WORTH — An inmate died yesterday of an apparent heart attack after being restrained for about four hours at the Tarrant County Jail, authorities said.

Kenneth Aaron Peterson, 29, of Fort Worth, was brought to the jail about 10:30 a.m. by Forest Hill police after being arrested on an outstanding warrant for possession of marijuana, Cmdr. James Skidmore, Sheriff's Department spokesman, said last night.

Peterson stopped breathing about 2:45 p.m. and died in the emergency room at John Peter Smith Hospital at 3:52 p.m. The

preliminary cause of death is a heart attack brought on by possible drug use, Skidmore said.

Before his heart stopped, Peterson had spent about four hours strapped to a backboard and padded with towels because he was behaving violently, Skidmore said. He was already in restraints when he was brought in by Forest Hill officers, and deputies struggled to get him into the jail's set of restraints.

Because he was unable to answer questions in the booking area, Peterson was placed in a nearby holding cell on the second floor of the main jail at 100 N. Lamar St., Skidmore said, and deputies and medical staff checked him every 15 minutes.



Bud Kennedy

COMMENTARY

Who's minding the fiscal store at courthouse?

What is going on at the county courthouse?

What is going on with our money?

What is going on when our hospital manager quits, and we find out trustees were paying him \$194,400 a year — more than a member of Congress and almost as much as President Clinton?

What is going on when our sheriff wants to spend 62 percent more than the last sheriff spent four years ago — when crime was much worse?

And what is going on when our sheriff won't keep parole violators in jail?

What is going on when our county judge and commissioners stall proposals to improve the white-elephant convention hall?

What is going on, anyway, with Sheriff David Williams, the hospital board and the county commissioners?

And one very big question:

These big spenders are *Republicans?!?*

Maybe you spent the last three weeks watching TV and fuming about taxes or Hillary. Maybe you should be watching your county courthouse.

To start with, there was the news this week that hospital manager Tim Philpot is leaving — finally.

For almost a year, he fought off the end of his regime. First, he persuaded trustees to defy state Medicaid changes. Then he resisted partnering with a larger hospital — cutting waste and saving tax money.

You'd fight losing your job, too, if you made \$744 a day.

Hardy Murphy, the hospital board chairman working to corral a runaway bureaucracy, was honest but charitable: "Like any executive," he said yesterday, "Tim felt the ground shifting and did what he could to stay in place.

"But we have parted ways."

That is, after we pay off Philpot's contract — costing an estimated \$350,000 more.

That's a good argument for renting out the county hospital.

That's only the latest expensive news from the courthouse, where Williams wanted \$55 million to do the job ex-Sheriff Don Carpenter did with \$32 million. But Carpenter didn't have sports cars, helicopters or drug dogs. He did only the basic job: He ran the jail.

And Carpenter turned prisoners away only when the jail was full. Today, Williams frees felony parole violators — including one convicted murderer — because his deputies don't like state arrest paperwork.

And the old convention hall is a money hole. That'd change if the Arlington-dominated Commissioners Court would tell Fort Worth to rent it and run it.

That's the same Commissioners Court that sets its own salary: \$1,623 a week.

For that kind of pay, they should now what's going on.

Officials near deal on parole violators

State, county spat had led to releases

BY JACK DOUGLAS JR.
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

FORT WORTH — Tarrant County Jail officials said yesterday that they are close to resolving their spat with the state on how to handle the incarceration of parole violators.

About a dozen criminals, including a convicted killer, have been released from the jail since the disagreement began in early July.

It was at that time that state parole officers began asking county jail officials across the state to hold parole violators on "detainers," rather than on the customary arrest warrants, also known as "blue warrants."

Melinda Bozarth, director of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice Parole Division, said the change was needed to streamline the processing of criminals who had violated the terms of their parole.

However, in Tarrant County and in other areas of the state, jailers said they did not believe that the so-called detainers gave them the authority to hold a prisoner. In Tarrant County, prisoners were released when the state declined to produce the actual arrest warrant.

Savala Swanson, chief deputy over the Tarrant County Jail, said the matter was settled last week when parole officials, in their request to hold a prisoner, began issuing a copy of the arrest warrant along with the detainer.

(More on PAROLE on Page 8)

Parole

From Page 1

The state parole division had initially asked Tarrant County officials to give them 10 days notice before they release a prisoner. That time was needed, state officials said, so they could decide whether to actually execute a warrant or opt

to withdraw it.

Now, the state is only asking for 72 hours advance notice, Bozarth said.

Swanson said he is optimistic that the matter is being resolved.

Bozarth agreed. "I think we're on the road to settling our difficulties," she said. "We've made progress. We are not quite where we want to be, but we're closer than we were before," Bozarth said.

Eules offers winning bid for decrepit inn



Star-Telegram / OLAF GROWALD

Tarrant County sheriff's Sgt. H.W. Spaugh opens bidding for the former Western Hills Inn in Eules yesterday at the county courthouse in downtown Fort Worth. Eules, the only bidder for the decrepit but once fashionable resort, purchased the property.

Detergent-laced cake sickens Tarrant inmates

BY YVETTE CRAIG
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

FORT WORTH — The dessert listed on the Friday evening dinner menu at the Tarrant County Jail was lemon cake. What prisoners got was lemon surprise.

About 100 inmates suffered from nausea, stomach cramps and vomiting after feasting on the pastry, which was somehow contaminated with a lemon-scented detergent, said Lt. John M. Dalton, a Tarrant County Sheriff's Department spokesman.

"We are not sure how the detergent got into the cake," Dalton said. "That's being investigated

(More on JAIL on Page 2)

Jail

From Page 1

now."

No one in the 3,200-inmate population is responsible for preparing the cake; however, some were involved in serving it. The county jail's food service is contracted by Mid-State Services, a private Fort Worth food company, Dalton said.

No one from Mid-State could be reached to comment yesterday.

The evening meal was served about 4:30 p.m. Some of the inmates had complained of smelling a detergent odor in the cake. Then about an hour later, the bellyaches began.

"My daughter said she took a

bite of the cake and then spit it right out," said Phyllis Haines about her 23-year-old daughter, who has been in the jail since August. "She told me it smelled like insecticide."

The Fort Worth woman said her daughter told her that the incident caused confusion. "She told me that they shut down the phones, turned off all of the televisions and shut down the visiting," Haines said. "They were running around with walkie-talkies and plastic trash bags."

The on-site medical personnel were kept busy for hours attending to the sick prisoners. The county described the cleaning solution as a mild detergent. None of the sicknesses was life-threatening.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 10, 1996

Law officers to compete in rodeo

The Stockyards event will benefit the Autistic Treatment Center.

BY VERONICA PUENTE
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

FORT WORTH — This weekend, Tarrant County Deputy Sheriff Michael Reusch will be fending off more than just lawbreakers.

Together with two fellow law officers, he will take on several three-man teams, not to mention a wild bucking horse, in a match sure to produce mounting suspense.

"I always wanted to do this," said Reusch, 30, who is nurturing a broken left leg from a July rodeo ride.

Reusch is one of about 80 law officers from across the state expected to compete in Saturday's Showdown in Cowtown rodeo at the Cowtown Coliseum in the Stockyards. The main event will begin at 8 p.m., and the two-man calf tie, junior barrel and goat-tying

events will be from 2 to 4 p.m.

Admission to the early competition is \$4 for adults and \$2 for children, 12 to 6. Tickets for the main event range from \$5 to \$18 and can be purchased at the Coliseum.

All proceeds will benefit the Dallas-based Autistic Treatment Center, a nonprofit organization that provides education and treatment for Metroplex children and adults who are autistic and/or developmentally disabled.

Jimmy Ferguson, president of the Fort Worth Police Officers Rodeo Association, said the rodeo is part of the 10-rodeo circuit sponsored by the Texas Law Enforcement Rodeo Association. The Fort Worth group, which has held similar rodeos to raise money for local mounted police, is handling the event.

"It's just a hobby for all the officers involved," said Ferguson, a Fort Worth police officer who with his own team will compete against Reusch in the wild horse event.

Ferguson said police officers, jail

guards, Texas Rangers and other law officers will compete in events such as calf roping, team roping, ribbon roping, barrel racing and chute dogging, in which a steer races out of a chute and a contestant has 20 seconds to knock him to the ground.

Reusch, an 11-year Sheriff's Department veteran who became involved with rodeos about four years ago, said the police rodeo stirs up childhood memories of visits to the Stock Show.

"It was pretty fun while you were a kid," said Reusch, 30, adding that he always pictured himself more as a contestant than as a spectator.

Reusch said he's looking forward to attending basically because "it's fun and you meet different people and different officers." His two teammates will be Bruce Morgan, a sergeant with the Burnet County Sheriff's Department, and Brent Nichols, a narcotics officer with the Marble Falls Police Department.

For more information about the event, call 871-8853.

Sheriff candidates tout achievements

BY JACK DOUGLAS JR.
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

FORT WORTH — In their first and possibly only televised debate, Tarrant County Sheriff David Williams accused his opponent, Lt. Bill McLendon, of resorting to "gutter politics," while McLendon accused the sheriff of running a crazy department.

So when the cameras stopped rolling and the show was over last night, the stage appeared set for the two men to make faces at each other and leave.

Instead, they engaged in friendly conversation.

"Did you have much damage from the storm?" Williams casually asked McLendon, as both men struggled to remove the microphone clips from their ties.

"Oh, man," responded McLendon, as he began to tell about the destruction from Monday's high winds and heavy rains.

Idle chitchat aside, Williams, a Republican, and McLendon, a Democrat, tried to outmatch each other on their policing accomplishments during the debate, which was sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Tarrant County and moderated by Laynee Jones.

Williams, a former Haltom City police detective, is finishing his first four-year term as sheriff. McLendon is a lieutenant with more than 20 years of service with the Euless Police Department.

During the 30-minute debate, Williams repeatedly noted that since taking office his department



McLendon



Williams

had quadrupled the number of people picked up each year on fugitive arrest warrants. He also pointed to his efforts to expand the sheriff's

"We're going to cut the fat. The sheriff's administration is too top-heavy. I promise to restore sanity to the sheriff's department."

— Lt. Bill McLendon
Democratic candidate for sheriff

department's crime-fighting programs.

"I will not be content in just running the jails," Williams said.

The sheriff accused McLendon of "wild exaggeration" for declaring that the department was way over budget.

McLendon did not retreat. "We're going to cut the fat. The sheriff's administration is too top-heavy," the lieutenant said. "I promise to restore sanity to the sheriff's department."

Said Williams: "I will not engage in negative, gutter politics."

Bailiff's ethnic slur won't result in complaint

BY BARBARA POWELL
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

FORT WORTH — A visiting judge has told the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department she will not file a complaint against a bailiff who referred to plaintiffs with a remark considered to be an ethnic slur during a personal injury lawsuit, sheriff's officials said yesterday.

Judge Maryellen Hicks declared a mistrial Monday.

Hicks, who was trying the case in Tarrant County's 348th District Court, was unavailable for comment yesterday.

Those in the courtroom Monday have confirmed that the mistrial resulted from allegations that a bailiff three times referred to plaintiffs

Mahin Shafi and her family, who are Iranian nationals, with a term considered offensive to people of Middle Eastern origin.

The plaintiffs have said they overheard the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department bailiff make the remarks to a court reporter while the attorneys for both sides were in the judge's chambers.

"That was definitely the reason for the mistrial," Jay English, attorney for the plaintiffs, said yesterday.

Cmdr. James Skidmore of the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department said Hicks told the internal affairs division that she does not intend to file a complaint against the bailiff. The Sheriff's Department has declined to name or investigate

the bailiff because no formal complaint has been filed.

"What you've got is whether it's intentional or not," Skidmore said. "She said she is satisfied that the bailiff didn't intentionally utter a racial slur. She said the bailiff had not done anything wrong, and she's not going to file a complaint about his actions."

Shafi, an Arlington resident, and her family had filed a lawsuit in 1992 against the now-closed King Saver grocery store in Arlington over injuries Shafi said she suffered when she slipped on a grape in the store and fell. English said he will have to ask for another court hearing, which may not be able to be scheduled until summer.

Robert L. Sikes

EVERMAN — Robert L. "Bob" Sikes, 71, a Tarrant County sheriff's bailiff, died Friday at a Fort Worth hospital.

Funeral: 10 a.m. Monday at Chapel of the Chimes in Laurel Land Memorial Park of Fort Worth. Graveside service: noon Monday in Grove Hill Cemetery in Dallas.

Robert L. "Bob" Sikes was born July 6, 1925, in Dublin and had lived in Everman for 27 years. He served 20 years in the Air Force and was a member of Everman Lodge 510, AF&AM, and Everman Chapter 624, Order of the Eastern Star. Mr. Sikes had been a bailiff with the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department for 10 years. He was a Baptist.

Mr. Sikes was preceded in death by a son, Ronald Sikes, in 1974.

Survivors: Wife, Bettye Sikes of Everman; daughters, Donna Wooldridge and Marilyn Sikes, both of Fort Worth; grandchildren, Ron Whitcomb, Jerry Beal, Angela Dawn Sikes, Christi Wooldridge, Jennifer Wooldridge, Amanda Ceat and Katie Ceat; and 10 great-grandchildren.

Laurel Land Funeral Home of Fort Worth
7100 Crowley Road, 293-1350

Tarrant inmate, 38, dies after apparent seizure

FORT WORTH — A 38-year-old Tarrant County inmate who died yesterday morning had a history of heart problems and apparently suffered a seizure in the jail's medical ward, officials said.

Henry Lee Jones, whose address was unavailable, had been in the custody of the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department since his arrest Oct. 30 on a warrant for failure to appear in court on a drug charge, Cmdr. James Skidmore said.

Jones, who Skidmore said had suffered two heart attacks and had a history of drug use, was taken from the jail's medical floor to John Peter Smith Hospital after suffering a seizure yesterday morning. He was pronounced dead at 9:52 a.m.

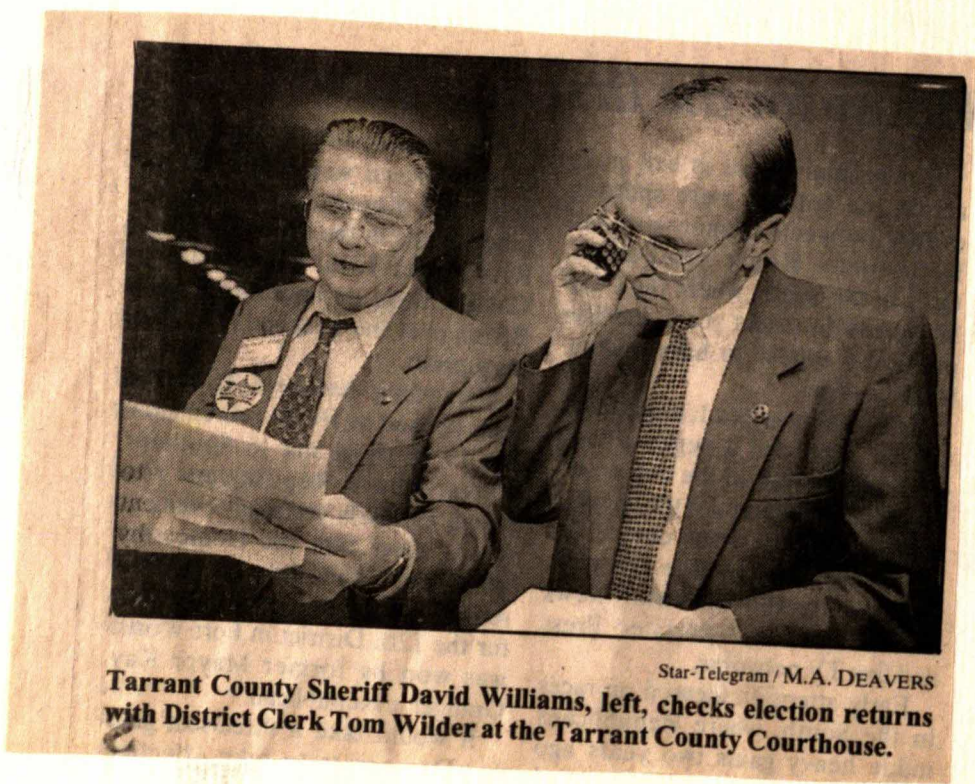
An autopsy was pending late yesterday.

THE '96 ELECTIONS

TARRANT SHERIFF

Tarrant County Sheriff David Williams faced an unexpectedly strong challenge from Democrat Bill McLendon.

Later returns place Williams ahead in close race for sheriff



Star-Telegram / M.A. DEEVERS
Tarrant County Sheriff David Williams, left, checks election returns with District Clerk Tom Wilder at the Tarrant County Courthouse.

By JACK DOUGLAS JR.

Star-Telegram Staff Writer

FORT WORTH — With more than three quarters of the votes counted, Tarrant County Sheriff David Williams was beginning to relax after a scare from Democratic challenger W.F. "Bill" McLendon, a Euless police lieutenant.

It was a much closer race than many observers expected.

At one point in the evening, with between 20 percent and 30 percent of the polls reporting, McLendon pulled to within 2 percentage points of the Republican incumbent. The gap between the two men consisted of just over 5,000 votes.

But with 81 percent of the precincts counted, Williams had 55 percent of the vote to McLendon's 45 percent. The sheriff's lead had

stretched to nearly 30,000 votes.

McLendon said he would not call it quits until all the votes are counted. "We're hanging in there. . . . We're going to wait until the end," he said.

Both McLendon and Williams said they had hoped the voters of Northeast Tarrant County would make them winners.

"We really think that as they count the polls, especially through Northeast Tarrant County, that gap will close and we'll meet them at the finish line," McLendon said early in the night. He lives and works in Euless.

However, Williams, a former Haltom City police detective, is also well known in the northeast portion of the county.

The area is a conservative Re-

publican stronghold and there was no way to know how many people voted a straight GOP ticket.

Williams said he thought the voters in the Mid-Cities were responsible for his pulling ahead.

"Apparently we've seen some big hits from [Northeast Tarrant] and Arlington," he said.

Earlier, with his lead shrinking, the sheriff sounded worried as he watched returns with his campaign staff at a downtown Fort Worth restaurant.

"Whatever the outcome, I believe I have come in and done the job the voters hired me to do," Williams said.

"I've delivered my commitment and exceeded expectations beyond measure," he said.

Williams and McLendon pa-

trolled for votes until the polls closed in a race to decide who will hold the keys to the County Jail for the next four years.

With more money to work with and a larger campaign staff at his side, Williams was favored to beat McLendon, a veteran lieutenant with the Euless Police Department.

McLendon hinted early in the counting that it would be difficult to unseat the incumbent.

"I'm not overly optimistic by any means, but we feel good about what we're doing," he said.

Williams showed signs of wanting the rigors of the race to be over.

Williams said he deserves to be re-elected because of his accomplishments in beefing up law enforcement activities at the Sheriff's Department. He also boasted of a significant increase in the number of fugitive warrants that the department serves.

McLendon countered that Williams is only attempting to play supercop, and that he has shirked his main responsibility of operating the County Jail, which usually has more than 3,000 prisoners.

McLendon also accused Williams of cronyism and of spending too much taxpayer money on such things as fast patrol cars.

Neither Williams nor McLendon is politically polished. This is McLendon's first race and Williams' second.

McLendon said that if he loses, he will turn in his badge at the Euless Police Department, where he has worked for more than 20 years, and move with his wife and children to the mountains of Colorado.

According to records filed with the Tarrant County election administrator's office, Williams has raised nearly three times as much in money and other "in-kind" contributions as McLendon has.

FORT WORTH — A shortage of guards at the Tarrant County Jail has forced the county to pay more than \$200,000 in overtime during the past two months to keep jail security at peak condition, officials said yesterday.

Portions of the jail cannot be opened because there are not enough jailers, forcing inmates to sleep on the floor for the first time since 1995 when a backlog of state convicts crammed the jail.

If more jailers are not hired soon, security may dip below state standards, triggering concerns that the staff at the Tarrant County Jail would not be large enough to maintain order among the more than 3,000 inmates.

But officials must recruit jailer applicants with entry-level pay that is among the lowest in the state.

In Tarrant County, the minimum wage for jailers is \$1,542 a month, compared with \$1,715 in neighboring Dallas County, \$1,812 in Harris County and

(More on GUARDS on Page 21)

Per capita prison numbers top U.S.

Hard time & Overtime

Jailer shortage is straining resources

\$1.618 in Bexar County.

Because of the increased demand on guards working overtime in the Tarrant County Jail, "it's obvious to me . . . there is a potential for unrest" among prisoners, County Judge Tom Vandergriff said.

Comparing the old problems of jail overcrowding to the new concerns about a shortage of guards, Vandergriff added, "It's a different situation, but the same potential for disquieting activity exists."

"We have to address it."

Yesterday morning, the jail held 3,404 prisoners — about 30 percent more than in January, when the inmate population at one point totaled 2,627.

But at the same time, a record 85

guard positions remain unfilled, forcing other jailers to take up the slack, officials said.

To ensure peace within county lockups, each guard should have no more than 48 prisoners to watch over at any given time, according to the Texas Commission on Jail Standards.

The Tarrant County Jail maintains that ratio — at least for now — but only by paying guards to work extra hours, said Hank Pope, chief deputy over administration and operations at the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department.

Pope said the county paid \$91,710 in overtime wages for guards in October, and \$113,962 in overtime in November. Some of that overtime is due to vacations taken during the holiday season, but most results from the staffing shortage, he said.

Pope said hiring a jailer takes 11 to 13 weeks, during which tests,

training sessions and background checks are conducted. But with the pay so low, most applicants are lured away to other jobs before hiring requirements are completed, he said.

The Sheriff's Department wants to shorten the hiring process by streamlining it, including eliminating a test that a later state examination nearly duplicates.

"I think, realistically, if we fine-tune the system, we can get down to five weeks," Pope said.

During Tuesday's regular session of the Tarrant County Commissioners Court, the Sheriff's Department is expected to ask for an increase in jail wages and a change in the way guards are hired.

Pct. 2 Commissioner Marti Van-Ravenswaay said she is concerned about the "massive overtime" being expended to keep the jail up to state standards.

"The potential for burnout is

certainly increased," Van-Ravenswaay said, adding, "The longer the people are working ... the greater the likelihood for fatigue-related errors."

For the past several weeks, about 50 inmates have been forced to sleep on the floor each night at the Green Bay jail in Northeast Tarrant County, sheriff's Cmdr. James Skidmore said.

A similar problem existed several years ago when as many as 5,300 prisoners crowded into the Tarrant County Jail, mainly because of a backlog of convicted criminals destined for state penitentiaries.

Now, the state prisoners are gone and the jail has space for 4,193 inmates, plenty to go around, Skidmore said.

However, space for hundreds of inmates remains unused in areas of the jail that cannot be opened because of the shortage in guards, he said.

9b51

Man, 26, dies in Tarrant County Jail after arrest in public intoxication

BY MICHAEL S. LEE
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

FORT WORTH — A 26-year-old man died yesterday in the Tarrant County Jail, apparently because of a medical problem, a Tarrant County sheriff's spokesman said.

The man's name wasn't immediately available because his family had not been notified, Cmdr. James Skidmore said.

Fort Worth police arrested the man Monday on suspicion of public intoxication, Skidmore said.

He had been classified as potentially suicidal and was being held in a suicide prevention unit with two other inmates on the upper floors of the police headquarters building at 350 W. Belknap St., Skidmore said. Inmates in that unit are

checked every 15 minutes.

"He appears to have suffered a grand mal seizure. At approximately 3:30 a.m., he was discovered to be unconscious and it was determined that he had died during the night," Skidmore said. "At this time the death appears to be of natural causes."

The man's body was taken to the Tarrant County Medical Examiner's Office for an autopsy. Officials there declined to comment or to release any information about him yesterday.

Skidmore said the man had been treated by jail medical personnel for delirium tremens, a side effect of alcohol use, and had been arrested "numerous times" since 1993 on public intoxication charges.

9310



CHEERS & JEERS



Saturday, December 7, 1996 / Star-Telegram

Cheers: To the R.D. Ryno family of Ryno Auto Sales. Although it took several trips, innumerable phone calls and a three-week period of concentrated diligence to correct the problems encountered with the automobile I purchased, the treatment I received has been beyond reproach. Such an organization has restored my faith in the integrity, honesty and dependability of sales formulated under the old adage of the Golden Rule.

FLOYD F. CLARK, FORT WORTH

Man convicted of '86 slaying of Tarrant deputy

"Certainly, we were hoping for a higher sentence. We do appreciate all the help the Mexico attorney general's office has given us, and we hope their appeal is successful."

— Robert Foran
Tarrant County assistant district attorney

BY KATHY SANDERS

Star-Telegram Staff Writer

FORT WORTH — Enrique "Ricky" Moreno Casas, once the area's most hunted fugitive in the 1986 slaying of a Tarrant County lawman, has been convicted in Mexico of the killing and ordered to serve 18 years in a Mexican prison, officials said.

Mexico does not extradite citizens caught there if they could face the death penalty in the United States. But Mexican prosecutors agreed to try Casas on behalf of the United States and Tarrant County prosecutors.

The maximum sentence Casas could have received in Mexico is 50 years.

"Certainly, we were hoping for a higher sentence," said Tarrant County Assistant District Attorney Robert Foran, who was assigned to

the case in 1994 and worked on the case with Mexican prosecutors.

"We do appreciate all the help the Mexico attorney general's office has given us, and we hope their appeal is successful," he said.

Foran said Mexican prosecutors appealed the Nuevo Laredo judge's sentence, asking for punitive damages and a longer sentence.

Casas was captured June 7 by Mexican officials working with local and federal law enforcement officials from Fort Worth, ending almost 10 years on the run.

His billfold and identification were found near the body of Tarrant County Deputy Frank Howell, 38, who had been fatally shot in south Fort Worth on Nov. 3, 1986. An arrest warrant for Casas was issued the next day.

A man who was with Casas at the time of the killing said Casas opened fire on Howell when the deputy stopped to ask the two young men what they were doing. Investigators said the other man told them that as Howell lay mortally wounded, Casas stood over

him, put the gun flush against his head and pulled the trigger.

Yesterday, investigators who had worked for years tracking Casas voiced mixed emotions over the sentence given Casas.

"If it's 18 years and day for day, I can live with it if the Mexican higher court won't look at an appeal," said Bill Foster, a district attorney's investigator who worked on the case for nine years.

"We know the prosecutors down there were asking for the maximum sentence, and we're going to be backing whatever they do to follow through with that appeal," he said.

Fort Worth major case Detective John Ladd voiced disappointment that Casas did not receive the maximum sentence but said, "He got 18 years in a Mexican prison and that's not one of my choices of stays for 18 years, I can assure you."

ETA ©1996 FORT WORTH STAR-TELEGRAM
HULME

MERRY
CHRISTMAS!



Christmas Memories

★ ★ ★
The family quest

As a small child, I recall scampering over the craggy wilderness of a rural countryside with my father and brother in search of the perfect coniferous evergreen for our Christmas tree.

Having made our selection from this rocky pastureland of cedars — choosing one not too tall, with several cones sprinkled throughout its broad branches — my father was careful to make a precision cut at its base in order to affix a stand. Homeward bound, I could scarcely wait to pull from the closet the aging array of ornaments and decorations collected over the years.

My mom would pause from her baking long enough to pop kernels of corn, which my brother and I quickly fashioned into popcorn ropes for additional decoration.

There were no lights on our tree that I recall, but with the heat from the old cook stove bringing to the surface the sweet resin fragrance of the fresh-cut cedar, intermingled with the aroma of mince pies and hot yeast rolls tempting my nostrils, nothing could be more illuminating than a child's breathless anticipation for the dawn of that now long-ago Christmas Day.

FLOYD F. CLARK
Fort Worth

★ ★ ★

Wednesday
December 25, 1996

Prisoner gives birth and then escapes



Lori Zeigenbein: Fugitive is wanted in Nebraska.

Star-Telegram

FORT WORTH — A prisoner in the Tarrant County Jail gave birth to a baby boy yesterday and then slipped out of custody, authorities said.

Lori Zeigenbein, 30, was a fugitive from Nebraska. She is charged with misusing an automated teller machine card, Tarrant County sheriff's Cmdr. James Skidmore said. Zeigenbein gave birth about 1:40 a.m. and was in a semiprivate room on the maternity wing of John Peter Smith Hospital, being guarded by a female deputy, when she escaped.

She was apparently released from her leg irons about 2 p.m. to take a shower; how she eluded the deputy was unclear.

"We have reason to believe she may have had help. . . . A person attempted to visit her shortly before she escaped," Skidmore said. Investigators were checking addresses in Tarrant County where Zeigenbein has friends.

About a dozen deputies, assisted by Fort Worth police, were searching the hospital building and grounds, Skidmore said. The baby was still in the hospital.

How long the woman had been in the jail and when she was trans-

ferred to the hospital were unclear, Skidmore said. Pregnant inmates are housed in a special unit in the main jail and then transferred to the hospital when the jail's medical staff decides it is necessary.

"At any given time, out of 250 to 260 in the female population, we'll have an average of 10 to 20 who are expecting," Skidmore said. "We do have five or six [births] per year. It's a very normal thing."

Zeigenbein is white, about 5 feet 7 inches tall, and weighs 150 pounds. She has blond hair and hazel eyes. She was last seen wearing a pink hospital housecoat, bedroom slippers and pajama bottoms.

'I just want to be able to get back with my baby'



Star-Telegr

Lori Zeigenbein's boyfriend, Rodney Short, and their son, William. Short was arrested late last night.

Boyfriend of fugitive mom arrested

Grapevine woman will surrender, attorney says

BY JONATHAN GREGORY
AND JOE SWICKARD
Star-Telegram Staff Writers

A Grapevine mother who has been evading police for more than two weeks accused the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department of arresting her boyfriend yesterday to get back at her. A sheriff's spokesman denied the accusation.

Rodney Short, 28, said in an interview earlier yesterday that he is the father of the baby that Lori Zeigenbein gave birth to shortly be-

fore she escaped from custody at John Peter Smith Hospital on Christmas Eve. Short was arrested late last night on suspicion of hindering the apprehension of a known felon, according to a jailer. His bail was set at \$25,000.

"They're [mad] because they did things they weren't supposed to do [so] they arrested him for a charge he didn't even do," Zeigenbein said in a telephone interview.

Sheriff's spokesman James Skidmore, while not familiar with the specifics of the arrest, said the department wouldn't arrest someone

as a harassing tactic. "The only way he could have been arrested would be with a probable-cause arrest warrant, which would have had to have signed by a judge."

Zeigenbein, who fled a Fort Worth hospital hours after the birth of a son, will surrender Monday when she raises enough cash to post bail, her attorney said yesterday.

"I just want to be a normal person, a normal mom with a normal family and a normal life," a woman who identified herself as Zeigenbein

(More on MOM on Page 8)

Mom

From Page 1

said yesterday in a telephone interview. "I just want to be able to get back with my baby."

Eight months pregnant when she was arrested on warrants Dec. 23, Zeigenbein gave birth to Saxon Lee on Christmas Eve. Thirteen hours later, she walked out of John Peter Smith Hospital — past a guard posted outside her door — wearing only a gown, robe and socks.

During the interview, she de-

scribed how she encountered a friend in downtown Fort Worth who sheltered her for a day before she began staying with "friends of friends and strangers."

Short said yesterday that Zeigenbein ran away because she was afraid.

"She was scared of losing her family and scared of being locked up," said Short, 29, with whom Zeigenbein has a 2-year-old son.

Zeigenbein, 30, has made a lot of progress since the couple met three years ago, and she has been portrayed unfairly in the news media, Short said.

"She went from an exotic dancer

and drug user to a wonderful mother," Short said. "If they could just see her like that."

Zeigenbein had used cocaine in the past, but she got off the drug five months into their relationship, he said.

Zeigenbein is being represented by Fort Worth attorney Ernest Rothfelder, who has been negotiating with officials to keep her bail low after she turns herself in, he said. Bail was set yesterday at \$15,000 on a felony charge in Nebraska and \$2,000 on a misdemeanor weapons charge from Amarillo, Rothfelder said. Bail on a potential escape charge has not

been resolved, he said.

The Nebraska warrant accuses Zeigenbein of writing 28 checks in her mother's name from Sept. 14 to Oct. 15, 1995, for a total of more than \$2,000, according to police records.

The Amarillo charge accuses Zeigenbein of possessing a double-edged boot knife.

Conviction for escape, a third-degree felony in Texas, carries a maximum 10-year sentence, officials said.

Staff writer Michael S. Lee contributed to this report.

Jail unit backed in ruling

Appeal planned in 'God Pod' case

BY BOB MAHLBURG
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

FORT WORTH — A special Christian education unit in the Tarrant County Jail nicknamed the "God Pod" does not violate constitutional prohibitions against mixing church and state, a state district judge has ruled.

In a brief, two-page order signed Tuesday, 352nd District Judge Bonnie Sudderth ruled for the Sheriff's Department but gave no written reason for the decision.

Attorneys who challenged the "God Pod" on behalf of Jewish and Jehovah's Witness prisoners said they will take the case to a state appeals court.

Prisoners backed by the American Jewish Congress and the American Civil Liberties Union sued the county in 1993, alleging that the "God Pod" amounts to special treatment for Christians because other religious groups don't get privileges such as religious literature and a piano to play.

County attorneys say the 48-prisoner "Christian rehabilitation pod" is legal because it is strictly voluntary, gets no special public money and does not promote a particular religious view.

"I feel vindicated," said Assistant District Attorney Marvin Collins, who has long advised sheriff's officials that the program is legal.

But attorneys on both sides and the judge all agreed that the case is not over, and could be appealed as far as the U.S. Supreme Court because of constitutional issues involved.

"I would say this is round one and we won round one," Collins said. "We welcome the appeal. We think this will help establish more clearly in the jurisprudence of the state that religious freedom in our

jails and penitentiaries is alive and well."

Collins and ACLU leaders said the legal issue boils down to whether the government is promoting a particular religious view and using the cellblock for a purpose that is more pious than public.

Plaintiffs' attorney Laurance Priddy said the "God Pod" amounts to publicly subsidized missionary work because a tax-paid

chaplain oversees the program.

"They administer who gets in the program and then monitor and control the curriculum," he said.

The ACLU said a booklet used in the "God Pod" program takes a strong anti-Catholic stance, calling a ban against priests marrying a "doctrine of the devils." Another text, the ACLU said, described Mormons, Unitarians and Jehovah's Witnesses as members of cults. But county officials said they no longer use the booklets.

Priddy said, "We feel we're 100 percent right on the law and it's an erroneous decision."

But Collins said the special 48-prisoner pods, one for men and one for women, provide "a win-win situation" that aids rehabilitation and reduces violence. He said the program offers no special privileges to "God Pod" prisoners beyond Christian reading and a calmer, safer environment.

Reached yesterday, Sudderth said she sees her ruling as a limited finding.

"It was up to me to decide if the 'God Pod' in that situation, in Tarrant County, Texas, violates the Constitution, and my decision is that it did not," Sudderth said. She

added that she expects the case to be appealed as far as the U.S. Supreme Court because of the issues involved.

"I'm quite sure it will be reviewed by higher courts and they'll make the ultimate decision," Sudderth said.

The suit, which named Sheriff David Williams and Tarrant County as defendants, was filed on behalf of a Jehovah's Witness prisoner, Michael Lee Huff; Ruth Maree Lara, a Jewish inmate; and Ronald Flowers, a religion professor at Texas Christian University and an ACLU board member.

Priddy said the "God Pod" does not allow prisoners to practice religion on an equal basis.

"If you believe in the Holy Trinity you can sign up and get a full course," he said. "If you're a Jehovah's Witness, all you can get is one-on-one visits from a teacher that meets you in a cubicle."

But Collins said there aren't enough Jews or Jehovah's Witness believers to justify creating pods for each group.

Attorney says newborn tested positive for drugs

BY JOE SWICKARD
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

FORT WORTH — The newborn that fugitive mother Lori Zeigenbein abandoned on Christmas Eve when she fled sheriff's custody was born with methamphetamine and marijuana in his system, according to the infant's court-appointed lawyer.

Nancy Ellen Tyler, the attorney, ad litem representing the baby

boy's interests in custody proceedings, said that testing at John Peter Smith Hospital was positive for the two drugs, indicating that the mother had used the substances during her pregnancy.

"Obviously, this is of concern," Tyler said. "But it does not preclude reuniting the family. I would like to see the mother seek and go into treatment. I would want to see (More on FUGITIVE on Page 4)



Lori Zeigenbein: Escaped from custody by walking out of hospital.

Fugitive

From Page 1

some progress before we'd place the child back into the home."

"This is not good news," said Ernest Rothfelder, Zeigenbein's lawyer, who is trying to work out a favorable surrender for his client.

Meanwhile, authorities are still seeking Zeigenbein, who escaped from Tarrant County sheriff's custody by walking out of the hospital 13 hours after the child, Saxon Lee Short, was born. Zeigenbein, eight months pregnant at the time, went into premature labor when she was arrested Dec. 23 at her Grapevine home on outstanding warrants from Nebraska and Amarillo.

The infant is in foster care through Child Protective Services while Zeigenbein's live-in companion, Rodney Short, is seeking custody of the child.

Zeigenbein, who is in hiding, could not be reached for comment, nor has she contacted the *Star-Telegram* since the drug test results became known.

The child's drug screen results contradict Short's earlier assertion that Zeigenbein, 30, had made a successful transition from exotic dancer and drug user to a caring mother. Short said that Zeigenbein had used cocaine in the past but that she gave up drugs after they entered into their serious relationship three years ago.

Dr. Bannie Tabor, a specialist in maternal-fetal medicine at Harris Methodist Hospital, said both marijuana and methamphetamine can harm an unborn child by restricting the flow of oxygen, blood and nutrients to the fetus.

A mother's methamphetamine use during pregnancy also carries the potential for developmental problems that may not show up until later childhood, Tabor said.

The situation was complicated late Wednesday when Short, 29, was arrested by sheriff's officers on a charge of hindering an investigation, a move characterized by several lawyers as an effort to force Zeigenbein's surrender.

Short's recommended \$25,000 bail, the attorneys said, was high for the charge and an indication that authorities are trying to increase the pressure on Zeigenbein, who has avoided arrest since she walked past a guard and out of the hospital, wearing night clothes and socks.

Rothfelder said he would try to get Short's bail bond lowered while trying to work out Zeigenbein's surrender.

"We are trying to bring her in under reasonable terms," Rothfelder said, adding that Short's arrest is "nothing but retaliation."

Cmdr. James Skidmore, spokesman for the Sheriff's Department, denied allegations that the arrest was retaliatory. He said the arrest was based on a sworn affidavit, but refused to release the public document until the document and a

Freedom of Information request are reviewed and approved by the district attorney's office.

Skidmore said the affidavit contains names of confidential informants and is part of an ongoing investigation.

Rothfelder said the affidavit should be released.

"This isn't nearly as serious as the Michael Irvin-Erik Williams case and that affidavit in Dallas got released pretty fast, while here they put up every roadblock they can in this case," he said, referring to search warrant documents in connection with a rape case involving the two Dallas Cowboys.

Saving Short had no role in her

escape or continued flight, a woman claiming to be Zeigenbein said earlier that she ran away because she feared authorities would use her arrest as an excuse to take her child. She said she had been placed in foster care as a youth and did not want her child to repeat the experience.

Zeigenbein was arrested on a felony warrant out of Grand Island, Neb., charging her with writing a series of checks on her mother's account. She also was charged with a misdemeanor weapons violation — possession of an illegal knife — in Amarillo.

Still unresolved is whether charges will be filed in connection with her escape, a third-degree felony that carries a maximum 10-year prison term upon conviction.

Short and Zeigenbein have an older son, William, 2, who was at their Grapevine home when his father was arrested. The child is now

Fugitive mother says she's trying to raise money for bail

with Short's father.

At the time of his arrest, Short had been trying to gain custody of Saxon Lee. He had arranged blood tests to establish his paternity.

"The impact of his arrest depends on how long he remains in jail," said Judith Van Hoof, his lawyer in the custody fight.

Tyler, saying the arrest "looks like just a ploy to bring the mother in," said the arrest does not mean the child will be taken from the parents.

"There is strong disposition in favor of the family as long as they are able to care for the child," she said. "There will be social service investigation to make sure. . . . Of course I wish the mother hadn't left the hospital."

Staff Writer Michael S. Lee contributed to this report.

BY JOE SWICKARD
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

FORT WORTH — Fugitive mother Lori Zeigenbein — on the run since her Christmas Eve escape from a guarded hospital maternity bed — acknowledged yesterday that she used illegal drugs during her pregnancy.

"I did smoke some marijuana. I did take some methamphetamines off and on," said Zeigenbein, who has been the object of a Tarrant County Sheriff's Department search since she fled from John Peter Smith Hospital about 13 hours after giving birth to a son, Saxon Lee Short.

The drugs were found in her child's system during hospital tests.

In a call to the *Star-Telegram* yesterday, Zeigenbein said she wants to give herself up but is trying to raise money to post bail. She said she hopes to have enough money by Tuesday.

Meanwhile, her attorney said that time, and authorities' patience, may be running out for Zeigenbein to negotiate a surrender.

"As far as their patience, I imagine it's evaporated already," said the lawyer, Ernest Rothfelder. "It's gotten down to one of those things: Do you go in or wait to get arrested? It's a hard one to call. They are most likely put out that she's been able to stay on the loose so long."

Zeigenbein, 30, of Grapevine, went into

premature labor when sheriff's deputies arrested her Dec. 23 on outstanding warrants from Nebraska accusing her of writing checks on her mother's account and from Amarillo citing possession of an illegal knife.

Originally, authorities said she was wanted on charges of misusing a bank card. But Nebraska officials said later that the warrant was for writing unauthorized checks on her mother's account.

She was taken to the hospital, where she gave birth early the next morning and was held under guard. That afternoon, she walked past the guard and out of the hospital.

Her live-in companion, Rodney Short, was arrested Wednesday on suspicion of hindering the search for Zeigenbein. Short remains jailed, with bail recommended at \$25,000, an amount Rothfelder said is excessive and is an attempt to force Zeigenbein's surrender.

Sheriff's officials deny those characterizations and say the arrest was based on a sworn affidavit. However, they have refused to release the affidavit, although it is a public document, saying it contains the name of a confidential informant.

"Well, if they had a good informant, they would have already had her," Rothfelder said.

Rothfelder has tried to work out a surrender for Zeigenbein, who said she fears that her baby will be taken from her.

"I didn't abandon him; I love him," she said yesterday in a call from an undisclosed location. "His daddy, Rodney, was supposed to take him. I would have never left if I didn't think he could be with his daddy. I put Rodney's name on the birth certificate so I thought it was all set."

The child was placed in foster care through Child Protective Services, and Short, 29, had begun legal action to establish paternity and gain custody when he arrested.

Zeigenbein said that Short had no role in her escape and flight. The couple has another son, William, 2, who is being cared for by Short's family.

Man pulled from fiery truck wreck

By KATHY SANDERS
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

FORT WORTH — Three law enforcement officers dragged a man from the flames consuming his wrecked pickup yesterday on a northwest Fort Worth road.

By evening, the three — a Fort Worth police officer and two Tarrant County sheriff's deputies — had been nominated for special honors by their departments.

The truck driver, who was not officially identified by authorities, was in Parkland Memorial Hospital in Dallas last night in "very, very critical condition" with burns over 80 percent of his body, a hospital spokeswoman said. He is believed to be a 44-year-old Fort Worth resident.

Police officer Scott Glasscock and Deputies William Farmer and John Bridges were on routine patrols when they heard about a wreck at Cromwell Marine Creek and Boat Club roads.

Bridges, 32, an eight-year veteran with the Sheriff's Department, said he was patrolling Lake Country when he heard Farmer dispatched at 12:42 a.m. to an overturned vehicle. He was then told to assist.

"I was about a mile away. Before I could get there, I could see the flames," Bridges said.

Farmer was already there, using his fire extinguisher, and Glasscock, whose beat adjoins the county's on that street, had been on routine patrol when he saw the accident.

Bridges said: "I got out, got my fire extinguisher and tried to do something. Tried to put it out as best as I could. The flames were just too much."

Glasscock, 29, recalled: "I was pulling on him, and the fire knocked me back. Then one of the deputies would pull on him and the fire would knock him back."

The three "just had to get him out," he said.

"The guy was screaming inside. I kept telling him we were trying to get him out," Bridges, 32, said. "I was expecting the truck to blow, and it never did. Once we started getting him out, we didn't want to quit."

Farmer finally was able to grab the man's jacket and pull hard enough to dislodge him, the other two said, and they pulled him free.

Fearing that the truck could explode, the law officers dragged the man away, his flaming clothing igniting the grass in their path, Glasscock said.

Using his coat, Glasscock smothered the flames as he and the deputies tried to comfort the victim.

A waiting medical helicopter flew the severely injured man to Parkland.

Glasscock, Bridges and Farmer suffered smoke inhalation and were taken to Harris Methodist Fort Worth hospital for treatment. They were later released, all hailed as heroes.

"He put himself in great personal risk," Fort Worth police Lt. Bryan Sudan said about Glasscock. "I'm sitting here looking at his coat. It's burned all down the front and both sleeves. It literally burned holes in the coat while he was wearing it."

By late afternoon, Sudan said Glasscock had been nominated for the Medal of Valor, the Police Department's highest honor.

Sheriff's officials also were praising Farmer and Bridges, saying both also had been nominated for recognition of their actions.

Because of the victim's severe burns, investigators had not been able to question him. But officials believe that he had fallen asleep or was unfamiliar with the area when his 1992 Silverado pickup approached a stop sign on Cromwell Marine Creek Road at Boat Club Road.

Skid marks indicated that it was traveling at a high speed as it shot across the intersection.

Rescue

Man rescued from burning car dies at hospital

BY LOU CHAPMAN
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

FORT WORTH — A 44-year-old Fort Worth man who was aflame as rescuers pulled him from his overturned truck on Boat Club Road died in a Dallas hospital Friday night.

Larry Joseph Fripp, 1908 Realistic Drive, was pronounced dead at Parkland Memorial Hospital at

8:50 p.m. Friday, a spokesman for the Dallas County Medical Examiner's Office said.

Fripp was apparently speeding westbound on Cromwell Marine Creek Road in his 1992 Silverado about 12:40 a.m. Friday when he slammed on his brakes at Boat Club Road, according to a police report.

The truck apparently shot across

the intersection, struck a curb, hit a tree and catapulted over a barbed wire fence onto its top, the report said. A fire apparently broke out in the engine compartment.

In actions that their supervisors described as heroic, a Fort Worth police officer and two county sheriff's deputies who arrived at the scene within minutes of one another pulled Fripp from the truck.

Fripp was taken by helicopter to the burn unit of Parkland Memorial Hospital in Dallas, suffering burns over 80 percent of his body.

An autopsy had not been performed as of yesterday morning, but based on a preliminary examination, the medical examiner's office believed that Fripp probably died from a combination of burns and internal injuries.

Tarrant fugitive arrested at house near Brenham

Sheriff's deputies trace a phone call to the woman who escaped from a hospital after giving birth.

By MICHAEL S. LEE
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

FORT WORTH — Fugitive Lori Zeigenbein was back in jail yesterday, nearly three weeks after slipping past a sheriff's deputy hours after giving birth at John Peter Smith Hospital.

Zeigenbein was arrested in Brenham after Tarrant County sheriff's

deputies told Brenham police that she had made a telephone call from there to Amarillo, police said. Police traced the number to a home in a subdivision outside Brenham, and a narcotics task force staked out the house, police said. She was arrested about 11 a.m. yesterday.

"They went in and found her hiding under the sink," Cmdr. James Skidmore, a Tarrant County sheriff's spokesman, said last night. "Our people will probably go down to pick her up and bring her back tomorrow."

(More on ARREST on Page 4)

Arrest

From Page 1

Skidmore said she could face charges as severe as escaping from a correctional institution, which is a third-degree felony punishable by two to 10 years in prison.

Zeigenbein, 30, a topless dancer, was arrested Dec. 23 on outstanding warrants from Nebraska, where she is suspected of writing bad checks, and from Amarillo, where she is accused of possessing an illegal knife.

She has been on the run since Christmas Eve, when she went into premature labor and was transferred to JPS. She gave birth to a baby boy, Saxon Lee Short, and slipped past a deputy 13 hours later.

Skidmore said that an internal investigation is still under way into how Zeigenbein escaped and that at least one deputy could face disciplinary action.

Hospital officials said the child tested positive for marijuana and methamphetamines.

Grapevine resident Rodney Short, 29, has said he is the child's father and had begun legal action

"Once she goes back and takes care of those checks in Nebraska, they'll drop those charges. And the one in Amarillo is only a misdemeanor."

— Ernest Rothfelder
Lori Zeigenbein's attorney

to obtain custody. But he was arrested Jan. 8 and is in Tarrant County Jail on suspicion of hindering the search for Zeigenbein, a misdemeanor.

However, Zeigenbein has said that Short had no part in her escape, and her attorney said that Short's arrest and high bail — \$25,000 — were part of a plan to pressure Zeigenbein into surrendering.

Skidmore said the department had sound legal reasons for arresting Short, but the department still has not released a copy of the probable-cause affidavit, which spells out the case against Short.

Meanwhile, Zeigenbein's newborn son is in the custody of Child Protective Services. She and Short have another son, William, 2, who is being cared for by relatives.

Zeigenbein had told the *Star-Telegram* that she intended to surrender and that she wanted to get her life in order and raise her children.

Her attorney, Ernest Rothfelder, said the charges against Zeigenbein are excessive.

"Once she goes back and takes care of those checks in Nebraska, they'll drop those charges. And the one in Amarillo is only a misdemeanor," he said.

As for charges stemming from her escape, he said, "I have people all the time, bond jumpers who have got serious crimes. . . . 90 percent of the time they don't do anything about those kinds of things. It just depends on what court it's in."

In the meantime, Zeigenbein will be classified as an escape risk — held outside the normal jail population and accompanied by two deputies any time she leaves the jail, Skidmore said.

Cost of copters detailed

Tarrant could spend \$70,000 this year

BY BOB MAHLBURG
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

Tarrant County could spend as much as \$70,000 this year flying, housing and maintaining two helicopters for Sheriff David Williams, county financial records show.

The helicopters are maintained with money from property seized in illegal drug cases, which a sheriff's official and a county commissioner said are different from tax money. The helicopters have long been controversial and became a campaign issue in Williams' recent re-election race, when an opponent said the money could be better spent on other uses.

The sheriff promised when he acquired several surplus helicopters in 1994 that no taxpayer money would be spent to keep them flying.

County commissioners voted unanimously yesterday to spend more than \$16,000 to rent helicopter hangar space and to buy extra fuel for two Bell Helicopter OH-58s owned by the Sheriff's Department. The fuel budget is up by 50 percent over the \$10,000 that commissioners budgeted a few months ago.

In recent months, county officials have also committed \$11,000 for insurance, and as much as \$20,000 for parts and electronics, including landing gear and \$500 for special decals to dress up the choppers, according to records and county officials.

County Commissioner J.D. Johnson said the helicopter costs should not cause concern because the money is coming from property seized in drug raids, not from county taxes.

"It's not coming from our gen-

(More on SHERIFF on Page 6)

eral fund," Johnson said.

A Sheriff's Department official interviewed later said drug seizure funds collected and spent by the sheriff are not public money.

"I wouldn't consider it to be public money," said Scott Ramsey, the sheriff's director of financial services.

"When the helicopters were acquired, the sheriff assured the commissioners there would be no public money spent on the helicopter program," Ramsey said. Williams

has kept that promise, he said.

Ramsey said private donations have paid "a small amount" of costs of the helicopters. He said the sheriff has leaned heavily on the county's drug forfeiture funds — money the county gets from cash, property and vehicles seized in illegal drug cases.

"A substantial amount of it is spent on helicopters," Ramsey said. "That's basically what's paid for the helicopters since we've had them."

The department has \$70,000 of the drug money budgeted for the helicopter program for the fiscal year that began in October.

Ramsey declined to discuss how much drug seizure money the sheriff takes in.

"I don't think it's something the taxpayer needs to be aware of," he said.

He said the amount of drug forfeiture money "could be a public safety issue" and involves secret undercover investigations.

County records show that such drug forfeiture funds totaled more than \$100,000 last year and that \$94,000 has been collected so far this year.

By law, money collected from such drug cases must be plowed back into law enforcement programs. The sheriff uses almost all of it on helicopters, officials say.

Williams did not return messages

to his office seeking comment.

The sheriff's critics see his aviation program as proof that he is enamored of police hardware.

But Ramsey called the choppers "a very important law enforcement tool" that leads to arrests and saves lives.

Within the past 60 days, the copters were used to help apprehend a mentally ill person threatening people with a gun, he said. Sheriff's helicopters also aided Arlington police with the Amber Hagerman abduction and slaying case, he said.

The helicopters became a campaign issue in Williams' recent re-election race. Several of his opponents said the money could be put to better uses.

OBITUARIES

Sunday, February 9, 1997 / Star-Telegram

RIVER OAKS — Mrs. Stella Louise Wallace, 48, a deputy sheriff for the Tarrant County Sheriff Department, died Friday, Feb. 7, 1997, at a local hospital.

Funeral: 10 a.m. Tuesday at Biggers Funeral Home. Graveside service with special honors by Tarrant County Sheriff Department: 2:30 p.m. Tuesday at Nancy Smith Cemetery, Somervell County. Visitation: 6 to 8 p.m. Monday at the funeral home.

Stella Wallace was born Sept. 13, 1948, in Stephenville. She graduated from Brewer High School in 1968. She briefly worked as a paralegal and began working for the Tarrant County Sheriff Department in 1988. During that time, she served in several areas and was most recently assigned to the Warrant Division. She was a member of the Fraternal Order of Police.

Stella L. Wallace



Survivors: Companion, Jack Thomas of River Oaks; sons, Navy GSMFN Clinton Edward Wallace of Everett, Wash., Matthew Morgan Wallace and Joseph Walton Wallace, both of River Oaks; mother and step-father, Louise McCoy Young and William Crawford Young of River Oaks; father, Gassaway Walton of Eastland; brother, Ronnie Aaron Baker of River Oaks; grandchild, Tyler Morgan Wallace; niece, Magan Baker; nephew, Chad Baker; and a number of aunts, uncles and cousins.

Biggers Funeral Home
7139 Jacksboro Highway, 237-3341

In Remembrance

After Glow

*I'd like the memory of me
to be a happy one.
I'd like to leave an after glow
of smiles when life is done.
I'd like to leave an echo
whispering softly down the ways,
of happy times and laughing
times and bright and
sunny days.
I'd like the tears of those who grieve,
to dry before the sun
Of happy memories that I leave
When life is done.*

In Memory of
Mrs. Stella Louise Wallace
September 13, 1948
February 7, 1997

Services
10:00 A.M. Tuesday
February 11, 1997
Biggers Funeral Chapel

Officiating
Major Hugh Atwell, Chaplain
Tarrant County Sheriff Department
Mr. Joseph Laskowski, Chapter Pres.
Fraternal Order of Police

Service of Committal
Nancy Smith Cemetery
Somervell County, Texas
2:30 P.M.

Guard of Honor
Tarrant County Sheriff Department

Tarrant County commissioners release \$1.1 million to hire jailers

BY JACK DOUGLAS JR.

Star-Telegram Staff Writer

FORT WORTH — County commissioners approved \$1.1 million to hire 41 new jailers for the Tarrant County Jail yesterday, and 100 more guards may be needed by year's end, officials said.

Scott Sheppard, administrative chief of the jail, said the new hires are needed to keep up with the in-

creasing number of inmates in the county's lockup facilities.

Yesterday, the jail was 90 percent full, with 3,359 prisoners.

If the jail population continues to grow at its current pace, an additional 100 jailers may be needed to reopen the Cold Springs facility in north Tarrant County, officials said.

It is too early, however, to deter-

mine whether that action will be needed, said Savala Swanson, chief deputy over the confinement bureau of the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department.

The Sheriff's Department will hire 25 new jailers next week, and 16 more will be hired Feb. 24, Sheppard said.

Those job prospects have already been recruited and their back-

grounds checked, he said. Each will have three weeks of training before being hired.

The need for more jailers is largely due to an aggressive program of issuing arrest warrants in felony and misdemeanor cases, and a trend of giving misdemeanor offenders "jail time" rather than probation, Sheppard said.

The slow process of scheduling hearings for parole violators is also causing a backlog of prisoners in the jail, he said.

The number of inmates who are charged with a felony and awaiting trial is increasing the most, with 261 more in the jail now than a year ago, according to records. The second-fastest-growing category is pa-

role violators, followed by inmates convicted of misdemeanors, the records show.

Salaries and benefits for the 41 new jailers will cost the county \$1.1 million during the next 12 months, the jail commander said. With the new hires, authorities will be able to free up 384 beds in the jail system, he said.

Saturday, February 15, 1997

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

What TV should be?

I find myself at odds with Ken Parish Perkins over his column applauding the powerful and recently televised episode of *NYPD Blue* as "exactly what TV should be" (Jan. 28). If this is so, heaven help us!

With today's families already erupting over the inability of parents to impose discipline in raising children to be of better moral fiber, such shows televised during prime time further paralyze and erode the family values under which this great society has emerged since biblical times.

I am not an advocate for censorship, but I feel that ABC and its affiliates, including WFAA/Channel 8, erred in placing this R-rated program in such limelight to justify its race for ratings and the almighty dollar.

If children are to become more competent, productive and moral adult personalities, they should begin by respecting those individuals they know best: their parents. Such respect and obedience will give them the freedom to discover within those boundaries their own identity without the disturbing media influence of adultery and violence, intermingled with gutter linguistics, which youth often times find themselves powerless to control.

Perkins' review of *NYPD Blue* was not television vindication, as he suggested. Even in today's society, where biblical teachings are often termed "archaic" and seemingly "old-fashioned," nothing has surfaced yet to invalidate the moral wisdom of the ages.

FLOYD F. CLARK
Fort Worth

OBITUARIES

Star-Telegram / Sunday, March 2, 1997

Donald J. Bishop



FORT WORTH — Donald J. Bishop, 63, a retired deputy sheriff, died Friday, Feb. 28, 1997, in Fort Worth.

Funeral: 3:30 p.m. Monday at Greenwood Funeral Home. **Burial:** Greenwood Memorial Park. **Visitation:** 2 to 4 p.m. Sunday at the funeral home.

Mr. Bishop was born Jan. 25, 1934, in Richmond, Ind. He was in law enforcement for 25 years and retired from the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department.

Survivors: Wife, Glenda Bishop of Fort Worth; daughters, Jann Bishop of Saginaw and Pam Nelson and husband, Gary, of Saginaw; grandchildren, Jason Bishop, Jennifer Nelson, and Garrett Nelson. He was known to his grandchildren as the world's greatest crime fighter.

Greenwood Funeral Home
3100 White Settlement Road, 336-0584

Tarrant jailer hurt on job faces termination

BY JACK DOUGLAS JR.
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

FORT WORTH — A Tarrant County jailer still feels the pain of a beating he received in 1994 when he stepped into the cell of a prisoner gone berserk.

Now, Steven VanSickle has a new worry: the near certainty that in another month he will lose his job as a \$1,849-per-month jail guard.

VanSickle said in an interview this week that he has been unable to return to work at the county jail since being injured by a combative prisoner in April 1994.

In December, the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department informed VanSickle in a letter that he was being placed on unpaid leave and would have to return to work within 90 days or lose his job.

"This leave will give you the opportunity to rehabilitate your injury and, if possible, return to duty," Chief Deputy Hank Pope wrote in the letter.

County officials say their handling of the case is in full compliance with state law, which allows them to terminate an employee when his or her "term of office" concludes. For VanSickle, that came at midnight on New Year's Eve when Sheriff David Wil-

(More on JAILER on Page 6)

Because Steven VanSickle was not redeputized, the county says nothing more can be done for him.

liams re-deputized his staff and did not include VanSickle.

As he sits out his leave, often groggy and thick-tongued from large doses of pain medicine, VanSickle is without county-paid insurance and he is not accruing seniority or retirement benefits.

"If your leave expires without your return to work, we will consider you to have resigned," the letter said.

Pope, chief of staff for the Sheriff's Department, was on vacation this week and could not be reached to comment.

VanSickle said he believes that he has been abandoned by the county — unemployed and unemployable — and that he needs further medical attention, including possible back surgery.

"I feel I've been betrayed, I feel I've been violated. It makes me sick," the jailer said.

County officials don't argue with VanSickle's claim that he has been seriously hurt — possibly for life — as a result of his brush with an out-of-control inmate.

Until his unpaid leave began, VanSickle's medical needs, including surgery on his neck in August 1994, were paid for by county benefits.

However, VanSickle said, he has had to fight the county and its insurance carrier to get much of what he has received.

Asked about VanSickle's case, Charlotte Knotts, workers compensation specialist for Tarrant County, said: "I don't have any comment."

Gerald Wright, head of the county's personnel department, said he also does not "think it's appropriate" to talk about VanSickle.

Other county officials said that the 39-year-old man's benefits simply have run out.

"We have paid him what the law allows us to pay him," said Ray Rike, legal liaison between the Sheriff's Department and the Tarrant County district attorney's office.

State law says counties must continue to pay the "maximum salary" to all county law enforcement officers injured on the job, whether they return to work or not.

But Rike said the county is also bound by a portion of the law that says the salary stops when an injured officer's term of office concludes. That came Jan. 1 for the injured deputy when Williams, freshly sworn in for a second term, re-deputized his force of nearly 1,300

Jailer

officers, and did not include VanSickle.

"I sympathize with the man," Rike said, "but I don't know what Tarrant County can do."

VanSickle said that he wants his health back, and then his job, and that he wants county officials to help him. After all, he said, "they didn't have any problems in sending me into that sewer."

VanSickle was a member of the jail's emergency response team on April 20, 1994, when he and two other guards were ordered into a jail cell to try to subdue an inmate who was looking for a fight.

The prisoner, who had smeared himself with his feces, repeatedly kicked VanSickle and tore away his protective chest shield and elbow pads, according to offense reports.

"I bent over and he put a choke hold on me," VanSickle said. "He was choking the daylights out of me ... I almost died."

"Finally, another man or two came in and, after awhile, I got loose."

Court records show that the prisoner, Farrell Hanna, 34, pleaded guilty to an aggravated assault charge and received 60 months' probation.

Hanna, now free from jail, could not be reached to comment.

According to a doctor's report, VanSickle sustained serious injuries, including potential nerve damage to his back and neck, when he wrestled with Hanna.

Charles Parable, a Fort Worth neurologist, said in a Sept. 17, 1996, report that VanSickle "has decreased sensory and decreased motor strength in the upper and lower extremities ... I think his prognosis is guarded."

VanSickle said he was never offered another assignment, such as a desk job, with less stress and fewer physical demands.

"I ain't scared of working," he said. "I don't think a handout is part of the question. I just want done what's right."

Rick Bunch, a Dallas lawyer hired by the jailer in anticipation of a lawsuit, said the county is wrong in claiming that VanSickle's job ended when Williams' first term concluded.

The re-deputization of the Sheriff's Department force is little more than a ceremonial ritual marking the start of a sheriff's term in office, Bunch said.

He said his client "wants to get fixed and I think the county owes him a duty to fix him."

"He put his life on the line and got hurt, got hurt bad," Bunch said, adding: "It's just not right. We need to take care of our law enforcement people, and this is just not the way to do it."

Body of Burleson man, 39, found in truck along road

BY KATHY SANDERS
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

FORT WORTH — The body of a Burleson man was found in the back of his pickup early yesterday when a sheriff's deputy stopped to investigate the abandoned vehicle on the side of a road, police said.

Identified as Johnny Lee Akin, 39, the man had been shot in the back of the head and was dead at the scene in the 1400 block of Longhorn Road, just south of Saginaw.

"It didn't appear that the truck had been there for a very long time," Fort Worth homicide Sgt.

Paul Kratz said.

Sheriff's Lt. R. Thornton told police that he was en route to an unrelated call about 12:30 a.m. when he noticed the white 1993 Ford pickup on the side of the road.

When Thornton returned to the truck shortly after 1 a.m. with other deputies, he discovered Akin's body in the truck bed, the report said.

Kratz said Akin's wallet was in his pants pocket and a rifle was inside the cab, making robbery seem unlikely.

No witnesses had been found and no arrests had been made.

This is news?

The narrow focus and obvious anti-David Williams bias of your Jan. 29 "Cost of copters detailed" article would have been more appropriate for the editorial page than the Metro headlines.

Scott Ramsey may not be an eloquent spokesperson for the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department, but the way that Bob Mahlburg exploited and manipulated Ramsey's statements was unworthy of a staff writer.

A "news" article about the "cost of copters" would include utilization practices, effectiveness, cost comparison with conventional means of accomplishing the same functions, and comparison of indirect costs such as officer safety and deterrence, in addition to operating costs and source of funding. The token mention of copter utilization hidden in the next-to-last paragraph hardly balanced the article.

The subject of this article was inconsequential compared to the manner in which it was presented. When the press of other countries print "news" articles with only one viewpoint, it's called propaganda. Why should we think of it any differently when it happens here?

RALPH BRAEULER
Aledo

Mexico extends sentence in Tarrant deputy's death

BY RAMON RODRIGUEZ

Star-Telegram Staff Writer

A man convicted in Mexico and sentenced to 18 years in prison in the death of a Tarrant County sheriff's deputy has had his prison sentence increased to 30 years, according to documents released yesterday by the Texas Attorney General's office and Mexican authorities.

After eluding law officers for 10 years, Enrique Moreno Casas, 29, was arrested in June in Nuevo Laredo, Mexico, in a massive hunt that involved police agencies from both sides of the border.

Moreno Casas was sentenced in November in the death of Frank Howell, who was shot four times, once with his own gun, during a routine traffic stop in 1986.

Sonya Sanchez, a spokeswoman for Texas Attorney General Dan Morales' office, said the state was pleased with the extended sentence. A sentence of 30 years is considered a harsh verdict in a Mexican prison, she said.

"What this man did to this officer was a terrible tragedy and no amount of time can make up for the pain caused to the [officer's] family," Sanchez said. "But we are very glad that the Mexican judiciary has lengthened the term. We were not satisfied with the first sentence."

But a source with the Office of Foreign Legal Matters of the Mexican Attorney General's office in Mexico City said yesterday that the magistrate's decision to extend the sentence had nothing to do with Morales' request.

According to the agency, the evidence in the case is sufficient to grant the 30-year sentence. It was upgraded from 18 years because the magistrate considered the first sentence insufficient.

Moreno Casas will most likely serve out the full sentence, the agency official said. Under Mexican law, people with previous convictions are rarely considered for parole. Mexico has no death penalty, and 50 years is the longest term a prisoner can serve.

Tip leads to arrest of Tarrant fugitive 9 months after escape

BY YVETTE CRAIG
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

FORT WORTH — Acting on an informant's tip, sheriff's deputies yesterday arrested a fugitive and the woman accused of helping him escape from a Tarrant County Jail nine months ago.

Michael John Short and Melody Dawn Woods were apprehended about 3 a.m. while traveling on Northeast Loop 820 at North Beach Street, where deputies stopped a vehicle in which an informant said they were riding, officials said.

Short, 22, of Bedford, who was convicted of aggravated assault with a deadly weapon and sentenced to eight years in prison, escaped from the Green Bay facility at Mark IV Parkway and Loop 820 in June. He was being held there while appealing the conviction.

He was back in the county jail yesterday facing an additional charge of escape. Bail was set at \$25,000.

Woods, 20, is accused of aiding Short's escape and was being held in lieu of \$10,000 bail, officials said.

Sheriff's Cmdr. James Skidmore

"We were scared that sheriff deputies would hurt him because he had made them look like fools by escaping. We were going to Bedford to surrender to the FBI at the Bedford police station."

— mother of Michael John Short

said Short and Woods were arrested after an informant provided a description of the fugitive's vehicle and its direction of travel.

Short's mother, who asked that her name not be used, said her son was on his way to surrender when he was stopped.

"We were scared that sheriff deputies would hurt him because he had made them look like fools by escaping," she said. "We were going to Bedford to surrender to the FBI at the Bedford police station."

Until Wednesday, the mother said, the parents had not heard

from their son since July.

"It kept bothering him that he didn't know what was happening with us, so he decided to surrender," his mother said. "I'm relieved that it's over. He'll be in prison, but at least he'll be alive and not chased by the police."

Short was convicted of aggravated assault after shooting at a car he had been tailgating on Texas 121 in January 1990. The bullet grazed the driver and narrowly missed his fiancée.

Short was convicted of aggravated assault with a deadly weapon and sentenced to eight years in prison in March 1995.

He was expected to serve four years before being eligible for parole. He had remained in the county's Green Bay facility awaiting an appeal.

Officials said Short escaped by crawling through corrugated Fiberglas panels that are part of the jail's roof.

Staff writer Domingo Ramirez contributed to this report.

Plan would restrict free-car perk

Only officials living in Tarrant would get take-home vehicles

BY JACK DOUGLAS JR.
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

FORT WORTH — Some Tarrant County officials, including police officers, may lose their free-car privileges under a proposed policy change that would provide such a perk only to employees who live in the county.

The policy change was recommended after a study showed that more than 15 percent of the officials who receive "take-home" cars live outside the county.

If the Commissioners Court approves the restrictions, it could hurt some sheriff's deputies and investigators who use take-home county vehicles for emergency calls, said Scott Ramsey, resources administrator for the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department.

"It will create some difficulties for us," Ramsey said, referring to officers who use take-home cars and live outside Tarrant County. "We are concerned about it," he said.

A "preliminary review" of 167 take-home county vehicles shows that 25 of them — about 15 percent — are driven to noncounty residences each day, according to a report submitted yesterday to the Commissioners Court.

It is actually believed that between 200 and 250 county vehicles are provided to officials around the clock. The report says that "between 30 and 40 or more . . . are taken out of county."

It says, "The majority of those vehicles taken out of the county appear to be driven by law enforcement employees who often drive directly from their residence to a job site."

Ramsey said his best "estimate" is that 75 Sher-

iff's Department officials have take-home vehicles. He said he did not know how many live outside Tarrant County.

Another proposed amendment to the vehicle policy says, "At no time may a county vehicle be used for personal gain, personal business, to drive to a place of secondary or part-time employment . . . or for any other non-county-related use."

Passengers in county cars would be restricted to employees, to people in the "care and custody" of county law officers, or to someone with an employee who is on county business.

The amended vehicle policy is expected to go before the Commissioners Court next week.

In other business, the commissioners:

- Freed up \$19,000 for overtime for deputies who will help control traffic during the April 5-6 opening weekend of the Texas Motor Speedway.

Between 50 and 60 deputies are scheduled to monitor the roads in the unincorporated areas of north Tarrant County. Commissioners voted unanimously for the overtime after being told that it is essential in helping other law enforcement agencies control traffic and protect against crime during the race day rush.

- Voted to raise the pay of county data processors, over the objections of Pct. 3 Commissioner Glen Whitley, who argued that the employees' salaries are already at or above local market value.

The other three commissioners and County Judge Tom Vandergriff voted for the increase. They said that the workers were under paid and that more attractive incentives are needed to fill 12 vacancies in the data processing department.

Guard applicants face tougher physical

BY JACK DOUGLAS JR.
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

FORT WORTH — People aspiring to become a guard at the Tarrant County Jail will have to prove they can stand the job and pull their weight before they are hired under procedures adopted yesterday.

Members of the Commissioners Court approved an additional physical for guard applicants — at a cost of \$40 per exam — after hearing that some of the 660 jailers now on board have trouble staying on their feet throughout their eight-hour shifts.

New hires will have to undergo "joint stability" tests to prove they can stand watch over prisoners for hours on end without feeling the need to sit down, said Cmdr. Scott Sheppard, a jail administrator for the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department.

In addition, when smoke alarms sound in the county jail, some guards — besides having flat feet and sore ankles — are getting winded when they carry air packs up flights of stairs, officials said.

To ensure that this will not be a problem for new jailers, applicants

will be called upon in the expanded portion of their physical to lift an 18-pound weight 56 inches off the ground, Sheppard said.

He said some applicants have already taken the new physical exams, even though the Commissioners Court did not approve the additional cost until yesterday.

The new exams, in addition to the physicals and drug-screening tests already in place, will show that new hires "can actually perform the functions of the job," Sheppard said.

Ex-jail minister suspected in more than 30 heists

A Fort Worth man is arrested in connection with four Arlington holdups after a four-hour standoff.

By DEANNA BOYD
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

FORT WORTH — A former Tarrant County Jail minister whom police describe as the “most active robber” in recent memory is behind bars, accused of robbing four Arlington businesses and suspected in as many as 30 other robberies in the Metroplex.

Police said they also suspect that 49-year-old John Everett Shelton, who served time in Missouri state prison, may have held up three businesses in Corpus Christi while attending a seminar there this month.

“He is by far the most active robber we’ve seen in a while in this area,” Arlington police spokesman Dee Anderson said. “And he wasn’t

going to stop once he did leave town.”

Police arrested Shelton at 6 a.m. after a four-hour standoff that ended yesterday when the Fort Worth Police Department’s tactical team forced its way into Shelton’s home. Arlington police arrived at his home at 2 a.m., but Shelton and his family would not open the door to officers

or answer their phone calls, police said.

“He was on the phone in the bathroom, apparently trying to talk to an attorney,” Anderson said.

Shelton was being held last night in Arlington Jail in lieu of \$400,000 bail. Arlington police said they plan to file four charges of aggravated

robbery against Shelton today.

Police reports show Shelton was a jail minister with Calvary Cathedral in Fort Worth until resigning a few weeks ago. A woman who answered the phone at the church yesterday read from a statement, saying that Shelton “has not been active on our staff for some time.”



Special to the Star-Telegram/KTVT

John Everett Shelton rides in a car after his arrest yesterday.

Jim Norwood, who trained Shelton to minister to inmates at Tarrant County Jail, said he was not surprised about the news of Shelton’s arrest.

Norwood, a former member of the Arlington City Council, said he has known Shelton for about two years.

“He had a knowledge already of jail and jail ministry,” Norwood said, adding that Shelton would show up sporadically, always carrying a magazine featuring his photograph and an article about his criminal background and testimony.

“I wasn’t impressed with him in the first place,” Norwood said, adding that Shelton would usually wear fancy clothing and jewelry, with his hair styled like a television evangelist’s. “He was slick, and I’m not impressed with slick people.”

Arlington police went to Shelton’s home after a clerk at one of the Arlington businesses that was robbed picked a photograph of Shelton’s face out of a photo line-up.

Police said they recovered clothing they believe Shelton wore in almost all of the Metroplex robberies. They said they also retrieved a red motorcycle helmet that they suspect he wore as a disguise in a Grand Prairie robbery. A gun believed used in the robberies was discovered hidden in a closet, Anderson said.

The four Arlington charges stem from the Feb. 26 Lucky Lady robbery at 500 N. Collins St. and the Feb. 24 robberies of the Stop’N Go at 615 W. Abram St., the Days Inn at 910 N. Collins St. and Texaco Food Mart at 701 W. Road to Six Flags.

Arrest

Law enforcement officials from other jurisdictions said they are looking into filing additional charges against Shelton.

Police first began considering Shelton as a suspect after an Arlington patrol sergeant spotted a white, two-door Pontiac Grand Prix registered to him in the park-

ing lot of an Arlington apartment complex and a man walking away from the car and heading toward a nearby business area. The man, who matched descriptions of a robber, disappeared into the apartment area after the officer ordered him to stop, police said.

While running a check on the Grand Prix, police discovered that Shelton had an extensive criminal history in Missouri for armed robbery, burglary, sexual assault and trespassing. He was released from the Missouri state prison in 1983 and was paroled for three years, according to a search and arrest warrant affidavit.

Police began a surveillance of Shelton's home. On Friday, police said, Shelton returned home wearing clothes matching the robber's apparel in almost all of the holdups. Detectives later learned that a man wearing the same clothes struck the Diamond Shamrock at 1901 Ester Road in Irving that same day.

A man similar to Shelton's description robbed three Corpus Christi businesses on March 3 and March 6, according to the affidavit. Shelton was in Corpus Christi at the time of the robberies to attend a seminar, according to the affidavit.

Three members of Calvary Cathedral viewed surveillance videos of the robbery suspect and told police the voice heard on the video sounded like Shelton's, but they were unable to positively identify Shelton as the man in the video because of the tape's poor quality, police said.

Anderson said police had difficulty obtaining a photograph of Shelton that resembles his current appearance. But Tuesday, an Arlington undercover officer photographed Shelton as he arrived at Dallas/Fort Worth Airport from a trip to Phoenix, where he was seeking new employment, according to the affidavit.

The clerk at the Lucky Lady — the only Arlington business hit where the robber pulled down his turtleneck shirt to reveal his face — identified the man in a photo lineup and police obtained an arrest and search warrant about 1:30 a.m. yesterday.

Shelton's wife, Joyce Ann, said she heard the officers knocking on her residence yesterday but said the family did not respond because they were frightened.

A woman who identified herself as Joyce Shelton answered the phone at the couple's residence yesterday but hung up without commenting.

Staff writer Veronica Puente contributed to this report.

Jail chaplain says volunteer's arrest is a rare instance

A robbery suspect had been approved for the prison ministry by a respected sponsor.

BY JEFF PRINCE
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

FORT WORTH — The chaplain at Tarrant County Jail knows that some who minister to prisoners there have spent time behind bars.

But for most jail ministry volunteers, criminal activity is in the past, said Hugh Atwell, chaplain for the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department.

A Fort Worth man who was arrested Wednesday in connection with at least 30 robberies and who had been involved with prison ministry is an "anomaly," Atwell said.

"There is no way in the world you could ever predict who will or won't fall by the wayside," Atwell said.

Arlington police arrested the former jail minister, John Everett Shelton, who faces four counts of aggravated robbery. Shelton, 49, who sports a gray beard like the one witnesses described in numerous recent robberies, remained in Arlington Jail yesterday in lieu of \$400,000 bail. Shelton is accused of robbing four Arlington businesses and is suspected in as many as 30 other robberies in the Metroplex.

About 10 percent to 30 percent of the 200 or so volunteers who minister to Tarrant County Jail prisoners have had brushes with the law at some point in their lives, said Atwell and another chaplain, Jim Norwood. In some instances, a distant walk on the wrong side of the law can improve rapport and success with inmates.

"It's always easier to administer to somebody if you've walked in their shoes," Norwood said.

Neither Atwell nor Norwood could recall another instance in which a volunteer chaplain had been arrested while involved in ministering to prisoners.

Becoming a volunteer chaplain, or worship leader, requires endorsement by a church or religious organization but does not require being a pastor or ordained minister, Atwell said.

"We give an orientation, show them the rules, give them a copy of the rule book, give them some [on-the-job training] and give them an assignment," Atwell said.

Shelton was endorsed by Calvary Cathedral in Fort Worth, where he coordinated volunteers for the jail ministry and occasionally served as a volunteer chaplain, Atwell said.

A woman who answered the phone at Calvary Cathedral referred questions to the church's chaplains, who she said were out of the country until the end of the month.

Atwell said Calvary Cathedral provides numerous volunteer chaplains who are dependable and successful in helping rehabilitate prisoners. Police suspicions about Shelton's criminal activity do not change Calvary's status within the Tarrant County Jail's ministry, Atwell said.

"It doesn't affect Calvary's standing at all," Atwell said. "It's a great institution."

Incidents such as Shelton's arrest can cause some people to question the need to minister to prisoners, Atwell said, but he makes no apologies for the ministry and plans no changes.

"It appears to be the only real rehabilitation that is going on," said Atwell, who served 25 years as a police officer in Arlington before graduating from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in 1992 and becoming chaplain for the Sheriff's Department.

"Every inmate that we have is a potential neighbor," Atwell said. "One day they are going to come out of here. It should certainly be in our interest that when they come out of here they are someone we can live beside."

Jail ministry does not always rehabilitate prisoners but it can provide the opportunity for rebirth, Atwell said.

"It shows inmates that there is another way that they can go," he said. "It tells the inmate that they are quite capable of changing. Even though they are still accountable for their crimes they can live life in a way that's different than what they've been doing."

Claude "Tony" Wise



SAGINAW — Claude "Tony" Wise, 66, a deputy sheriff/county sheriff, died Thursday, April 3, 1997, in Saginaw.

Funeral: 10 a.m. Saturday at Word of Life Church (formerly Meadowbrook Evangelistic Temple). **Burial:** Greenwood Memorial Park in Fort Worth.

Rev. Claude Wise was born April 16, 1930, in Dallas. He had a long battle with cancer. He was a retired captain of the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department, pastor of Meadowbrook Evangelistic Temple for 25 years, chaplain of the Tarrant County Deputy Sheriff's Association, American Legion No. 655, was the first crime prevention officer for Tarrant County, served as chief bailiff for Tarrant County for six years and designed the current security program for Tarrant County buildings. He established many churches, Bible colleges and schools in the United States, Mexico and other countries.

Survivors: Wife, Sandra Wise of Saginaw; son, Trevor Baccus of Saginaw; daughter, Rhonda Wise of North Richland Hills; mother, Vera Wise of Fort Worth; grandsons, Christopher Baccus of Saginaw and Bret Allen Royster II of North Richland Hills; mother-in-law, Jeanette Wheeler of Reno; and many dear friends.

Arlington Funeral Home
1221 E. Division, 548-1791

Real time for lesser crimes filling jail

BY JACK DOUGLAS JR.
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

FORT WORTH — Angela Dawn Adams peered through the steel-mesh window of a holding cell, looking bewildered over the prospect of spending 45 days in jail for writing a hot check.

"I don't think I deserve to be here," Adams said recently as court officials prepared to transfer her from the courthouse to the Tarrant County Jail.

Deserving or not, Adams had joined a growing number of people in Tarrant County who receive real jail time for misdemeanor offenses — including petty thefts, DWIs and spousal abuse.

In the past, those types of crimes usually resulted in little

more than a legal slap on the wrist and no time in jail, records show. So why are police and prosecutors putting more wife beaters, drunken drivers and shoplifters in jail than ever before?

Because they can.

From the late 1980s to the mid-1990s, county jails in Texas were booked full with convicted felons waiting to be transferred to an overcrowded and heavily litigated state prison system. Murderers and rapists took up much of the jail space, forcing authorities to let the misdemeanor offenders walk.

In June 1994, the Tarrant County Jail housed 5,228 inmates, several hundred more
(More on JAIL on Page 4)

than maximum bunk capacity, but only 367 — or 7 percent — were in for misdemeanor crimes, county records show.

Texas' prisons have expanded since then and a federal lawsuit has been settled, allowing for a quick transfer of convicted felons to the state. Suddenly, county jails have plenty of bunks available for all types, from killers to hot-check writers.

On a typical day last month, the county jail was far below maximum capacity, with 3,389 prisoners. Among those inmates, 715 — 21 percent — were in for misdemeanor crimes, according to records. Yesterday, the jail population was 3,175.

The no-tolerance, law-and-order proponents say it is good that petty criminals are finally finding themselves behind bars.

"I think that's what the public wants," Tarrant County misdemeanor court Judge Daryl Coffey said. "An empty punishment [no jail time] is no punishment at all."

Richard Alpert, head of the misdemeanor division for the Tarrant County district attorney's office, agreed. "The space [in jail] that once was not available, now is, and misdemeanor offenders are finally serving the sentences they were given," he said.

Few of the inmates are getting out early for good-time credit, the prosecutor said, adding: "A 90-day sentence now means 90 days."

Critics say the police, prosecutors and judges are leaning too hard on small-time criminals. They say authorities are dishing out jail terms at wholesale rates simply to fill jail beds that have not been needed since the days of prison overcrowding.

Police officer-turned-defense lawyer L.E. "Cowboy" Schilling, a frequent critic of the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department, said he believes local authorities are trying to hide the fact that they have overbuilt the jails.

"They're trying to justify their existence," he said. "It's like we've got a sign out front of the jail that says, 'Need prisoners. No experience needed. Uniforms furnished.'"

Ward Casey, another Fort Worth defense attorney, said he believes that petty criminals are being placed in jails because, otherwise, "they're empty and [police] want to fill them up any way they can."

Taxpayer financing for the Tarrant County Jail system has peaked and plunged at the same rate as inmate population, statistics show. The county also lost millions of dollars in state revenue when convicts were finally transferred to prisons.

From 1992 to 1995, with prison overcrowding at its worst, the state paid Tarrant County more than \$67.1 million to house state inmates, according to the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.

In 1994, one of the worst years for jail overcrowding in this area, Tarrant County devoted \$43.1 million for prisoner confinement, \$8.2 million more than the year before. The state tossed in another \$28.4 million, records show.

In 1995, the county dropped its jail budget to \$41.1 million and the state trimmed its contribution to \$17.7 million.

In 1996, with the backlog of state prisoners gone from the Tarrant County Jail system, the confinement budget dropped again to \$32.5 million and the state paid nothing, according to records.

Now inmate population is again increasing in the county jail — from 2,498 in December 1995 to 3,369 last February, according to statistics. To meet jail needs, the Tarrant County Commissioners Court approved an increase in the confinement budget this year to \$37.7 million.

Officials predict that by the end of the year the county jail will be home to nearly 4,000 prisoners, many of them people who have been picked up on arrest warrants by a re-energized warrants division of the Sheriff's Department.

Savala Swanson, chief of the confinement bureau of the Sheriff's Department, said there is little doubt that the county jail system will need to be expanded soon. That is due in part to the increased numbers of petty criminals in jail and to the expectation that under-aged misfits will soon graduate to the adult justice system, Swanson and other jail officials said.

Ironically, misdemeanor offenders — most of them neophytes in crime who spend little time in jail — tend to be rowdier than the felons who know their life behind bars is easier, and sometimes shorter, if they behave, Swanson said.

"I would much rather deal with a murderer [in jail] than I would a drunk," he said.

Angela Adams said she simply allowed her finances to get out of control when she wrote a worthless check for nearly \$400 in January 1995. But her transgressions did not immediately land her in jail.

Court records show that she first received a year's probation and was ordered to perform 24 hours of community service for a misdemeanor theft of between \$20 and \$500. She was arrested March 12 and her probation subsequently revoked after a judge found that she had not lived up to the terms of the probation, including failing to pay restitution and court costs.

"I was doing everything I could," said Adams, the single mother of a 5-year-old girl.

She said she believes her time is too harsh for her crime.

"I just think 45 days is a little lengthy."

Bailiff accused of fondling girl suspended

BY BILL HANNA
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

A 52-year-old Tarrant County Sheriff's bailiff has been suspended after being accused of fondling a 16-year-old girl in Parker County and providing her shelter when she ran away from home.

Kurt Brian Freed, who has been a bailiff for four years, was arrested Monday in Fort Worth. He posted an out-of-county \$20,000 bail bond on a charge of indecency with a child, and was released. An arrest warrant affidavit filed in Parker County accused Freed of touching

the girl's breasts on several occasions.

"His badge and identification have been seized and he's not allowed to engage in any law enforcement activities pending the outcome of his situation," Tarrant County Sheriff's spokesman Commander James Skidmore said yesterday.

The Sheriff's Department has begun an internal affairs investigation, Skidmore said.

Freed could not be reached to comment. His attorney, George Gallagher, did not return phone

messages left at his office.

Before the criminal charge surfaced, the girl's mother obtained a temporary injunction against Freed on Oct. 31 ordering him to stay away from the girl.

The mother's attorney filed a contempt motion Feb. 24 contending that Freed had violated the injunction by providing money and his motor home to the girl after she had been listed as a runaway.

In January and February, Freed bought the girl a car and moved his motor home to an RV park in Weatherford for her to use, the civil

suit contends. On Feb. 10 and Feb. 12, Freed touched the girl's breasts, the lawsuit said.

Freed and the girl met in the fall of 1994 through the Tarrant County Sheriff Department's Explorer program. Freed began offering her rides and inviting her on vacations to Corpus Christi and Colorado, the civil suit contends.

The Tarrant County Sheriff's Department learned of the investigation in Parker County when Parker County officials told Tarrant officials that an arrest warrant had been issued for Freed.

Staff writer Kathy Sanders and correspondent Gale M. Bradford contributed to this report.

Exemplary

At approximately 12:40 a.m. Jan. 10, I was notified of a major accident at Boat Club and Cromwell Marine Creek roads. The driver was trapped in a burning vehicle.

Deputies John Bridges and William Farmer were dispatched, along with Fort Worth police officer L.S. Glasscock. Upon arrival, they observed an overturned truck fully engulfed in flames. The driver was alive inside and was screaming for help.

Farmer emptied two fire extinguishers on the fire to no avail. The smoke was so heavy and the flames so intense that the officers had to take turns reaching inside the burning vehicle, each time exposing themselves to extreme danger, in an attempt to remove the trapped driver. As a result of their collective effort, they were able to remove the driver from the vehicle, extinguish his clothing, and pick him up and carry him to safety some 30 feet away.

All three officers suffered smoke inhalation and had to be transported to a local hospital for treatment.

Bridges, Farmer and Glasscock, with no regard for their own safety, displayed great courage, teamwork and a dedication to duty that exemplifies the principles of their chosen profession: Texas peace officer.

SGT. ROBERT N. SMITH

Patrol Supervisor

Tarrant County Sheriff's Department

Cheers: To Cmdr. James Skidmore, Lt. Mary Hendrix and officer Mark Smith for taking valuable time out of their busy schedules to give our class an insightful tour of the Tarrant County Corrections Center. This experience has made a lasting impression on all of us! Thank you for caring!

ARLENE STOTTS AND MARY HARTLEY, TRANSITION
CLASS, WATAUGA MIDDLE SCHOOL

OBITUARIES

WEATHERFORD — Amanda "Mandy" Lynn Johnston, 1, died Thursday, May 22, 1997, in Fort Worth.

Funeral: 2 p.m. Sunday at University Baptist Church. The Rev. Mark Woods will officiate. Private burial: East Greenwood Memorial Park.

Memorials: University Baptist Church Preschool Ministries or Cook Childrens Medical Center.

Amanda "Mandy" Lynn Johnston was born February 15, 1996, in Fort Worth.

She was a member of University Baptist Church.

Survivors: Parents, Cliff and Donna Johnston; maternal grandmother, Gloria Allen of Fort Worth; maternal grandfather, Charles Allen of Whitney; paternal grandparents, Gary and Judy Johnston of Fort Worth; maternal great-grandparents, Roy R. and Eloise Hunt of Fort Worth; paternal great-grandparents, Sylvia and E.B. Whitehead of Fort Worth; paternal great-grandfather, C.H. Johnston of Whitney; aunts, Sandra Orban and Charla Allen; and cousins, Stacey and Stephanie Orban.

Thompson's Harveson & Cole
702 Eighth Ave., 336-0345

CLIFF JOHNSTON IS AN OFFICER
WITH THE TARRANT COUNTY

SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

Sheriff's deputy honored

Hank Pope with the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department presents Deputy Jerry Kizer with a plaque honoring Kizer's work with the U.S. marshal's office. Pat Howell of the Sheriff's Department looks on.
STORY ON 4B



Special to the Star-Telegram/ SPENCER D. COO

to Kizer and Horner, both members of the North Texas Joint Fugitive Task Force.

Kizer, a sheriff's deputy for a decade, joined the task force last year. Horner, an intelligence analyst with 21 years in the Air National Guard, has been with the task force three years.

Deputy U.S. Marshal Dave Hiebert, who heads the task force operations in Fort Worth, said the joint efforts of the marshal's office, the Sheriff's Department and the Tarrant County district attorney's office have made a significant impact, both in capturing most-wanted outlaws and collaring probation violators.

"We've really tried to concentrate our efforts so it's a total effort," Hiebert said.

The task force helped secure Casas' capture by Mexican officials exactly a year ago today.

Casas had fled the United States and an arrest warrant shortly after the fatal shooting of Tarrant County Deputy Frank Howell in November 1986. In December, he was convicted of killing Howell and was sentenced to 18 years in a Mexican prison.

Arendes was apprehended in November in Florida, just weeks after his case was featured on the TV program *America's Most Wanted*.

Arendes had been arrested in 1991 and accused of sexually assaulting a 5-year-old Colleyville girl in her home. He disappeared after being released on bail.

He was returned to Tarrant County in January and awaits trial.

The Richardson twins, Gerald and Derald, eluded police for almost three years. They are accused of severely beating an elderly man in 1991.

After *America's Most Wanted* featured the brothers in February, authorities traced them to Houston, where Hiebert, Kizer and about 30 police officials arrested them in March.

The capture was shown on the television program. Both men are in jail awaiting trial.

Marshal's office recognizes effort in 'Most Wanted' investigation, arrests

BY LINDA P. CAMPBELL
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

FORT WORTH — Capturing suspected police killer Enrique "Ricky" Moreno Casas after 10 years on the run required long stakeouts near the Texas-Mexico border and getting cooperation from Mexican law enforcement officials.

Tracking down child molestation suspect Edwin Arendes involved tracing Social Security payments, bank accounts and ATM withdrawals.

Nabbing the elusive Richardson

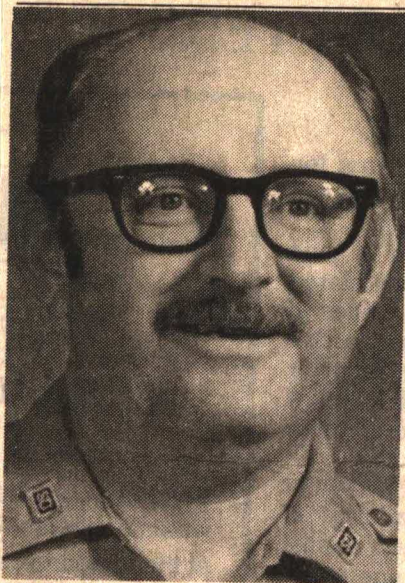
twins, Gerald and Derald, meant working through hundreds of tips leading to a dramatic showdown at a Houston apartment complex complete with helicopters, police dogs and a high-speed chase.

For their roles in snaring those fugitives, Tarrant County Sheriff's Deputy Jerry Kizer and Air National Guard Master Sgt. Gayla Horner were honored yesterday by the U.S. marshal's office.

"It's a great feeling to know some of these people are off the streets," U.S. Marshal D.W. "Dub" Bransom said in presenting plaques

OBITUARIES

Otis F. Rowe



SAGINAW — Otis F. "Frank" Rowe, 57, a retired Air Force gunnery sergeant, died Thursday, June 5, 1997, at a Fort Worth hospital.

Graveside service: 2 p.m. Monday in Laurel Land Memorial Park of Dallas.

Otis F. "Frank" Rowe was born in Joplin, Mo., on July 23, 1939, and had lived in Saginaw for 22 years. He was with the Tarrant County Sheriff's Office for 14 years. Mr. Rowe was a Baptist.

Survivors: Wife, Mary Rowe of Saginaw; daughters, Sandra Ware of Burleson and Terri Weaver of Saginaw; stepdaughters, Vicki Mercer of Watagua and Kay Brock of Saginaw; mother, Ada E. Rowe of Blue Mound; two grandchildren; and three stepgrandchildren.

Laurel Land Funeral Home of Burleson
Burleson, 295-5211

Computer system to track, chart crime considered

Sheriff's Department seeks grant

BY NEIL STRASSMAN
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

FORT WORTH — The Tarrant County Sheriff's Department wants to buy a high-tech computer system to track and map crime in the unincorporated areas of the county.

The computerized geographic information system, which can sort crime by type, location, time and other criteria and make a corresponding map, is used to allocate resources and help neighborhood watch groups identify problem areas, law enforcement officials say.

In the old days, detectives would ponder over pins stuck in a wall map. Now, a computer can quickly make and analyze dozens of different maps.

Sheriff's officials are expected to ask the Tarrant County Commissioners Court today to approve a request to the U.S. Department of Justice for a grant of \$29,179 to purchase the ARC/INFO and ARC/View GIS computer system, manufactured by the California-based Environmental Systems Research Institute.

The Fort Worth Police Department already uses the system to track stolen cars, and the Arlington and Dallas police departments expect to use the same system by year's end. With the Tarrant County sheriff on board, the largest law enforcement agencies in the Metroplex would be able to share crime data, the officials said.

"If the court and federal government approve the grant, we would hope to have it operating by the first of next year," said Cmdr. James Moore, Sheriff's Department finance director. "It will be well worth it."

Sheriff's officials have been studying the computer system with Arlington police, Moore said.

Arlington is switching to ARC/INFO from another computerized crime-tracking system as part of a renovation of the city's computer network, said Roy Haskins, the Police Department's crime analysis supervisor.

"We have proven technology," said Sheila Cobb, Environmental Systems regional manager in San Antonio. ARC/INFO is a data-crunching analytical program, and ARC/View is a program that can be run on a personal computer, though maps can be made from both, she said.

The cities of Seattle and Houston have been using the technology for about six years, and the Tarrant County 911 emergency response system has been using it for several years, Cobb said.

In the past three years, police interest in the ARC/INFO system has grown because it easily interfaces with other government agency systems, said Carolen Collins, a company spokeswoman.

In November, President Clinton praised the Police Department in Salinas, Calif., for reducing violent youth crime, which police there attributed to computer mapping, Collins said.

Pct. 2 Commissioner Marti VanRavenswaay said she has been interested in getting the county involved in computer mapping since she joined the court seven years ago.

"Now, we can simply layer on the data the sheriff needs. We won't have to re-create the wheel," she said.

The city of Dallas is building a base map "from parcels on up" using the ARC/INFO system, and the Police Department will probably switch to it from the mapping system it now uses, said Lt. Gene Summers, commander of computer crime analysis.

Computer mapping has for several years been the Dallas department's "primary tool" for crime analysis, and soon may be integrated with census data, Summers said.

"It helps police on the street demonstrate to management where the needs are, and it helps crime-watch meetings focus on the most important problems," Summers said.

David Garrett, Fort Worth's chief police planner, praised the sheriff's choice of the ARC/INFO system.

"We're putting together a custom data base for crime analysis," he said.

However, unlike Dallas, Fort Worth has chosen ARC/INFO competitor Intergraph as its "architecture" for its geographic information system, said Lorraine Stryjack, the city's geographic information service project manager.

"It's still open for discussion which way the Fort Worth Police Department will go," Stryjack said. Even if the police were to use Intergraph, the two systems would still be able to exchange information, she said.

THURSDAY, JUNE 27, 1997

Sheriff's Department dismisses chief deputy

BY NEIL STRASSMAN
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

FORT WORTH — The Tarrant County sheriff's chief deputy in charge of special operations has been dismissed from the department, sheriff's officials confirmed yesterday.

Pat Howell, 47, an employee of the Sheriff's Department since November 1986 and a chief deputy the past five years, was discharged from the department two days ago, said Cmdr. James Skidmore, sheriff's spokesman.

"Mr. Howell was informed of the reasons for his separation from employment on Wednesday afternoon," Skidmore said. "In his present position he supervised the special operations command, which is made up of 20 personnel who focus primarily on narcotics interdiction."

Skidmore said he could not discuss "any further details" concerning Howell's departure from his \$72,000-a-year job.

Howell, who could not be reached to comment, was one of three chief deputies in the Sheriff's Department. In his tenure with the sheriff, Howell was chief deputy over operations and the jail, and he also served as captain over the de-

partment's internal affairs division.

He previously worked for the Tarrant County district attorney's office as an investigator for eight years, and as a Texas Department of Public Safety highway patrolman in the Fort Worth area.

There were no job openings with the sheriff when Howell applied in 1986. In a cruel twist of fate, however, a position became available when his older brother, Frank Howell, 38, was gunned down in the line of duty.

Ten years later, 29-year-old Enrique Moreno Casas, a Mexican national, was arrested and convicted of the crime.

Howell's time with the Sheriff's Department has not been without controversy.

In 1994, Tarrant County Deputy Mark Hoop resigned from the department, saying he was unfairly disciplined after stopping Howell, who was driving an unmarked car, for speeding. An internal affairs investigation found that Hoop improperly stopped Howell for driving 49 mph in a 30-mph zone.

Howell's office was shifted to the sheriff's Green Bay facility in north Fort Worth in 1995, and he maintained a small office downtown.

Staff writer Ginger Richardson contributed to this report.

Narcotics suspect handcuffs deputy and escapes

BY MICHAEL S. LEE
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

FORT WORTH — A Tarrant County sheriff's deputy was overpowered and handcuffed yesterday by a woman she was trying to arrest on a narcotics warrant.

The deputy, Judy Baker, suffered scratches and bruises but declined medical treatment. Police and sheriff's deputies are searching

for the woman who escaped, Drinda Yvonna Campbell, 26, who is wanted on a narcotics possession warrant.

"We're very fortunate that she was [Baker] not seriously injured," said Cmdr. James Skidmore, a sheriff's spokesman. "It was a very dangerous situation."

Baker was overpowered about noon when she went to a house in

the 2900 block of Mecca Street after receiving a tip that Campbell was staying at the southeast Fort Worth residence.

The deputy spent about an hour outside the house, knocking on doors and calling inside on her cellular phone, before she saw Campbell running across the back yard carrying a baby, Skidmore said.

"[Baker] used what force she

could to restrain her without endangering the child, and in the process of that scuffle, an elderly man next door . . . started telling this person to stop resisting and quit fighting with the deputy," Skidmore said.

Sheriff's deputies usually work alone when serving warrants, unless the suspect is wanted for a violent offense or is known to be armed or aggressive, Skidmore

said.

Instead of surrendering, Campbell handed her baby to the bystander and overpowered the deputy, handcuffed her hands in front of her and ran off across a nearby golf course, officials said.

Baker was freed about two minutes later by a Fort Worth police officer responding to her call for help. About a dozen deputies and police officers, and a helicopter team, searched the area for about an hour.



Sheriff's Deputy Judy Baker: Was overpowered by a suspect yesterday.

Brothers arrested in 17-year-old slaying

Ex-residents suspected in man's fatal beating

BY VERONICA PUENTE
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

FORT WORTH — U.S. marshals yesterday arrested two Fort Worth brothers who for 17 years had eluded law officers who suspected them of beating one man to death while they were out of jail on bail in the fatal shooting of another man.

Gilbert Rodriguez, 38, and Billy Jack Rodriguez, 36, were arrested at their homes in Phoenix, where officials believe the brothers have lived since the slayings of Cirlo Gavay in December 1979 and Douglas Billiot in March 1980.

The two were found after officers with the North Texas Joint Fugitive Task Force learned that the elder Rodriguez was using the alias Angel Soria in Phoenix.

"We thought they could be in Mexico with relatives and that they had relatives in Phoenix," said Senior Deputy David Hiebert of the U.S. Marshal's office. Hiebert and Deputy Jerry Kiser of the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department had been working on the case for about a month.

The brothers are in the Maricopa County Jail in Phoenix, where they will remain pending an extradition hearing on Monday, Hiebert said.

Marshals were hunting for the Rodriguez brothers because of two incidents that took place about four months apart.

In December 1979, Gilbert Rodriguez was accused of fatally shooting Gavay during an

(More on FUGITIVES on Page 12)

argument about a parking space at a popular nightclub in the 1500 block of South University Drive.

"According to witness statements, the guy was trying to bully him to get a spot," Bill Foster, assistant chief investigator with the Tarrant County District Attorney's office, said of Gilbert Rodriguez.

Foster said Gilbert Rodriguez grabbed a handgun and shot Gavay several times, but not before a witness jotted down the license plate number of the brothers' car.

While out of jail on bail on that charge, officials say, the brothers are suspected of killing another man and attempting to kill a third.

During a March 1980 party at the Rodriguez home, the brothers reportedly began arguing with neighbor Douglas Billiot and a friend, identified by Billiot's family as Ernest Flores. Officials said that Billiot and Flores were apparently concerned about the heavy traffic from the party and had gone outside to move their car.

The Rodriguez brothers, who lived across the street, began to beat the two men in front of Billiot's home, officials said. The brothers took the men to a nearby cemetery, where they continued beating them with a tire jack, investigators said.

The beating stopped when the two men were believed to be dead, Foster said. They were

found by a cemetery groundskeeper. Billiot, 24, was dead. The friend was alive, but was in a coma for a long while. Friends said yesterday that his condition has improved.

Investigators could not find the Rodriguez brothers.

Amanda Rodriguez said she was surprised to learn of her sons' arrests late yesterday. She said she had not spoken to the two youngest of her 11 children since they disappeared.

"It's been a long time since I've seen them," said Rodriguez, 74, as she sat at the kitchen table of her home in the 1600 block of Homan Avenue. "I really never knew what happened."

Lorethea Billiot, Douglas' mother, said she was relieved to learn that the men suspected of killing her sons had finally been apprehended.

"It's hard on your heart, but I never did give up," said Billiot, 64, from her north Fort Worth home.

Since the slayings, Billy Jack Rodriguez had married, had two children and was working as a manager at a Phoenix company, Hiebert said. Gilbert Rodriguez worked at the same company, using the name Angel Soria. He had been arrested on four felony counts including drug possession and auto theft, and Soria's fingerprints matched Rodriguez's in a recent check.

"He was probably thinking this was all behind him, but he obviously didn't give up his criminal ways," Hiebert said.

Chief deputy fired, accused of threatening another officer

BY JACK DOUGLAS JR.
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

FORT WORTH — One of the top commanders of the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department was fired late last month after he was accused of making "heinous" and "shocking" statements to another ranking officer that bordered on "criminal behavior," documents and officials disclosed.

Chief Deputy Pat Howell, who was in charge of the Sheriff's Department's special operations division, was fired June 25 after being accused of making "terroristic threats" against another chief deputy, according to Howell's lawyer and a letter written by Sheriff David Williams.

Howell's attorney, Jim Lane, filed an appeal this week with the Sheriff's Department's Civil Service Commission, in which Howell says he did nothing wrong. The sheriff's allegations were included in the filing.

Reached at his home, Howell said he could not talk. "My attorneys told me I couldn't comment. I'd sure like to," he said, adding, "It's just a little bizarre, is all I can say."

Lane said that neither he nor his client has been informed about what Howell is accused of saying, but that the comments are said to have been made against Hank Pope, another chief deputy who is chief of staff for the Sheriff's Department.

Neither Pope nor Williams could be reached yesterday to comment.

Lane said that after Howell received his terse, five-paragraph letter of termination from Williams, "They escorted him out the back door and left him standing alone in the parking lot."

Howell, an 11-year veteran of

the Sheriff's Department and a chief deputy for the past five years, was once considered one of Williams' most trusted officers.

But the sheriff says in his letter to Howell: "In view of the heinous and shocking statements made by you to a fellow officer in such a calculated and deliberate manner ... I cannot imagine what other outrageous comments you may have expressed to others that I have yet to learn.

"Therefore, it is my obligation to inform you that the confidence I had in you has been totally lost."

Williams continues, "Based on your gross misconduct and vicious statements towards a fellow officer, bordering on criminal behavior, which includes expression of terroristic threats and felony retaliation against a peace officer, you have forced me to terminate your employment effective this date."

Lane contends that Howell is protected by civil service provisions and is entitled to an appeal hearing. County officials maintain that he is exempt from civil service protection because of his high rank in the Sheriff's Department and because Williams appointed him to chief deputy.

Wednesday, July 9, 1997

Sheriff's deputies say fugitive's eyes tell no lies

BY MICHAEL S. LEE
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

FORT WORTH — One of Tarrant County's 10 most wanted fugitives tried to evade the law again Monday, but his blue eyes gave him away, authorities said.

David Dwayne Summerville, 28, was wanted for driving while intoxicated and aggravated assault on a peace officer when sheriff's deputies received a Crime Stoppers tip and traced him to an apartment in the 7700 block of Crowley Road, said Cmdr. James Skidmore, a sheriff's spokesman.

Summerville, who has an almost identical twin brother, told the deputies that they had the wrong man, Skidmore said.

"The deputies were already

"The deputies were already aware of the fact [the twin brother] has one green eye and one blue eye and [Summerville] has two blue eyes, and there he was with two blue eyes."

— Cmdr. James Skidmore
Sheriff's Department spokesman

aware of the fact [the twin brother] has one green eye and one blue eye and [Summerville] has two blue eyes, and there he was with two blue eyes," Skidmore said.

The twin brother's name was not released because he has not been charged with a crime.

Summerville has been arrested 39 times since 1987, including on 14 driving while intoxicated charges, nine aggravated assault on a peace officer charges, and other charges including marijuana possession and unlawfully carrying a weapon. No convictions appear on his record.

He was put on the list of the county's most wanted fugitives when he didn't show up for a court hearing after his arrest April 3, 1996, on charges of aggravated assault on a peace officer.

He was being held without bail yesterday in the Tarrant County Jail.

Tuesday, July 15, 1997 T

No one was seriously injured in the 3 p.m. incident at the Cherry Hill Apartments in the 5900 block of Callaston Lane. However, Sam and seven other families were looking for another place to live after Fort Worth city officials declared their apartments structurally unsound.

"Chalk, glass, plaster and smoke started falling on me," Sam said. "The car shook the whole place and knocked me to the floor. I started screaming because I didn't know what was going on. I thought it was a dream."

The impact knocked out two load-bearing walls, displacing the front wall and making the second floor unstable, according to Brian McGraw, fire protection engineer for the Fort Worth Fire Department. An estimate of the cost of the damage was not available last night.

"We had to evacuate the entire building," McGraw said. "We have to wait until the car is removed before we can determine how extensive the damage is."

Authorities did not release the young driver's name, and it was not clear whether she or her family will be cited. The family would not answer a reporter's questions yesterday afternoon.

Gary Smith, an off-duty Tarrant County Sheriff's Department officer who works at the apartment complex, said the girl was



Star-Telegram/KEVIN FUJII

Gary Smith, an off-duty Tarrant County Sheriff's officer, looks at the accident scene yesterday.

driving her grandmother's rental car.

"Apparently she got behind the wheel of the car to drive herself to the mail boxes," Smith said. "She drove forward, jumped the curb and knocked out the retaining walls along the sidewalk."

"She panicked, put the car in reverse and came crashing into this apartment."

A young friend of the girl helped her climb out of Sam's apartment through a car window. She fled down the street, leaving the car's motor running, Smith said.

"I was sitting at my table doing paperwork when all of a sudden, boom!" resident Frederick Henry said. "I thought it was an earthquake or something. I just got up and ran out."

Henry, 25, who lives on the second floor and not far from where the car hit the building, said a crack in his ceiling stretches across two rooms.

Sam had to climb around the car and out onto her patio to escape her apartment.

"I could be dead right now," she said. "I watch *Rap City* faithfully everyday. If my boss hadn't asked me to come into work, I would have been sitting on that sofa watching the show."

The marble top of her coffee table, which is too heavy for one person to lift, was pushed off its base and landed in the VCR. A portion of the ceiling collapsed and the car crushed many items in the living room. But a dining room set, which was inches from the driver's door, was intact, including the floral centerpiece and candlesticks it held.

The apartment management was working to find lodging for the displaced families, said Nancy Hart, a regional property manager.

Some tenants were allowed inside to collect a few items and clothing for the next few days until the property is further inspected.

"We are scurrying to try an accommodate everyone," Hart said. "Some have already been placed in other units."

Sheriff's gun range

plan questioned

BY NEIL STRASSMAN
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

FORT WORTH — Tarrant County commissioners balked yesterday at paying \$1.2 million for a sheriff's shooting range.

Although the Commissioners Court allocated \$450,000 for such a range in 1995, there was little support yesterday for providing an additional \$750,000 needed to begin the work.

Sheriff David Williams, who in recent years added drug-sniffing dogs, surplus helicopters and a SWAT team to the sheriff's office, told the commissioners at yesterday afternoon's budget hearing that his department needs the range that he wants to build in Kennedale so that 800 sworn peace officers can get their annual weapons qualification.

The commissioners wanted to know why the deputies can't use the Fort Worth police range instead of building their own, and even Pct. 4 Commissioner J.D. Johnson, among the strongest supporters of the Sheriff's Department, had his doubts.

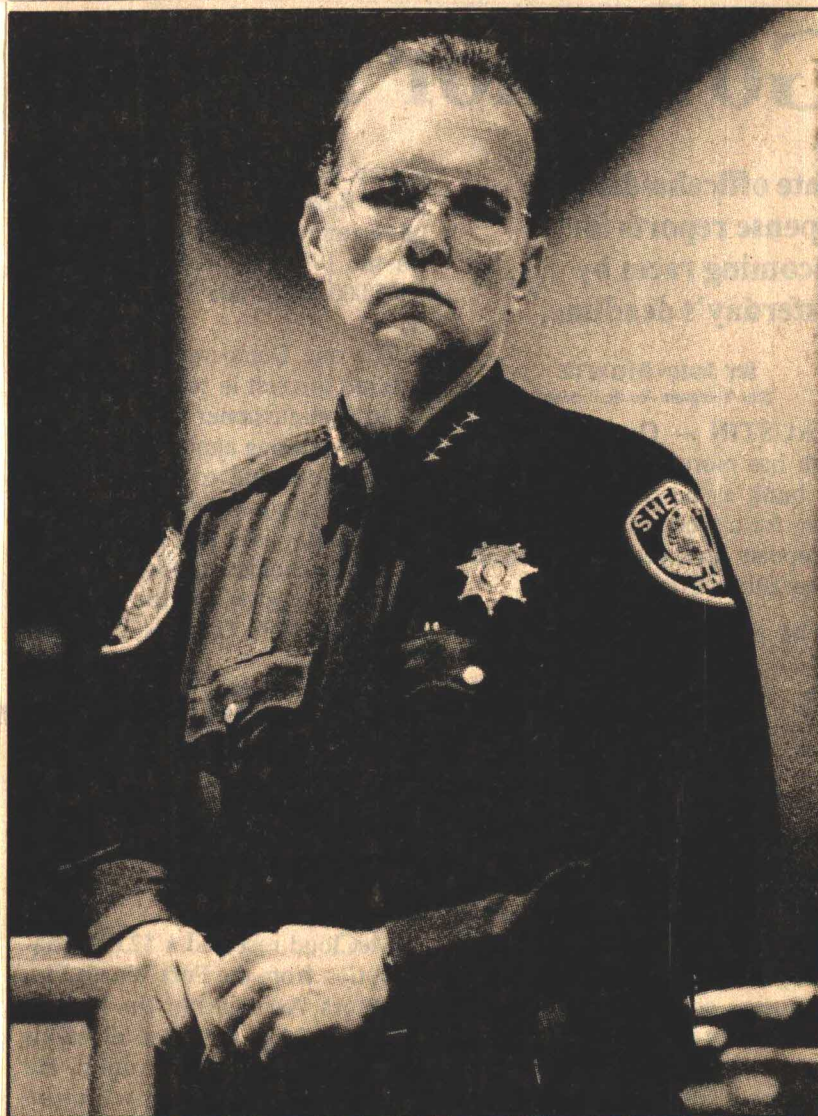
"I can't believe we can't find something closer. I hate to see us spend money at any remote location," Johnson said.

Chief Deputy Hank Pope said that scheduling at the Fort Worth range is always difficult, and that there are environmental problems from lead contamination associated with the Sheriff's Department's continued use of the Tarrant Regional Water District's shooting range at Eagle Mountain Lake.

The request for the shooting range was just one item, albeit a large one, in the sheriff's 1998 budget request for the 1,342-employee department. It accounts for the largest share of county spending, about 25 percent of the total county budget.

"We realize there are limited dollars and that public safety is not a revenue generator, but one of the things we're most proud of is demonstrating how the money is spent."

— Sheriff David Williams



Star-Telegram / RON JENKINS

Tarrant County Sheriff David Williams presents his budget proposal at Commissioner's Court yesterday.

Initially, Williams had proposed a \$59.5 million budget, roughly 42 percent more than the department spent in 1996. Included in the proposed budget were 122 new positions. Williams presented a pared-down budget, defending only a handful of new positions as es-

sential.

Williams asked for 21 new deputies to replace jailers temporarily assigned to the warrants section, an additional patrol deputy, a person to answer questions from the public in place of the automated answering system, a deputy to visit schools, a crime prevention deputy, two computer network coordinators and several other positions.

"It's such a large department and there's so many compelling issues. So much of what we bring to the table are things we feel obligated to make the commissioners aware of,"

Williams said at the close of the grueling three-hour session. "We realize there are limited dollars and that public safety is not a revenue generator, but one of the things we're most proud of is demonstrating how the money is spent."

The first hour of his budget presentation was a video on the de-

partment's accomplishments, interspersed with comments from Williams on the success of the warrant program, a victims assistance program and a violent repeat offender program, and on keeping the jail doors open, unlike the previous sheriff.

"Last year we processed over 52,000 prisoners," he said. "Today we have the lowest crime rates since the 1970s. If I can't take and hold prisoners we can't reduce crime."

The jail accounts for nearly two-thirds of the sheriff's budget.

County Judge Tom Vandergriff and Pct. 2 Commissioner Marti VanRavenswaay said they were frustrated by the budget process because the county is waiting for information from the Tarrant Appraisal District on how much revenue it will get. The report is due July 25.

"Until we get some revenue estimates I hate to approve or reject any items," Vandergriff said.

But Pct. 3 Commissioner Glen Whitley was more straightforward.

"The gun range and those types of things, I don't know that I can justify spending money on that," he said.

Tarrant sheriff replaces terminated chief deputy

BY NEIL STRASSMAN
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

FORT WORTH — Tarrant County Sheriff David Williams has promoted Dave Dunaway to chief deputy to replace recently fired Chief Deputy Pat Howell.

Dunaway, 52, a 24-year veteran of the Texas Department of Public Safety, joined the Sheriff's Department a year ago as a captain in charge of the criminal investigation division.

As chief deputy, Dunaway will be in charge of the department's law enforcement operations, said Cmdr. Jim Skidmore, Sheriff's Department spokesman.

While working for DPS, Dunaway spent seven years as a highway patrolman, seven years as an intelligence agent and 10 years as one of two Texas Rangers responsible for the Fort Worth area. He retired from the DPS in June 1996.

Williams said yesterday that he is

pleased to have a man of Dunaway's "experience and knowledge" in the chief deputy's position. The other chief deputies are Hank Pope, chief of staff for the Sheriff's Department, and Savala Swanson, in charge of the jail.

Howell, who Dunaway replaced, was fired June 25 after he was accused of making "heinous" and "shocking" statements — "terroristic threats" — that bordered on "criminal behavior" against Pope, according to Howell's lawyer, Jim Lane, and a letter written by Williams.

Lane filed an appeal with the Sheriff's Department's Civil Service Commission, denying the allegations, but county officials maintain that Howell is exempt from civil service protection because of his high rank in the Sheriff's Department and because Williams appointed him to chief deputy.

Hearing set for deputy fired over threat allegation

BY JACK DOUGLAS JR.
AND NEIL STRASSMAN
Star-Telegram Staff Writers

FORT WORTH — A chief deputy with the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department was fired last month after he was accused of threatening to cut the throat of another ranking officer with piano wire, officials said yesterday.

Pat Howell, a 10-year veteran of the department who was head of the special operations division when he was let go, denied yesterday that he made such a threat.

"I don't own a piano," Howell said.

In another development, a deal has apparently fallen apart that would have rescinded the June 25 firing and allowed Howell to resign with six months' pay at a

(More on HOWELL on Page 4)

Star-Telegram / Tuesday, July 29, 1997

Howell

From Page 1B

captain's rank.

Instead, a hearing is scheduled for Monday before the Sheriff's Civil Service Commission, Howell's attorney said.

Yesterday, several sources said Howell was accused of threatening executive Chief Deputy Hank Pope, chief of staff operations, by telling Pope that he would one day slip up behind him with piano wire, cut his throat, "and that he would never know it was coming."

Howell's attorney, Jim Lane, confirmed that the Sheriff's Department had made such a claim against his client.

"Those are the alleged facts of the alleged terroristic threat," Lane said, adding, "We certainly and unequivocally deny those allegations. ... This whole thing has almost gotten comical."

Sheriff David Williams fired Howell in a letter to his former top deputy, saying Howell had made "heinous" and "shocking" statements to another ranking officer. Williams could not be reached to comment yesterday.

In his letter, Williams describes the statements as "terroristic threats" that bordered on "criminal behavior."

A Sheriff's Department spokesman said Pope was on vacation yesterday and was unavailable for comment.

Lt. John Dalton, another Sheriff's Department spokesman, said

that he did not know the specifics on why Howell was fired and that he could not comment.

In the deal that now appears dead, Williams sent Howell a letter July 17 offering him the opportunity to resign, Lane said.

"The sheriff wrote him a letter saying he was changing it [termination] to a resignation and would pay him not more than 180 days of pay," Lane said.

"We want the deal. If we get a check, there won't be a need for a hearing," he said.

Tarrant County Auditor Renee Tidwell received a request from the sheriff the next day to reclassify Howell's termination as a resignation and to pay him the percentage of accrued sick leave to which he was entitled.

"We processed the payment like we would for any other employee. From time to time we do get requests to change a termination to a resignation," she said.

Tidwell, who as of yesterday had not received a request to issue a check to Howell for six months' captain's pay — about \$26,000 — said that in any case, the law prevents her from writing such a check.

"Based on state law, I couldn't have written the check unless it was part of the settlement of a lawsuit," Tidwell said.

A check could be written to Howell if he had an employment contract with a provision for severance pay, but county employees don't have employment contracts and can't be paid for work they haven't done, she said.

"Any agreement must comport

with the law," said Marc Richman, a Dallas attorney who occasionally represents Williams in civil matters. "There is no official settlement. There is no offer or settlement that has been accepted, and I am not aware of the sheriff offering to pay him any money."

Lane said the former chief deputy should have been returned to the ranks as a captain and not been fired. Howell is seeking reinstatement as a sheriff's captain and back pay, but no damages, Lane said.

Lane contends that civil service provisions protect Howell and that he is entitled to an appeal hearing before the commission. County officials maintain that he is exempt from civil service protection because of his high rank and because Williams appointed him chief deputy.

"The hearing is limited to the question of whether the civil service commission has jurisdiction over his firing," said David Hudson, Tarrant County assistant district attorney.

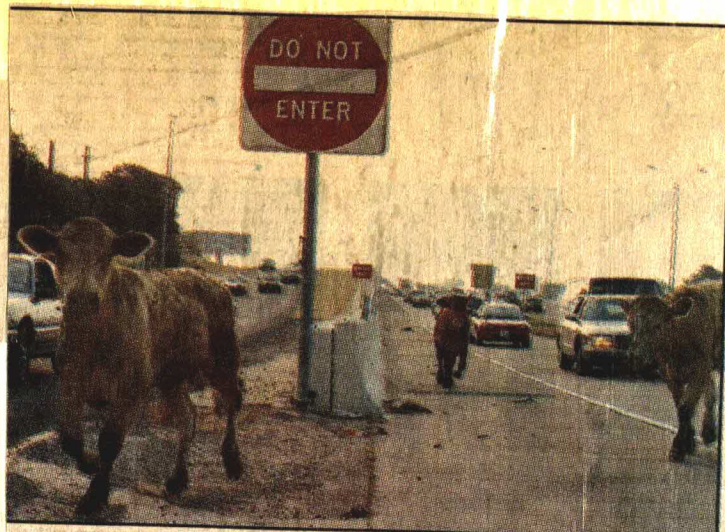
Howell was chief deputy over operations and the jail and also served as captain over the department's internal affairs division. He previously worked for the Tarrant County district attorney's office as an investigator and as a Texas Department of Public Safety highway patrolman in the Fort Worth area.

Williams has promoted Dave Dunaway, 52, a former Texas Ranger and a 24-year veteran of the Texas Department of Public Safety, to chief deputy to replace Howell.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 1, 1997

An urban roundup

Accident spills cattle onto freeway



Special to the Star-Telegram/DAVID ROBISON



About 40 cattle escaped yesterday when a truck overturned in southeast Fort Worth. Top, some of the cattle turn Interstate 20

Star-Telegram/PAUL MOSELEY

into an escape route. Above, James Skidmore of the Sheriff's Department tries to calm a roped animal. STORY ON PAGE 24A

Wreck makes officers Cowboys for a day



BY CHRISTY GONZALES
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

FORT WORTH — Some days they dodge bullets. Yesterday, they dodged bulls.

Officers from several area law enforcement agencies began rounding up bovines at 7:45 a.m. after a double-decker trailer hauling 93 head of cattle overturned at the interchange of Interstate 20 and Loop 820 in far southeast Fort Worth, said Tarrant County Sheriff's Department Cmdr. James Skidmore.

About 40 animals wasted no time moo-ving all over the place, some as far as a mile away from the accident site.

"At one point, we had cattle in four different cities," Skidmore said.

Between 50 and 60 police officers from Fort Worth, Arlington and Kennedale spent eight hours chasing and capturing the cattle. Crews included animal control workers from Kennedale, Fort Worth and Arlington and two dozen Fort

Worth firefighters who cut the aluminum top of the trailer to free trapped animals.

The cattle were taken to a holding area for stray livestock in the Fort Worth Stockyards. About a dozen animals died or had to be euthanized.

The accident tied up traffic for more than four hours.

One deputy sheriff suffered a severely bruised leg.

The driver, who was not seriously injured, was westbound on I-20 where I-20 curves at the Loop 820 interchange when the trailer flipped, Skidmore said.

In the past year, the Sheriff's Department has handled four incidents involving overturned trucks that were carrying animals, he said.

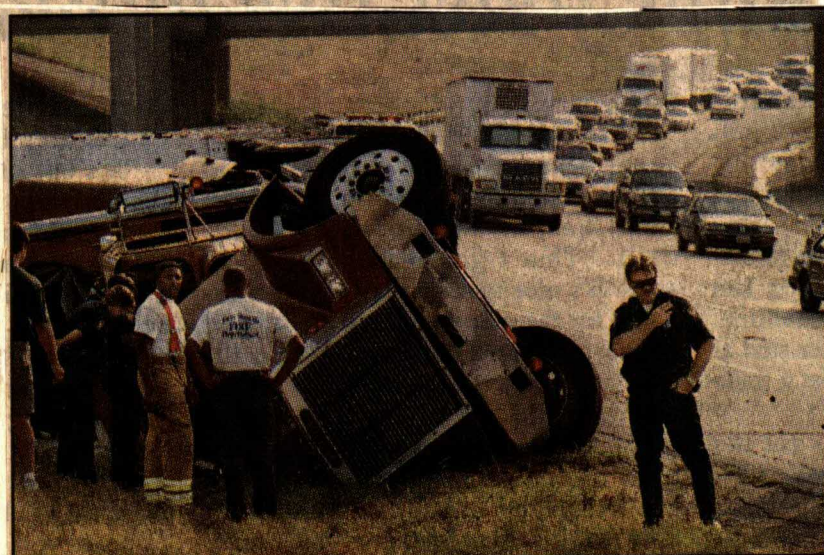
"It's all a part of public service," Skidmore said. "So if it means getting down in the grass and getting dirty and getting bunged and banged up and 'rasslin a steer — that's what we do. It's part of the job."

Truck driver Dan Goodin surveys the site of his wrecked cattle truck in southeast Fort Worth. About 40 cattle escaped, and the accident tied up traffic for more than four hours.





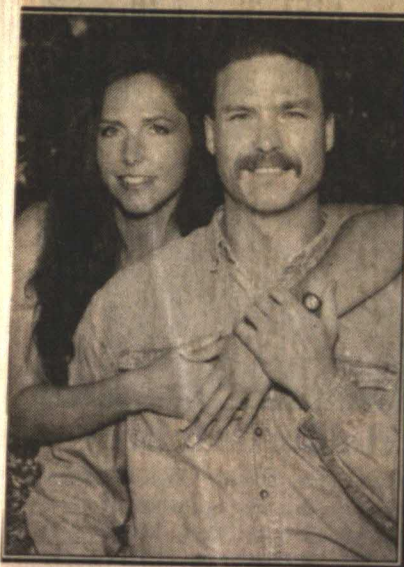
Tarrant County Sheriff's Department Deputy Ralph Clemons tries to lasso a bull that escaped from an overturned cattle truck at the Interstate 20-Loop 820 interchange. At left, Clemons tries to calm his horse after a bull bolted, wrapping the rope around the horse's rear legs.



Fort Worth police officer S.W. Cooper talks on his radio at the scene of the overturned truck. Law enforcement officers from Fort Worth, Arlington and Kennedale worked to round up the escaped cattle.

ENGAGEMENTS

Sunday, August 17, 1997 / Star-Telegram



Williams-Wanzor

Sandra Wanzor of Joshua announces the engagement of her daughter, Jorjana Wanzor of Watauga, to Lee Williams of Weatherford. He is the son of Laster and Mary Jo Williams of Lubbock.

The bride-elect is employed by the Fort Worth Police Department. The prospective bridegroom received his associate's degree in applied science from South Plains College. He is employed by Siemens ElectroCom L.P.

They plan to marry in September at Marty Leonard Chapel.

OBITUARIES

Sunday, September 14, 1997

Milton Wayne Cook

FORT WORTH — Milton Wayne Cook, 55, a retired Tarrant County Sheriff Department deputy, died Thursday, Sept. 11, 1997, in Fort Worth.

Funeral: 2 p.m. Tuesday at Laurel Land Memorial Chapel. Burial: Laurel Land Memorial Park. Visitation: 6 to 8 p.m. Monday at Laurel Land Funeral Home, Fort Worth.

Milton Cook was born Jan. 23, 1942, in Fort Worth.

Survivors: Sons, Kevin Wayne Cook and Kurtis DeWayne Cook, both of Everman, and Jeffery Scott Cook of Haltom City; daughter, Karla Wynett Cook of Arlington; parents, Floyd and Doris Cook of Mansfield; brother, Terry Allen Cook of Mansfield; sister, Linda Cook Lacey of Mansfield; and six grandchildren.

Laurel Land Funeral Home of Fort Worth
7100 Crowley Road, (817) 293-1350



Helicopter crash kills 2 deputies

BY KATHY SANDERS
AND NEIL STRASSMAN
Star-Telegram Staff Writers

EAGLE MOUNTAIN LAKE
— A Tarrant County sheriff's helicopter on an investigative surveillance flight plummeted from the sky and crashed yesterday morning, killing the pilot of the sheriff's controversial air fleet and another deputy.

Investigators quoted unidentified witnesses as saying that the helicopter, a military surplus OH-58 Bell Ranger, was flying over an airstrip owned by Kenneth Copeland Ministries when it suddenly "dropped straight down" and crashed east of Eagle Mountain Lake about 9:50 a.m.

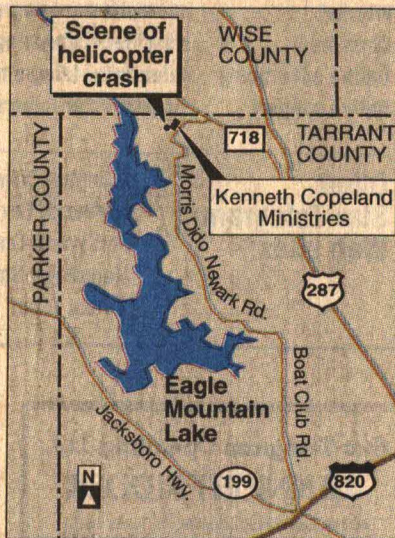
The aircraft slammed on its skids, crushing the undercarriage, but remained upright with its rotor angled skyward. There was no explosion or fire, and the cause of the crash had not been determined.

"As far as we can tell, it came straight down as it is," said Lt. John Dalton, a sheriff's spokesman. "It looks like it's in a ditch and it's not. It's flat."

He said several people witnessed the crash, but "we can't comment on what the witnesses said."

The impact killed Lt. George Maurice "Copter" Hendrix, the 51-year-old pilot who spearheaded the sheriff's effort to acquire the helicopters, and Deputy Thomas Jay Smith, 45.

The helicopter was one of two OH-58A Kiowas owned by the Sheriff's Department. Sheriff David Williams initially set up the air fleet in July 1994 with three donated military surplus choppers



Star-Telegram

Inside:

- ▶ Future of sheriff's helicopter program is in doubt. **23A**
- ▶ Helicopters criticized from the beginning. **Bud Kennedy, 1B**

— 1960s-era Hughes OH-6s — but eventually traded them for the OH-58s, a military version of the Bell JetRanger 206.

The sheriff's venture into aircraft stirred immediate controversy and accusations that Williams was unduly enamored with law enforcement hardware. He had previously acquired souped-up Chevrolet Camaros, drug-sniffing dogs and submachine guns for a tactical weapons team, bolstering his deputies' duties as law officers over their traditional role as jailers.

Williams said at the time that he wanted the copters for drug surveillance and to aid other law enforce-

ment agencies in investigations and emergencies.

County commissioners said yesterday that they will re-evaluate their support of the program.

"The sheriff has to come to the Commissioners Court and justify why he wants to continue the program after this tragic incident," Commissioner Marti Van-Ravenswaay said.

Speaking at a late-afternoon news conference at Copeland Ministries, Williams praised Hendrix and Smith as "fine officers" and said unexpected death is "something we know in law enforcement can happen."

He said the deputies were on an "airborne reconnaissance ... intelligence-gathering" mission related to a criminal investigation.

He would not elaborate on the nature of the investigation.

Earlier in the afternoon, Georgia Snyder, lead investigator for the National Transportation Safety Board, said investigators had "preliminary information that the helicopter had been doing practicing and may have just taken off from this airport when they experienced a problem and were attempting to make an emergency landing."

She said there was no obvious sign that anything on the aircraft had come apart in flight.

John Clables, the Federal Aviation Administration's spokesman for the Southwest region, said the pilot did not radio a distress call and was not in contact with air traffic controllers when the helicopter went down.

By the time rescuers arrived at the crash site, bystanders had pulled the two men out of the wreckage and were performing car-

diopulmonary resuscitation, said Danny Martin, a paramedic with the Eagle Mountain Volunteer Fire Department.

"They had head injuries, spinal injuries, multiple-system trauma from the hard impact," he said.

The crash site, in an unincorporated part of northwest Tarrant County, was on Copeland property off Morris Dido Newark Road. The religious organization has allowed the Sheriff's Department helicopters to use its airstrip for practice landings and takeoffs, said Barry Tubbs, associate minister for the group.

After the crash, the property entrance at Morris Dido Newark Road was guarded by several deputies and security officers.

Williams arrived at the site in late afternoon, although several high-ranking members of his department, a county commissioner, constables, state troopers and local volunteer firefighters were there throughout the day.

Dalton, the sheriff's spokesman, said the Sheriff's Department was researching Hendrix's medical and flight certifications and would turn them over to the NTSB, along with the copter's mechanical records.

Hendrix is not listed in the FAA's database as a licensed pilot with a current medical certificate, according to a computer search conducted by the *Star-Telegram*.

But an FAA source said pilots of public-use aircraft, such as a sheriff's helicopter, aren't required to hold pilot's licenses and medical certificates. It was unclear yesterday what additional training or certification Hendrix might have received in the OH-58 other than while in the military.

Williams said Hendrix had 2,400 hours of flight time and was a retired Army colonel with combat duty in Vietnam.

The sheriff described Hendrix as "a well-trained helicopter pilot. The job, needless to say, has risks and we understand that."

County Commissioner J.D. Johnson, who inspected the crash site, said the Sheriff's Department "maintained the helicopters properly and had qualified pilots. Malfunctions are going to happen."

Witnesses to the crash told investigators that the "tail was going around" the body of the helicopter as it went down, Johnson said. The Sheriff's Department acquired the helicopters from the federal government, which in recent years has donated more than two dozen surplus aircraft to sheriff's departments in about 15 states.

Maintenance and other expenses, including hangar rent and fuel, are financed with money from property seized in drug cases.

The *Star-Telegram* asked to inspect the helicopters' flight logs on July 18, but the Sheriff's Department has refused to release the records. The newspaper has appealed to the state attorney general's office.

FAA records show that the helicopter was registered to the Sheriff's Department on June 19. Williams said it was 25 years old with 3,700 hours of flight time.

Bell Helicopter-Textron spokesman Dick Davies said the company had "no specific information on the aircraft that crashed," but that a Bell representative was assisting the NTSB in the investigation. The sheriff's helicopters are kept at the Air Star hangar at

Meacham Airport, several miles from Copeland's property.

The department rented the hangar space for "in the neighborhood of \$300 a month," said Reed Pigman, president of Texas Jet Inc., owner of the hangar.

"I gave them a discounted rate because I was supportive of their [air command] program," Pigman said. In a mid-July interview at the hangar, Hendrix said one of the sheriff's aircraft had about 3,700 flight hours on it and the other about 4,000 hours.

"The helicopters are preflighted every morning and sit fueled up, ready to go," Hendrix said in the interview. "We can be in the air in a few minutes."

He said the Army maintained the helicopters in "pristine condition" and that the Sheriff's Depart-

ment had maintained that "high level" of maintenance. The helicopters have a range of "about two hours flight time" and travel at about 80 to 90 mph, he said.

"People think we're running these helicopters on three eight-hour shifts, but that's not what we do. We're on an on-call basis and don't fly a certain number of hours every day," Hendrix said. "If you don't have a reason to get in it [the helicopter], don't get in it."

Hendrix said in the July interview that Deputy Bob Maehring is the regular pilot of either helicopter.

"I'm just a back-up guy," he said.

Staff writer Jack Douglas Jr., Chris Vaughn, G. Chambers Williams III, Michael Weisenstein and Anita Baker contributed to this report.



Star-Telegram/RON JENKINS

Tarrant County Sheriff David Williams, center, speaks at a news conference after the helicopter crash that killed two of his officers. Second from left is crash investigator Georgia Snyder.

Tarrant airstrip where two died was part of WWII training base

BY ANITA BAKER

Star-Telegram Staff Writer

For decades before the Kenneth Copeland Ministries bought a small north-west Tarrant County airstrip where two sheriff's deputies died in a helicopter crash yesterday, military aircraft used the field.

Built during World War II, the airfield accommodated Marine Corps, Army and National Guard aircraft for more than 30 years.

The runway is part of 1,200 acres bordering Eagle Mountain Lake that the religious organization bought more than 10 years ago, said associate minister Barry Tubbs.

The ministries has kept the strip maintained to accommodate occasional flights for two airplanes the organization owns, and had agreed to allow Sheriff's Department helicopters to use it for practice landings and takeoffs, Tubbs said.

"We had not entered into any contracts. It was just an accommodation on our part," he said about the agreement. Tubbs said deputies probably used the field no more than a half-dozen times a year.

"Typically, they would call and let us know they would be coming out, but I don't know if they did this morning," he said yesterday.

During the war years, the strip was laid for a Marine Corps air station where pilots

received preliminary training in small aircraft, said Bill Fairley, a history columnist for the *Star-Telegram*.

Cross-country military aircraft would often stop over to refuel before completing their flights, he said.

Later, the land was transferred to the Army, which also used Eagle Mountain Lake to land seaplanes.

After the war, it became a training facil-

ity for Fort Worth units of the Texas Army National Guard where Fairley served from 1948 to 1950.

It remained an active base until after the 1950s or '60s when the National Guard used it only for weekend training, said Bill Abernathy, who also once served there.

Copeland Ministries purchased it from the National Guard, he said.

Fatal copter crash puts future of sheriff's program in doubt

BY NEIL STRASSMAN
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

FORT WORTH — Sheriff David Williams' helicopters have been a source of controversy since the first donated 1960s-era helicopter touched down at Carswell Air Reserve Base in 1994 with Lt. Maurice Hendrix at the controls.

Since the county decided to accept the helicopters, Williams has been fighting off criticism and trying to calm doubts that he could operate the aircraft at no cost to taxpayers.

Even as the commissioners mourned the loss of two deputies yesterday, the crash of one of the department's two helicopters has put the future of the helicopter program in jeopardy.

"Anytime there's something

tragic that happens with a program, there will be a complete reconsideration," Commissioner Marti VanRavenswaay said. "The sheriff has to come to the Commissioners Court and justify why he wants to continue the program after this tragic incident."

Commissioner Glen Whitley said, "There's going to be a lot of thought and discussion on this."

County Judge Tom Vandergriff said: "We will have to wait further discussions with the sheriff to see if there will be a cessation of the program. Right now, our hearts go out to the families."

Williams told Tarrant County Commissioners when he received the county's first group of three donated former Army National

Guard OH-6 helicopters that he would not use taxpayer money to fund the operation of the fleet.

But from the beginning, Commissioners VanRavenswaay and Dionne Bagsby and then-Commissioner Bob Hampton suggested that the county reconsider the helicopters.

The sheriff told the commissioners then that the helicopters would be used for drug investigations and to augment the department's crime-fighting power.

"The sheriff was insistent upon having the program. He funded it through private donation and forfeited money," VanRavenswaay said.

Williams' chief campaign contributor, Ed Max, pledged money

to support the helicopter program. And Williams said he would fund the program — which he said at the time was the only sheriff's helicopter fleet in the state — through the sheriff's criminal forfeiture fund, which holds drug money and money from the sale of items seized because they were used in crimes.

Initially, the three Hughes OH-6 helicopters acquired were grounded by a tug of war between Williams and the county auditor, who both claimed control of the drug forfeiture money that the sheriff wanted to use for the aircraft. Williams won. But the OH-6 flew only a handful of times before the sheriff swapped choppers with the Riverside County Sheriff's Department

in California in March of 1995. Riverside got two OH-6s and Tarrant got the two more contemporary Bell Helicopter OH-58s, military versions of Bell Helicopter's Jet Ranger.

Bell Helicopter Textron donated \$24,000 worth of training to the Sheriff's Department. Hangar space for the two helicopters was donated by Texas Jet at Meacham Field. It was one of those OH-58s that crashed yesterday in northwest Tarrant County.

Both of the OH-58s, which Williams described as superior equipment, had to be adapted for the Sheriff's Department's use.

On Nov. 6, 1995, the department got one of the two OH-58s in the air for the first time, but the heli-

copter was used fewer than 20 hours over nine days before it was grounded Nov. 17 to install a searchlight. Sheriff's officials said they expected to have the helicopter back in action within a week and hoped to get the second one up within a year. Flight logs were not available to determine use of the helicopters since January 1996. The Sheriff's Department recently turned down a *Star-Telegram* request to inspect the helicopter flight logs.

The helicopters have been used for marijuana seizures, observations of suspected drug laboratories, car chases, elementary school visits, transporting deputies to aid another deputy and to take aerial crime-scene photos.



