

*Tarrant County
Sheriff's Department*



1st Annual Awards Banquet

December 11, 1992



*Tarrant County Sheriff's Department
Awards Banquet*

DECEMBER 11, 1992

7:00 P.M.

PRESENTATION OF COLORS	Tarrant County Sheriff's Department Color Guard
INVOCATION	Robert McGinty <i>Deputy Sheriff</i>
DINNER	
WELCOME Introduction Of Special Guests	Lt. Joe Tims <i>Master of Ceremonies</i>
GUEST SPEAKER	Honorable Bob Gill <i>Judge Elect Criminal District Court 213</i>
PRESENTATION OF AWARDS	Hamp Scruggs <i>Chief Deputy</i>
TCSO DEPUTY SHERIFF'S ASSOC. Special Presentations	Mack West <i>Deputy Sheriff</i>
REMARKS	David Williams <i>Sheriff Elect</i>
CLOSING	Lt. Joe Tims <i>Master of Ceremonies</i>

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Members who through their dedication and hard work
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Sheriff may face 2nd trial

Judge to announce decision in gun case

BY BILL HANNA
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

FORT WORTH — Tarrant County Sheriff Don Carpenter will stand trial on a perjury charge if he is found not guilty of a crime in giving a confiscated gun to County Commissioner J.D. Johson, the special prosecutor in the case said.

State District Judge Bill Burdock, who earlier this month heard testimony in Carpenter's trial on a theft-by-public-servant charge, was to announce his verdict in the gun case this afternoon.

"I will tell you unequivocally that if the judge finds him not guilty, I will immediately ask for a trial date on the perjury case," special prosecutor Galen Sumrow said yesterday.

Carpenter was indicted in May on theft and perjury charges, the latter accusation stemming from his grand jury testimony that he had never given guns to anyone other than law enforcement officers, Sumrow said.

Trying the perjury case "would be a waste of the taxpayers' time and money," said one of Carpenter's four lawyers, Marc H. Richman of Dallas.

"Let him try it. He'll never get to the jury with that one."

Sumrow also said he planned to ask the judge to immediately remove Carpenter from office if he were found guilty of either a felony or a misdemeanor in the gun case.

If found guilty of a third-degree felony, Carpenter could be sent to prison for two to 10 years and be fined up to \$10,000.

Carpenter, who is in his second term in office, has been on a paid leave of absence since January, when six other indictments were returned against him.

A Haltom City detective, David Williams, was elected sheriff in the general election Nov. 3 and is scheduled to assume office Jan. 1. He defeated Carpenter in the Republican primary.

Burdock said yesterday that he spent the weekend reviewing the legal issues and that his verdict today would be based on three legal (More on CARPENTER on Page 16)

Carpenter

From Page 13

questions.

"The primary issues are the statute of limitations, whether there was intent to deprive the owner of the weapon and the value of the weapon," Burdock said.

He said it would be unethical for him to discuss the matter further.

During the two days of testimony that ended 12 days ago, testimony conflicted concerning the value of the .38-caliber derringer that Carpenter gave Johnson. If the fair market value is \$200 or more, the crime Carpenter is charged with is a felony. But anything less would make it a misdemeanor and bring in the issue of the statute of limitations.

Carpenter gave Johnson the gun in November 1987. If the judge

ruled that a felony was committed, then the five-year felony statute of limitations applies. If the charge is a misdemeanor, the two-year statute of limitations applies.

The third issue before the judge deals with the question of who had a greater right to the gun: the sheriff or the gun's owner?

The the gun's owner asked Carpenter for the gun back. But because the owner was placed in John Peter Smith Hospital on a mental warrant, Carpenter's lawyers said the sheriff would have committed a crime if he had given it back.

The prosecution, however, said no crime was committed until Carpenter gave the gun to Johnson.

Johnson, who had the gun for four years, testified that he believed the gun had been loaned to him and that he would have returned it to Carpenter if he had been asked. Carpenter never asked for the gun back.

Lott denies child abuse at hearing

The man charged in the Tarrant County Courthouse shootings attends a child support proceeding.

By JACK DOUGLAS JR.
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

FORT WORTH — The man charged in the July 1 shooting rampage at the Tarrant County Courthouse appeared in court yesterday and denied separate allegations that he repeatedly abused his young son in Illinois.

"Gee, you catch on fast," George Lott said angrily, responding to a lawyer's question about whether he was disputing allegations that he ever abused his son, now 5.

Lott, who is charged in the courthouse shootings that left two people dead and three wounded, was in court yesterday for a child support hearing.

He also faces charges of sexual assault to a child in Illinois, where his ex-wife lives. Those charges accuse Lott, 45, of molesting his son
(More on LOTT on Page 16)

Lott

From Page 13

during his visits with the child after he and the boy's mother divorced in January 1990.

During the hearing yesterday, Lott faced his former wife, Margo Livesay, for the first time since the shootings at the courthouse.

Livesay is asking for back child support payments, totaling \$5,000, and a doubling of the \$1,000-a-month payment he is supposed to be making now. Livesay's attorney, Brian Webb of Dallas, said she wants the payment in a lump sum of \$312,000.

The money is needed, Webb said, to pay for counseling and therapy for Livesay's and Lott's son.

Webb said financial records show that Lott has liquid assets totaling about \$419,000.

The child support payments are exempt from another judge's order to freeze Lott's assets, according to Webb. That order is part of a civil suit filed by Judge David Farris, one of the three judges on the bench the day a gunman opened fire in the 2nd Court of Appeals courtroom.

State district Judge Bill Burdock said he would announce his decision on the child support payments Nov. 24.

In his opening remarks, Webb said Lott repeatedly sexually abused the couple's son with a "gun, a stick, a hand, a finger and other objects."

"It's brutal; it's cold-blooded," Webb said.

On the witness stand, Lott said: "I did not sexually abuse him . . . I believe Margo Livesay, my ex-wife, has sexually abused my son."

After the hearing, Livesay said she was surprised by Lott's contention that she molested her son.

"I can flatly say that's a lie. That's the first time I've ever heard him say I did it," she said.

Livesay testified her son is traumatized and will need extensive physical and psychological therapy for the rest of his life. "When I walk out of the room, he screams 'Mommy! Mommy!,'" she said of her son's condition.

During the early part of the hearing, Livesay appeared tense and she took several deep breaths when Lott walked past her, his feet shackled by leg irons. She has said through her attorney that she remains frightened of her former husband.

Lott, in a confession to a TV anchorman hours after the courthouse shootings, said he went on the rampage because of frustrations over his divorce to Livesay and the sexual assault charges filed in Peoria, Ill.

Lott, who has a law degree, is representing himself in both civil and criminal proceedings.

In yesterday's hearing, Webb said that Lott had left a "trail of tragedy in his wake."

Dressed in green jail clothes, Lott rose from his counsel table and said: "I'm going to have to object to this 'trail of tragedy.'"

"I don't believe that's been proven in court," Lott said. "It's real cute, but I'd ask that it be stricken from the record."

Burdock refused to remove Webb's comments from the record.

Lott is charged with capital murder in the courthouse shootings, which claimed the lives of Chris Marshall, 41, a Tarrant County prosecutor, and Dallas attorney John Edwards, 33.

Appellate court judges John Hill, 48, and Clyde Ashworth, 69, were wounded in the assault, as was Assistant District Attorney Steve Conder, 28.

Lott did not call any witnesses or take the witness stand after Webb rested his case. He said he did not think the proceeding would be fair to him because the court is "a good friend of Clyde Ashworth, who I am accused of shooting."

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Trust the man who wears the star

Congratulations, Tarrant County, in selecting David Williams as our next sheriff! We could not have voted for a more honest, qualified, hard-working person for the task.

My husband and I have had the honor of knowing David Williams for the past three years. In that time, we have known him on a professional as well as a personal basis. We saw firsthand his commitment to his family and his community. His character and credentials are indisputable and will make much needed improvements of our Sheriff's Department. One thing we can be sure of is when decisions are made, there won't be any coin-tossing.

Williams has four years to show the public what his friends and co-workers already know about him: We could not have chosen anyone better for sheriff than Williams.

**Melanie and Bill Vaden
Fort Worth**

Jail explosion linked to water heater or jailer's mistake

By THOMAS KOROSEC
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

FORT WORTH — Either a malfunction in a water heater or a jailer's mistake is suspected of causing the explosion last weekend at a Tarrant County Jail low-risk facility, a county official said yesterday.

Gary Kirby, Tarrant County director of facilities management, said a county-hired inspection company and an insurance inspector have offered differing theories on how the Saturday morning blast occurred.

Kirby, in an interview and in a presentation to the Tarrant County Commissioners Court, said the blast caused approximately \$10,000 in damage to the Cold Springs Road low-risk jail in north Fort Worth. The blast, which caused no serious injuries, moved an interior wall and knocked tiles and cinder blocks loose.

Kirby said the explosion took place in a duct that leads from the water heater and the boiler, both of which are fueled by gas.

Johnson Controls Inc., which is under contract to inspect boilers in county buildings, theorized that gas escaped from the water heater into the duct after a pilot light went out, Kirby said. The gas exploded when the heating boiler was turned on, the inspectors said.

But an insurance inspector who looked at the boiler yesterday said that the explosion may have been caused by a jailer who worked the boiler controls in the wrong order, Kirby said.

"That scenario is that some

switches were flipped in the wrong sequence when they were trying to start the boiler," he said.

The explosion, which shook the walls, occurred in the flue leading up from the boiler.

The jail facility, which used to be a public school building, should be repaired to the point that it can accept prisoners by Friday, Kirby said. It may take longer to repair and provide heat to the first floor than the second, he said.

The 2-story building was occupied by about 170 inmates at the time of the blast. The facility, along with an attached addition that was unaffected by the explosion, can hold 500 prisoners.

Jailer names Carpenter in sexual harassment suit

BY JOHN COUNCIL

Fort Worth Star-Telegram

FORT WORTH — A female Tarrant County jailer has filed suit against the county and Sheriff Don Carpenter alleging that a "good ol' boy" law enforcement network ignored her sexual harassment complaints last year.

In her lawsuit, Laura R. Dutton, who has been employed as a corrections officer in the jail for 18 months, says the county and Carpenter operated a "buddy network in which a sexually offensive atmosphere was not only permitted to exist but was fostered and flourished."

Dutton is seeking an undisclosed amount in damages in the suit

which was filed late Friday in the 67th State District Court.

Carpenter has been on paid administrative leave since January when a grand jury returned six indictments of official misconduct against him. Yesterday, the lone charge on which Carpenter was being prosecuted was dismissed. He could not be reached for comment yesterday.

"We're not saying that the sheriff harassed her personally," said Dutton's attorney, David Fielding. "But the buck stops there. He's responsible for the jail."

Acting Chief Deputy Jim Minter of the Sheriff's Department said that he could not comment on the

pending suit, but added that the department does its best to resolve sexual harassment complaints.

"We have a sexual harassment policy and adhere to that policy at the sheriff's department," Minter said. "We take immediate action when that type of situation is reported to us."

Dutton alleges that after she spurned the advances of a colleague last year, the colleague, other officers and even inmates began harassing her, referring to her by the nickname "Jugs."

Dutton also alleges that a ranking officer made comments that she and he would make a "good porno couple."

After complaining about the comments to sheriff's department officials, Dutton says she was transferred several times, but that the men who allegedly harassed her remained at their posts.

Minter said that the department has a male officer and a female officer who are responsible for handling sexual harassment and other civil rights complaints.

Ann Diamond, assistant district attorney who represents the county, declined to comment on the suit because it is pending.

In addition to the lawsuit, Dutton filed a sexual discrimination complaint with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission last May.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 1992

CARPENTER CASE THROWN OUT



Fort Worth Star-Telegram / JERRY W. HOEFER

Don Carpenter reacts after a judge dismisses a charge of theft by a public servant.

Misdemeanor is declared; sheriff faces another charge

BY BILL HANNA
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

FORT WORTH — A state district judge threw out a 1987 theft case against Sheriff Don Carpenter yesterday, but prosecutors vowed to appeal the ruling and take the sheriff back to court.

The judge determined that the value of a property room gun that Carpenter gave County Commissioner J.D. Johnson was less than \$200, which lowered the charge against him from a felony to a

misdemeanor and placed the case outside the two-year misdemeanor statute of limitations.

As state District Judge Bill Burdock read his decision, the 61-year-old Carpenter buried his hands in his face and broke into tears, hugging his wife and shaking the hands of supporters.

In the hallway outside the courtroom, Carpenter expressed relief and said he had been uncertain what the judge would do.

(More on SHERIFF on Page 2)

Sheriff

From Page 1

"I didn't know what to expect," he said before his lawyers hurried him away.

The sheriff has seven other indictments pending against him, and prosecutors said they plan to try the sheriff on one of them, a perjury charge, as soon as possible. Burdock said the earliest possible court date is in January.

Special prosecutor Galen Sumrow said he expects to appeal the judge's statute of limitations ruling to the Court of Criminal Appeals.

Prosecutors will contend that the two-year statute on misdemeanors should not apply if a defendant was originally indicted under a felony charge. The statute of limitations on felonies is five years.

If the Court of Criminal Appeals agrees with Sumrow's interpretation, the case could be sent back to Burdock's court for a new trial because the judge never ruled on whether the sheriff is guilty or not.

Defense lawyers expressed confidence that the higher court will back Burdock's ruling.

"We knew all along these charges shouldn't have been brought," defense attorney Joe Brent Johnson said. "He [Sumrow] targeted the sheriff. He was going to indict the sheriff even if it was nothing more [than] double parking."

Sumrow, however, contended yesterday that evidence in the trial indicates that even if Carpenter is not guilty of the theft charge, he committed perjury before a grand jury last year.

The grand jury investigated allegations that guns were missing from the Sheriff's Department property room and returned six indictments in January, contending that Carpenter had taken guns improperly and had falsified property room documents.

In May, another grand jury indicted Carpenter, contending that he lied to the first grand jury when he said he had never given guns to anyone outside the law-enforcement community.

"You look at J.D. Johnson's testimony and then you read the indictment and tell me if that isn't perjury," Sumrow said.

Carpenter's lawyers said J.D. Johnson was a former reserve police officer and was given the gun for law-enforcement purposes.

"Regardless of whether they go to a judge or jury they can't get there with a perjury charge," Joe Brent Johnson said.

Carpenter's job status does not change because of the judge's ruling, his lawyers said, and he will remain on a paid leave of absence.

Testimony in Carpenter's trial took place two weeks ago. He was tried on a charge of theft by a public servant for giving a confiscated gun to J.D. Johnson in November 1987.

The case centered on the value of the confiscated gun and because there was conflicting testimony about whether the gun was worth more than \$200, Burdock said he had reasonable doubts about its worth and ruled in favor of the defense.

"I cannot find in good conscience, beyond a reasonable doubt, that the value of the pistol was \$200 or more at the time of the transfer to Commissioner Johnson . . .," the judge said from the bench.

Because felony theft must involve items valued at more than \$200, Burdock's ruling made the case a misdemeanor subject to a two-year statute of limitations.

Burdock would not say after his decision whether he believes that Carpenter is guilty or not of the theft

Carpenter

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Carpenter's lawyers said J.D. Johnson was a former reserve police officer and was given the gun for law-enforcement purposes.

"Regardless of whether they go to a judge or jury they can't get there with a perjury charge," Joe Brent Johnson said. "We think, and this is the consensus of all of the sheriff's lawyers, that it's weaker than this case that the judge dismissed."

Carpenter's job status does not change because of the judge's ruling, his lawyers said, and he will remain on a paid leave of absence.

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Burdock would not say after his decision whether he believes that Carpenter is guilty or not of the theft charge.

"It would be the height of irresponsibility to say he was guilty or innocent of a crime that was beyond the statute of limitations," Burdock said in his chambers. "You don't get that far."



Sheriff Don Carpenter lowers his head into his hands after the court dismissed his charge of theft by a public servant.

JERRY W. HOEFER
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

Sheriff-elect's transition team criticized

Williams' panel excludes minorities

BY THOMAS KOROSEC
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

FORT WORTH — Tarrant County Sheriff-elect David Williams introduced a 12-member transition team of law enforcement professionals, county officials and businessmen yesterday but came under criticism for including no African-Americans or Hispanics in the group.

The team, which Williams said will "identify areas of concern" and educate him about the job, includes high-ranking lawmen such as Fort Worth Police Chief Thomas Windham and acting Chief Deputy Jim Minter.

Williams named one woman to the group, Criminal District Judge Sharen Wilson, but no minorities.

"Because of the time we had to work with, if we got the group too big it would be a little difficult to operate and identify these priority issues," Williams said in an interview after a news conference

yesterday at which the panel was unveiled.

"I know there are folks who are not represented who have valid input," the 38-year-old Republican said. "That is why I think it could be expanded in the future to include minority representation and broader representation from the community."

Reaction from minority leaders contacted yesterday was pointed.

"This is a mistake," said John Hernandez, chairman of the board of the Fort Worth Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. "If David is serious about representing everyone then this doesn't make sense. We definitely should be there [on the panel]. Nobody else should represent us. We should represent ourselves."

State District Judge Maryellen Hicks said, "That is so stupid; you can't leave out one-fourth of the community on day one.

"I think it's very important that the chief law enforcement officer say we are all important. Unless his message is one of inclusion we will continue to have serious problems."

African-Americans and Hispanics together make up 24 percent of the county's population, according to the 1990 Census. Minorities make up more than 60 percent of the Tarrant County Jail population, Minter said, adding that he did not have exact figures.

As of December, 4 percent of the Sheriff's Department's 996 employees were Hispanic and 10 percent were African-American, according to county records.

At yesterday's news conference, Williams said he has not decided whom he will place in the top positions in his office.

Windham, who with the rest of the team met with Williams after the news conference, said he saw Williams' inclusion of law enforcement professionals as a move that will strengthen interdepartmental cooperation.

"I think it will be a good partnership," he said. "Jim Minter started the process of establishing a partnership not only with the Fort Worth police but with all law enforcement agencies, and I hope we will be carrying that on."

Joel Glenn, head of security for the Bass family's downtown holdings and president of Security Partners, a home security company, will lead Williams' team.

"This is a great opportunity for a group of people outside and inside the Sheriff's Department to discuss general law enforcement problems in this county," Glenn said.

Other members of the group include County Judge Tom Vandergriff; Arlington Police Chief David Kunkle; Haltom City Police Chief Tom Cowan; Ronnie Goldman, a Fort Worth investor; Dan West, a Sheriff's Department patrolman; Rick Houck, a Sheriff's Department detention officer; and sheriff's Capt. Tony Wise.

Tom Wilder, a commercial real estate salesman and Williams' campaign manager, will be the team's vice chairman.

Williams said that after he takes office in January, some yet-to-be-determined members of the team will stay on as a strategic planning group.

"I think it is important that I just don't get input from the community every four years," Williams said. "It should be an ongoing process."

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3, 1992

Fingerprint system funds top Tarrant's wish list

BY STEFANI GAMMAGE KOPENEC
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

FORT WORTH — Want to help nab a crook this Christmas?

For about the cost of a Christmas card, you can pay to put a suspect's fingerprint card into a new regional computer system, says Tarrant County Commissioner Bob Hampton.

The automated fingerprint identification system, called AFIS, should be up and running by late next year, but prints from 175,000 cards have to be converted to digital impulses in the AFIS system, he said. Each conversion costs \$1.25.

The Citizens Crime Commission of Tarrant County is trying to raise

\$300,000 for the conversion and welcomes tax-deductible contributions, said board member Kay Day, chairwoman of the fund-raising effort.

"Give a crook a Christmas present and put his fingerprints in the AFIS system," Hampton said Tuesday. "Call your friends and tell them you're going to do them a favor in lieu of sending a Christmas card."

Donations made payable to the crime commission can be sent to Kay Day Inc., 2615 Merrick St., Fort Worth 76107.

"That's the best Christmas present I can think of for those guys [criminals]," Hampton said.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 1992

Officers to escort shoppers

BY FRANK PERKINS
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

FORT WORTH — The Tarrant County Deputy Sheriffs Association is handing out its Christmas gift to the public early this year.

About 30 deputies, including acting Chief Deputy Jim Minter, have volunteered to spend their off-duty hours from 6 to 10 p.m., in uniform, escorting shoppers and employees at Ridgmar Mall to their cars.

"We just want everybody to be safe for Christmas," said Deputy David Mann, who came up with the public service project for the organization.

Mann is the group's sergeant-at-arms.

He said he came up with the idea about two weeks ago and the association quickly supported it. "They really stepped forward and volunteered to help with it," he said yesterday.

He said Ridgmar was the first mall they contacted, and they decided to start the project there.

"We began the project Saturday night, and we intend to continue it every shopping day until Dec. 23," Mann said yesterday. "We hope to expand it to every major mall in Tarrant County, but that may have to wait until next year."

Mann said the deputies are volunteers and are providing the safety escort on their own time. "It is not costing the public or the county a dime," he said.

The uniformed deputies gather at the mall shortly before 6 p.m. and take up stations at mall entrances, ready to escort shoppers and mall employees.

"If the shoppers have parked somewhere else, we're ready to escort them to that location as well," Mann said.

Security check sped up for Tarrant courthouse workers

By FRANK PERKINS
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

FORT WORTH — County employees and court workers at the new Tarrant County Justice Center soon will be able to get through the building's security checkpoints without queuing in the long lines with hundreds of prospective jurors and other courthouse visitors.

Beginning Monday, the building's Lamar Street entrance will be reserved for the use of such employees from 7:15 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.

daily, according to acting Chief Deputy Jim Minter. After 8:30 a.m., the public will be allowed to use the entrance.

Minter made the change on orders yesterday from county commissioners after 153rd District Court Judge Sidney Farrar complained about the delays his employees faced.

"That will let them get in the building and through our security checkpoints without having to fight those long lines on jury days, or

weaken our security procedures," Minter said yesterday.

The action came after Farrar told commissioners that his staff had to come in at least an hour early to get through the security system in time to get his court in session by 8:30 to 9 a.m.

He applauded the employee-entrance idea.

"This should take care of a lot of our problems," Farrar said yesterday. "I knew we could find some way to help each other solve this

problem if we just worked together."

Walk-through metal detectors and X-ray machines manned by county security guards were installed after a July 1 shooting spree in the old 1893 courthouse. Two attorneys were killed, and two associate justices of the 2nd Court of Appeals and a third attorney were wounded.

George Lott, 45, has been charged with capital murder in the shootings

(More on SECURE on Page 32)

Secure

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and goes on trial Jan. 11 in Judge Sharen Wilson's Criminal District Court No. 1.

Since the shootings, security checkpoints have been installed in the Tarrant County Administration Building, Criminal Justice Building, old Courthouse, Civil Courts

Building, Criminal Justice Center, and old Criminal Courts and Jail Building. In addition, entrance into and exit from the buildings have been restricted.

The Commissioners Court determined that all who enter the buildings, including employees, judges and elected officials, must go through the checkpoints.

"We are secure as we can be with the personnel and equipment we have," Minter said.

Officials debate need for metal detectors

By STEFANI GAMMAGE KOPENEC
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

FORT WORTH — Despite beefed-up security after the fatal shootings at the Tarrant County Courthouse in the summer, city officials are still debating whether to install metal detectors at Municipal Court Building entrances.

Members of the Municipal Court Advisory Committee disagreed yes-

terday on the need for such detectors during a discussion on security measures.

Chief Judge Bonnie Sudderth has requested metal detectors, which officials estimated would cost up to \$200,000 to install, including the cost of paying four bailiffs to monitor the equipment at the building's

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Court

From Page 29

front and back entrances.

City Councilman David Chappell, chairman of the committee, said the cost of metal detectors might be lessened if the bailiffs are reassigned from courtrooms to monitor the equipment.

Sudderth's initial call for the devices came in August, one month after a gunman opened fire in the old granite courthouse, killing two attorneys and wounding two judges and another attorney. Since the July 1 shootings, metal detectors have been installed at county offices and courthouses downtown.

Two of the three councilmen on the committee requested another meeting between Sudderth and city officials and called on them to agree on a security system.

"We have had incidents in our courtroom with people with guns and people having violent outbursts," Sudderth said later in an interview.

People arrested off the street come to court with whatever is in their pockets, she said. The court handles Class C misdemeanors, including traffic citations and penal code offenses as well as violations of city codes, zoning, or health and sanitation regulations.

"We've had defendants arrested on warrants, and they'll come in, and after they search the area where they have been sitting, the marshals find guns," she said. "They [defendants] usually dump the weapon before they come to the courtroom, but that doesn't mean that someone who is inclined to violence would do that."

Bulletproof plating has been installed inside each of the five judges' benches, and an alarm system has been installed so that a judge can alert the marshal's office of a potential problem by simply pushing a button.

But Sudderth said the telephone-alarm system is not discreet enough because courtroom spectators can hear speed-dialing.

City officials said they will try to find a way to quiet the system.

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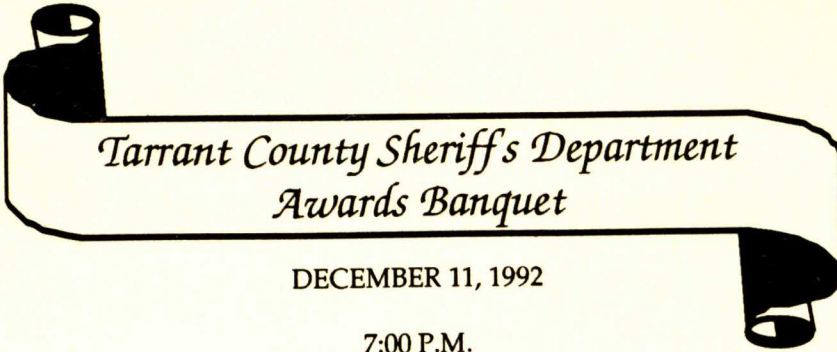
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DECEMBER 11, 1992

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Six Flags Over Texas
Industrial Professional Services, Inc.
Pepsi Cola Company
Piggly Wiggly
Hillwood Development Corporation
Thomas Rubber Stamp
Paul's Flower Boutique
4159th Association - Army Reserve
Stanley Printing
Coors Distributing Company
Professional Bondsmen of Tarrant County

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 11, 1992

LON EVANS 1911-1992



File photo

Diabetes claimed first one leg, then the other, but didn't keep Lon Evans from a 24-year career as Tarrant County sheriff. Mr. Evans died this morning.



Lon Evans: Became Tarrant's 34th sheriff in 1961.

Lon Evans, sheriff from '61 to '85, dies

Former sheriff remembered as law enforcement legend

BY KATHY SANDERS
AND STAN JONES
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

FORT WORTH — Former Tarrant County Sheriff Lon Evans, the legendary "Purple Lawman" and ex-TCU and All-Pro football player, died this morning at Harris Methodist Fort Worth. He would have been 81 on Christmas Day.

Mr. Evans served as sheriff for 24 years, retir-

ing in 1985, and reportedly was the first Texas sheriff to hire a black deputy. He was credited with bringing professionalism to the Sheriff's Department and earned his "Purple Lawman" moniker for his avid support of athletics at TCU, where he won all-conference honors in leading the Frogs to the Southwest Conference championship in 1932.

Funeral will be at 11 a.m. Monday at Green-
(More on EVANS on Page 4)

wood Funeral Home. Burial will be in Greenwood Memorial Park.

Professional, witty and dedicated, Mr. Evans, after his glorious collegiate and professional football career, jumped into a sheriff's department teeming in controversy and stayed for 24 years, weathering many a storm.

"Lon was a breath of fresh air," said Tarrant County Chief Deputy John Pempsell, a longtime friend. "He took away, not all the cowboy, but most of the cowboy out of the department. Shoes had to be polished; hats had to be square on the head.

"He brought professionalism to the sheriff's office."

After his retirement, Mr. Evans could not turn his back on law enforcement, actively working for passage of a bond package to finance the new justice center and jail and other projects he deemed important.

Health problems stemming from diabetes, which forced the amputation of one leg in 1977 and the other in 1983, never seemed to daunt the sheriff, friends said.

Acting Chief Deputy Jim Minter, among many officials mourning the death of Mr. Evans, said that in a visit to the new jail about a month ago, Mr. Evans spoke of spending half his time in hospitals.

"He'd call me on a regular basis since February when Sheriff [Don] Carpenter stepped down," Minter said. "He'd offer advice; he'd call and say, 'Don't let the press get you down. Just keep on telling the truth and doing the job and it will be all right.'"

Carpenter had succeeded Mr. Evans as sheriff and served until he took leave of absence to fight several criminal indictments. He recently was tried on a charge of felony theft by public servant, but after trial the charge was reduced to a misdemeanor and the case dismissed.

Dub Bransom, police chief of River Oaks and unsuccessful Democratic candidate for sheriff this

year, said Mr. Evans was irreplaceable.

"When you mention sheriff of Tarrant County, that's synonymous with Lon Evans. Lon Evans is the sheriff of Tarrant County, I'd don't care who's up there now.

"He was always proud of that star."

District Attorney Tim Curry said Mr. Evans was a dynamic courthouse figure when Curry first began practicing law in Tarrant County.

"Lon was kind of a legend in his own time," Curry said. "He sort of raised me up as a young lawyer as far as the courthouse was concerned."

As district attorney, Curry said he butted heads with Mr. Evans on occasion but the incidents never affected their professional relationships.

"Lon was headstrong and certainly had a mind of his own," he said. "In the run-ins we had, we always walked away shaking hands.

Curry credited Mr. Evans with turning an ill-equipped sheriff's office into an efficient big-city department.

"I think he kind of brought the office into the 20th century. Before Lon it was kind of run in an Old West fashion."

County Judge Tom Vandergriff said flags at the courthouse were immediately lowered to half-staff with word of Mr. Evan's death.

"Lon Evans has been a hero of mine for as long as I can remember," Vandergriff said. "He brought integrity and dedication and tireless energy. He set a standard by which not only sheriffs but all public officials would do well to follow."

The county judge said he recalled Mr. Evans in his early years as a towering man — "the personification of what you'd think a high sheriff would be physically."

In his later years, complications from diabetes cost Mr. Evans a leg and confined him to a wheelchair, but Vandergriff said that didn't change people's perceptions of him.

"Even in his wheelchair, he did come across as a true giant, which he surely was," Vandergriff said. "I had immense respect for him as an individual and certainly as the chief law enforcement officer."

Marvin Collins, U.S. attorney for the Northern Region in Texas, said he worked closely with Mr. Evans while serving as legal counsel to the county in the 1970s.

"I found him to be unerring in his commitment to strong law enforcement. . . . It's not an exaggeration to say he commanded the respect of everyone in law enforcement," Collins said.

"Even today, years after he has been sheriff, you will see his influ-

ence [in the Sheriff's Department]."

Mr. Evans was born in Fort Worth, graduating from Polytechnic High School in 1928, lettering in football. He became a football star at Texas Christian University as a guard, making all-conference two years.

He played for the Green Bay Packers for five years, beginning in 1933, and made All-Pro Team twice. After leaving the Packers, he began officiating professional, college and high school football.

He later joined District Attorney Doug Crouch's office as chief investigator. In 1960, he won the sheriff's election and in 1961 was sworn in, becoming the department's 34th sheriff.

In a biography, Mr. Evans is credited with being the first sheriff in Texas to hire black deputies who later reached the ranks of captain, lieutenants and investigators.

His 24-year tenure is the longest of any sheriff in Tarrant County.

He is survived by his wife, Marion Pace Evans; three daughters, Marlon Evans Seghetti, Kitty Evans Loveless and Peggy Evans Dulaney, all of Fort Worth; five grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren.

**BY KATHY SANDERS
AND THOMAS KOROSEC**
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

FORT WORTH — Former Tarrant County Sheriff Lon Evans, the legendary “Purple Lawman” and an ex-Texas Christian University and all-pro football player, died yesterday morning at Harris Methodist Fort Worth. He would have been 81 on Christmas Day.

Mr. Evans, who was sheriff for 24 years before retiring in 1985, was remembered for bringing professionalism to the department, all the while keeping his characteristic humor.



Lon Evans was a lineman for the TCU Horned Frogs football team beginning in 1929.

Lon Evans

FORT WORTH — Lon Evans, former sheriff of Tarrant County, died Friday at a Fort Worth hospital. He was 80.

Funeral will be at 11 a.m. Monday at Greenwood Funeral Home. Burial will be in Greenwood Memorial Park. The family will receive friends from 4 to 6 p.m. today at the funeral home.

Mr. Evans was a lifelong resident of Fort Worth and was sheriff for 24 years before retiring in 1985. He was a graduate of Texas Christian University, where he was All Southwest Conference star for the TCU 1932 championship team. He was also a former professional football player for the Green Bay Packers and an official for the Fort Worth public schools, the Southwest Conference and the National Football League for 25 years.

Mr. Evans was a member of University United Methodist Church, Polytechnic Masonic Lodge 925, the Moslah Shrine Temple Drum and Bugle Corps and the Royal Order of the Jesters. He was past president of the Sheriff's Association of Texas and director of the National Sheriff's Association. Mr. Evans was supportive of youth organizations such as the Golden Gloves, Little League Baseball and Pee-wee Football.

The family suggests that memorials be made to the youth department at University United Methodist Church, the Shriners Crippled Children's Hospital or the National Paraplegia Foundation.

Survivors: Wife of 58 years, Marion Pace Evans of Fort Worth; three daughters, Marlon Evans Seghetti, Kitty Evans Loveless and Peggy Evans Delaney, all of Fort Worth; five grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren.



In 1966, Sheriff Lon Evans presented Don Knotts with a badge only to have the actor, in Fort Worth for a run of *The Ghost and Mr. Chicken* at the Hollywood, attempt to arrest him.



Honorary pallbearer Mason Mayne, in hat, offers condolences to Lon Evans' family after the funeral.

Hundreds mourn ex-Tarrant sheriff

BY FRANK PERKINS
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

FORT WORTH — Lon Evans, 80, Tarrant County's longest-serving sheriff, was buried yesterday after a eulogy by former U.S. House Speaker Jim Wright and funeral honors rendered by the 18-member Sheriff's Department Honor Guard.

Dubbed the "Purple Lawman" because of his athletic career at Texas Christian University, Evans was sheriff from 1961 until his retirement in 1985. He is credited with changing the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department from a force marked by inefficiency and good-'ol'-boyism into a modern, efficient law enforcement body.

He died Friday at a Fort Worth hospital.

His 11 a.m. funeral yesterday at Greenwood Memorial Cemetery drew several hundred mourners and friends, including deputies, county political figures and police officers from as far away as Corpus Christi.

They quickly filled the chapel and then stood several rows deep around the sides of the room and in the foyer.

Among those attending were former Fort Worth Mayor Bob Bolen, former Tarrant County Commissioners B.D. Griffin and Dick Andersen, Texas

Rangers President Tom Schieffer, attorney Bill Lane, former Chief Deputy John Pempsel, acting Chief Deputy Jim Minter and Sheriff Don Carpenter.

Carpenter succeeded Evans as Tarrant County's top lawman in 1986, beginning a stormy career that has seen him indicted on charges of perjury and illegally taking guns from his property room and giving them to friends.

He was defeated in the Republican primary and will leave office Jan. 1.

"Lon called me about a week before he died," Carpenter said yesterday. "He kept up with my case and called every week to tell me to stand tall and fight hell out of 'em, and that is exactly what I'm doing."

As tears came to his eyes, Carpenter said: "He hired me. I looked on him as if he was my daddy. He was a great man."

Francine Morrison, a nationally acclaimed Fort Worth gospel singer, set the tone of the funeral when she told the crowd: "I used to sing *Happy Birthday* to Lon; now I guess the Christ of Christmas decided to have Lon spend his birthday with him." She then sang *Beyond the Sunset*.

The Rev. Don Scott of University United Methodist Church said the Evans family had asked that the service be one of celebration, not sadness.

"Lon has gone to life, to healing, to wholeness, and we rejoice with him," Scott said. "He doesn't need his wheelchair anymore." Evans suffered from diabetes, which cost him both legs. He had used a wheelchair for the past several years after his retirement.

Wright wished him a poetic farewell.

"So long, old friend. Your race is run, your work is done, your game is won, and from the eternal skies I know you'll hear the words, 'Well done,'" Wright said.

Other praises came from former County Judge Howard Green, former *Fort Worth News-Tribune* Publisher Mack Williams and Tarrant County Jail Chaplain Bobby Cox.

"Lon was so well-respected as a sheriff that even people he put in jail voted for him," Williams recalled.

The funeral ended with Morrison singing *When the Saints Go Marching In*.

At the Greenwood gravesite amid stands of oaks, Evans' flag-draped coffin was interred after a salute fired by seven deputies with riot guns. Deputy James Cook played taps.

Evans is survived by his wife of 58 years, Marion; three daughters, Marlon Evans Seghetti, Kitty Evans Loveless and Peggy Evans Delaney, all of Fort Worth; five grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren.



Sheriff hails dismissal of suit in hostage death

By BOB MAHLBURG
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

Tarrant County Sheriff Don Carpenter says he is pleased by yesterday's federal appeals court decision to throw out a lawsuit blaming him for the death of a Fort Worth woman in a controversial 1989 courthouse hostage-slaying.

A three-judge panel of the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the family of Juanita Hermosillo, who was killed by her estranged husband at the Fort Worth courthouse on Aug. 1, 1989, could not sue Carpenter or Tarrant County because the sheriff is protected by

"qualified immunity," which protects him from most lawsuits involving his official performance.

Carpenter said that he was pleased by the decision to throw out the case but declined to elaborate.

"That's that," he said. "That's just one of those things."

Ray Rike, an assistant district attorney who handles civil cases for Tarrant County, said he expects the family to appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court.

"We're all sorry for the tragedy that occurred," Rike said.

Hermosillo's survivors claimed
(More on SHERIFF on Page 32)

that Carpenter was at fault for the death because the Sheriff's Department did not have the professional capability to properly handle a hostage incident. The suit claimed that negligence on the sheriff's part also resulted in Hermosillo's constitutional rights being violated.

* "We do not say that this crisis was properly handled or that Sheriff Carpenter made no mistakes," the appeals court said. "We say only that there was not denial of Juanita Hermosillo's rights."

Hermosillo, an employee of a justice of the peace, was taken hostage by Manuel Cabano, a former sheriff's deputy. Hermosillo had left Cabano after she accused him of sexually abusing her two daughters from a previous marriage.

Although a Fort Worth police SWAT team surrounded the courthouse, Carpenter ordered the units to leave, saying he was in charge of courthouse security. After about six hours of negotiations, Cabano shot and killed Hermosillo, then himself.

After the killing, Carpenter was

sharply criticized for ordering the police tactical squad to leave the area so that he could personally handle negotiations with Cabano. Carpenter has repeatedly defended his actions, saying he did everything he could and is proud of the way he handled the situation.

A federal judge had rejected an earlier motion by Carpenter to dismiss the suit. But the appeals court yesterday disagreed and threw out the suit. Without qualified immunity, suits would occur that would "unduly inhibit officials in their discharge of their duties," the 5th Circuit said.

Carpenter's tenure as sheriff has been enveloped in controversy, including six felony indictments accusing Carpenter of taking confiscated weapons from the property room and falsifying records.

The 60-year-old West Texas native, who took a leave after the indictments, was acquitted of the charges. But a special prosecutor has said he will still push an additional charge accusing Carpenter of lying about his actions before a grand jury.

Judges offered 2nd firearms class

FORT WORTH — For the second time since the July 1 courthouse shootings, Tarrant County judges are receiving firearms training from Sheriff's Department deputies.

Fifteen judges have signed up for next week's session, Acting Chief Deputy Jim Minter said. Because the first session at the county shooting range in October was rained out, most of the 15 who participated in that class are expected to attend that portion of the training.

The two-day school will begin with a classroom session Monday and will move to the shooting range Tuesday. While at the range, judges will be allowed to fire a number of weapons, Minter said.

The clamor for firearms training came about following the July shootings at the Tarrant County Courthouse, which left two attorneys dead and two judges and another attorney wounded.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 24, 1992

Salute to Lon Evans

In every profession, a few elite will always distinguish themselves from the group. Their personal qualities, tolerance and ethics will make it impossible to not use them as a benchmark for those who follow.

Lon Evans was one of those individuals. He was a mentor and friend. Tarrant County is a better place because he passed through.

Jerry M. Wood
Assistant director
Tarrant County Juvenile Services
Fort Worth

1992

In January, eight indictments were lodged against Sheriff Don Carpenter, forcing him into a paid leave of absence. He stood trial in November on one count, alleging theft of a gun, but it was thrown out

of court on a technicality. Carpenter buried his face in his hands, hugged his wife and wept.

The sheriff, who was defeated in the Republican primary in his bid for re-election, is not out of the woods, however. Prosecutors said they will take one of the other indictments, alleging perjury, to trial. A court date is tentatively scheduled for January.

Dianne & Steve Moreau
invite you to a

New Year's Eve Open House

Thursday, December 31, 1992

7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

at

1413 Clarendon Street
Fort Worth, Texas 76134

RSVP (817) 568-2031

Williams to take reins as sheriff this morning

By THOMAS KOROSEC
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

FORT WORTH — Tarrant County gets a new chief lawman today when David Williams is sworn in as sheriff.

When the 38-year-old Republican pins on the star, acting Chief Deputy Jim Minter's 11 months of running the 1,100-employee department will end.

"It is absolutely a tremendous job," said Minter, 47, who will return to his duties as administrator of the county jail. "Each and every issue that you have to decide, you can't decide those by flipping a coin."

Minter, who said he is excited to return to his old duties, has been aiding Williams in his transition into the job.

"He's spent considerable time (More on SHERIFF on Page 22).

Sheriff

From Page 21

here at his own expense and I commend him for that," Minter said. "He is serious about his approach and very astute."

Williams beat River Oaks Police Chief Dub Bransom in the November election. Justice of the Peace Sandy Prindle will swear him in at

10 a.m. in the old Central Jury Room in the Civil Courts Building, 100 N. Houston St.

Williams, a former Haltom City detective, succeeds Sheriff Don Carpenter, who lost in the Republican primary in the spring and has been on paid administrative leave since February.

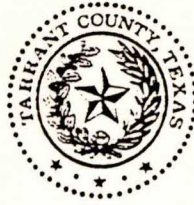
Other first-time officeholders and incumbents will be sworn in today and over the next several days.

Among those holding public cer-

emonies today, Bob Gill, the new 213th District judge, will be sworn in at 3 p.m. in his courtroom, 300 W. Belknap St.

Bob McGrath, the new 342nd District judge, will take the oath of office at 5 p.m. at New World United Methodist Church, 2201 N. Davis Drive in Arlington.

Robert Heaslet, the new Pct. 1 constable, will be sworn in at 10 a.m. in the old Tarrant County Courthouse, 100 E. Weatherford St.



TARRANT COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

DAVID WILLIAMS
SHERIFF

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER # 93-001

Under the provisions of section 158.038 of the Local Government Code the following positions are designated EXEMPT POSITIONS:

1. Chief Deputy - Three Positions
2. Assistant Jail Administrator
3. Six additional positions to be specified at a later time

Effective immediately the following personnel are assigned as follows:

1. Hamp Scruggs is assigned as Chief Deputy Administrative Bureau
2. Pat Howell is assigned as Chief Deputy Confinement Bureau

Previous occupants of the above positions, if not named above, are relieved of their positions, responsibilities and authority effective immediately.



David Williams, Sheriff
Tarrant County Sheriff's Department

1-1-93

Date



TARRANT COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER 93-003

DAVID WILLIAMS
SHERIFF

On the 1st day of October, 1992, the County Judge of Tarrant County having declared that there is created a Sheriff's Department Civil Service System. Pursuant to Subchapter B, Chapter 158, Texas Local Government Code, the Sheriff of Tarrant County, Texas, David Williams, does issue this Administrative Order and says:

Appointment of Commissioner and Chairman.

The Sheriff's appointee to serve as a member of the Sheriff's Department Civil Service System is Louis Sturns. Said appointee's term runs from the date of the appointment of the third commissioner.

The Sheriff appoints Louis Sturns to serve as Chairman of the Commission.

Interim Rules.

Until such time that the Sheriff's Department Civil Service Commission shall meet and enact rules to govern the matters within its jurisdiction, the rules and regulations of the Tarrant County Civil Service System, as existing on this date, are adopted as Rules and Regulations of the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department and all employees and officers of the Sheriff's Department shall adhere to said rules and regulations. Provided, however, that all appeals in the Sheriff's Department shall hereafter be to the Sheriff's Department Civil Service Commission, under said interim rules, and further provided that the rules regarding Nepotism shall be those provided for by State law and not by Commission Rule.

At such time as the Sheriff's Department Civil Service Commission shall meet and enact rules to govern the matters within its jurisdiction, this order regarding interim rules shall be of no further force and effect with regard to any rules inconsistent therewith.

This department will review decisions regarding employment matters under the rules in effect on the date of the employment action in question, and will review the conduct of employees and officers under the rules in effect on the date of said conduct. There shall be no retroactive application of rules.

TARRANT COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

INTER OFFICE MEMO

TO: All Sheriff's Department Personnel

FROM: Sheriff David Williams

REF: News Media Releases

DATE: 1-1-93

All inquiries from the news media or news media releases, in reference to activities concerning the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department, will be directed to and authorized by Sheriff David Williams or his designee.

Bob Howell for David Williams

David Williams
Sheriff of Tarrant County

1-1-93 0001 hus.

TARRANT COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF
INTER OFFICE MEMO

DATE: 1-1-93
~~December 31, 1992~~

TO: All Personnel

FROM: David Williams
Sheriff

SUBJECT: Property Room

A complete inventory of the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department Property Room is forthcoming. Until that inventory is complete, no property or evidence will be taken out of the Property Room except by the Property Room Officer and a Communications Division Supervisor witnessing the removal. The Property Officer and the assisting officer will affix his/her signature to the property card as the Releasing Officer and a copy of the property card will be sent to the Internal Affairs Division Captain for record keeping.

This order is in no way suggesting that a problem exists with the current system, but is only a protective measure until the inventory has been completed.

Sincerely,



David Williams
Sheriff

DW:jad

Designation of Exempt Positions.

Pursuant to § 158.038, it is incumbent upon the Sheriff's Department to designate how many positions shall be exempt and which positions shall be exempt from the Civil Service System.

And, there being fewer than 2,000,000 persons residing in Tarrant County, a total of 10 positions (not to exceed ten) are declared and specified by me as exempt from this system, those being as follows:

1. Chief Deputy - three (3) positions
2. Assistant Jail Administrator
3. Six (6) additional positions to be specified at a later time.

All other positions in this department are not exempt, and they shall be subject to the applicable rules.

It is so ORDERED.

SIGNED this the 1 day of January, 1993.



David Williams
Sheriff
Tarrant County, Texas



TARRANT COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER # 93-002

The policies, procedures and rules in effect upon my assumption of office as Sheriff of Tarrant County as related to the day to day operation of the Department and delivery of Law Enforcement services to the community will remain in effect until ammended or changed by me or my designee.

No standing order that gives authority to a named individual shall be void because that individual no longer occupies the designated position, but such authority shall transfer to the person currently occupying that position.

Any conflicts arising in the interpretation of a current policy, procedure or rule will be resolved by the Chief Deputy of the division in which the conflict arises.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Williams", is written over a horizontal line.

David Williams, Sheriff
Tarrant County Sheriff's Department

1-1-93

Date

Sheriff fires top officials

Williams took office secretly after midnight

BY BILL TEETER
AND JERI CLAUSING
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

FORT WORTH — Tarrant County Sheriff David Williams secretly took office early New Year's Day and immediately fired the administrative team that many county officials had credited with re-establishing credibility in the troubled law-enforcement agency.

Williams took the oath of office at a secret ceremony at 12:01 a.m., hours before a public swearing-in ceremony at 10 a.m. witnessed by a crowd of more than 300 at the Civil Courts Building, sources told the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*.

Immediately after the first swearing-in, Williams sent out orders relieving three top officers of their duties: acting Chief Deputy Jim Minter; George Campbell, chief deputy of operations; and John Pempsell, assistant jail administrator.

Bad weather prevented deputies from delivering the notices immediately. Consequently, at least one, Minter, received his notice at the public ceremony.

The action caused jaws to drop across Tarrant County and led officials to wonder about the dismissals, especially that of Minter.

Williams could not be reached for comment later in the day, when news of his actions became public.

Williams retained two attorneys,
(More on SHERIFF on Page 8)

one before he took office and one immediately after his swearing-in, as the personnel crisis began unfolding this week, said sources close to the new sheriff.

Williams' adviser and former campaign chairman, Tom Wilder, said the dismissals were a well-thought-out action.

"The decision on the deputization was not made because David was an insensitive fool rushing to change everything, but to continue his plan of giving the county the best of all law-enforcement teams. This whole matter will play itself out in a matter of days," Wilder said yesterday evening.

When Minter got the termination notice at the swearing-in ceremony, he hired attorney Jim Lane on the spot to represent him in possible legal action.

Minter said later that he could not talk publicly about the situation.

"On advice of counsel, for the record, I'm not going to comment," Minter said.

When Minter tried to enter his office at the jail yesterday, he was denied access, he told Williams in a memo yesterday.

Lane said that although Williams stated in correspondence that he will meet the men Monday to discuss their futures with the Sheriff's Department, the notifications appear to mean they have been fired.

It's a blow his client didn't deserve, Lane said.

"If this is the way Tarrant County's going to treat a man like Jim Minter, wow," Lane said.

If after Monday's meeting Minter appears to have no job, Lane said, he wants to take Minter's case before the civil service commission or pursue other legal remedies.

Lane said that in his opinion, the sheriff cannot simply fire the men, even though they are in positions that Williams says have been declared exempt from civil service protection. The sheriff may promote employees into certain exempt positions, meaning that he can go around normal civil service promotion channels for those jobs, Lane said. Once in the job they cannot be fired but must be placed back into a civil service position, Lane said.

According to an order signed by Williams, Capt. Pat Howell is taking Minter's position as chief deputy for confinement.

In a letter to Minter dated yesterday, Williams wrote, "This letter is to advise you that effective Jan. 1, 1993 at 0001 hours [12:01 a.m.], you are relieved of your position as Chief Deputy of the Confinement Bureau." The letter continues, "It is my order that you will relinquish all responsibility and command authority associated with your previous position as chief deputy of the Confinement Bureau."

"I have set aside Monday, Jan. 4, 1993 at 10 a.m. to meet with you in my office to discuss any further affiliation you may have with the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department."

"Your deputation and affiliation with the Sheriff's Department will be determined as a result of that meeting," the letter ended.

Two Tarrant County officials expressed surprise at yesterday's developments.

"I am very much surprised," County Judge Tom Vandergriff said. "I have nothing but praise for the manner in which Mr. Minter has directed the Sheriff's Department all these many months since assuming his post."

Minter was named by District Attorney Tim Curry to the position of acting chief deputy in February to run the department when former Sheriff Don Carpenter became entangled in legal problems. He had been jail administrator, and Pempsell replaced him temporarily in that position.

Vandergriff said, "It was an awkward and difficult time for everyone concerned and they provided the leadership needed to make significant strides forward."

County Administrator G.K. Mae-

nius, who also praised Minter, also said the firing surprised him.

"I believe that Jim Minter did an excellent job during the past 11 months. He had moved that department forward in a time of uncertainty, and that's to his credit and to the credit of the county," Maenius said.

River Oaks Police Chief Dub Bransom, the Democratic candidate defeated by Republican Williams for the post in the November elections, said: "That Minter's always been an excellent administrator. He [Williams] was elected sheriff. He has a right to do whatever he wants to."

Section A, Page 8 / Fort Worth Star-Telegram / Saturday, January 2, 1993



Fort Worth Star-Telegram / TONY RECORD

Tarrant County Sheriff David Williams, left, takes the oath of office from Justice of the Peace Sanford "Sandy" Prindle.

Bransom said he knows the other two fired officers as well.

"They've got about 50 years of experience and loyalty to Tarrant County," Bransom said.

County Commissioner J.D. Johnson said he remains confused about the men's status.

"I haven't determined if it is a firing. I'm going to be very disappointed if that is the case," Johnson said.

He said the district attorney's office told him two weeks ago that there were no exempt positions under the new civil service rules covering the Sheriff's Department.

However, officials with Tarrant County District Attorney Tim Curry's office declined yesterday to confirm that opinion.

"It looks like there is probably going to be litigation over this issue and we are not going to have a comment for the newspaper at this time," said Assistant District Attorney Ray Rike of the civil division.

Johnson said he was surprised to hear of Minter's firing.

"He took over in hard times. He made the department something that I felt like we could be proud," Johnson said.

"We've got to understand that the sheriff is elected by the people . . . but we've all got rules and guidelines we've got to follow," Johnson said.

Steve Chaney, a senior assistant to Curry, said he is baffled as to why Williams would want to get rid of such "loyal, hard-working" employees.

"Apparently that wasn't the impression people had of one of the first steps the new sheriff would take," he said. "I would think . . . that they would be a real asset to someone coming on board. I don't really understand."

Staff writer Frank Perkins contributed to this report.

Fur flies over removal of 3 by new sheriff

By BOB MAHLBURG
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

Tarrant County Sheriff David Williams is asking for calm and patience in judging his decision to abruptly remove three top veteran Sheriff's Department officials minutes after taking office early New Year's Day.

But at least one county official says Williams' move could spark a costly legal battle for taxpayers and create serious long-term repercussions in relations between the new sheriff and other county leaders.

In his first interview since the action, Williams declined to explain yesterday the sudden removal of acting Chief Deputy Jim Minter and two other top officials overseeing the jail and day-to-day sheriff's operations.

"It would be inappropriate for me to discuss matters of internal personnel adjustments," said Williams, citing advice from private attorneys and adding, "These events are still unfolding."

But Williams vowed to say more
(More on SHERIFF on Page 2)

after meeting with the men tomorrow and said he believes that even his critics will ultimately approve.

"Some people who don't know me real well are wondering, 'Why so soon?'" Williams said. "But they don't know the full story and I can't tell the full story right now. I think if people wait, they will support the actions."

The Republican sheriff's lightning strike to remove Minter, Assistant Jail Administrator John Pempell and Chief Deputy of Operations George Campbell caught most other county officials off guard.

Pempell has worked for the Sheriff's Department for 32 years, Minter for 22 years and Campbell for 13.

Williams issued letters relieving them of their duties immediately after being sworn in at 12:01 a.m. Friday. The ceremony was at a massive concrete jail and former warehouse in a north Fort Worth industrial park.

County commissioners and County Judge Tom Vandergriff expressed confusion and shock at the removal of Minter, who had drawn near-unanimous praise for guiding the multimillion-dollar department after former Sheriff Don Carpenter was indicted.

"This could have major repercussions," said one county official, who asked not to be identified.

The official said that many leaders are disappointed in the brusque treatment of Minter, whom officials credited with salvaging a department mired in morale and manage-

ment problems.

The moves have also caused some to question the political savvy and managerial ability of Williams, a former Haltom City detective and political novice who narrowly defeated Democrat Dub Bransom in November.

Sheriff

County Administrator G.K. Maenius confirmed that Williams was legally sworn in early Friday, a full 10 hours before other newly elected leaders, so that patrol deputies working the overnight shift could be deputized with legal authority.

Williams said the Texas Sheriff's Association recommended the special early-morning oath, which was administered by Justice of the Peace Sandy Prindle. Prindle also performed a ceremonial oath later in the day, Williams said. Other county officials were told of the plan for the early oath of office at a sheriff's transition meeting weeks earlier, Maenius confirmed.

But Maenius, like other county leaders, expressed surprise at Williams' decision to strip Minter of his duties. Maenius added that Williams had given no hint of his intentions in meetings in the three weeks before the action.

"In fact, it was somewhat unique because the new sheriff was complimenting Jim Minter on a job well done at several of those meetings," Maenius said.

Williams said meetings tomorrow with Minter and the others will decide their futures, but he would not say if he plans to fire or reassign them. Attorneys for Minter have threatened legal action and have questioned Williams' legal power to fire the men under a recent state sheriff's civil service law.

The law has a political perk built into it for the sheriff: an exemption clause that gives the sheriff the right to fire and appoint his chief deputy,

four major deputies and five others of lesser rank, according to Gerald Wright, the county's personnel director.

Williams reportedly retained two private attorneys for advice before issuing the orders relieving the men of their duties. But a county official said yesterday that a county attorney advised Williams during a recent meeting that he could not legally take such action.

The result could be an expensive, drawn-out legal battle.

Williams also issued orders for armed guards to block Minter from entering his former office, but Williams declined to say if any of the men are accused of wrongdoing.

"On the advice of counsel, I can't answer that question," he said.

Williams said he has named Capt. Patrick Howell to Minter's former post as chief deputy over the jail. Maj. Savala Swanson will take Pempsell's former spot as assistant chief deputy over the jail.

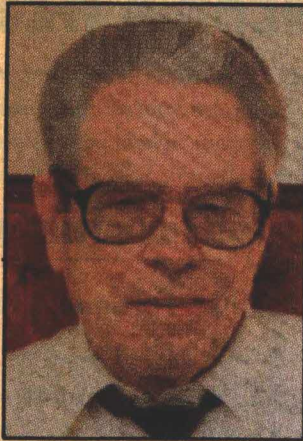
Williams said he has also picked a new operations division chief to take Campbell's spot, but could not reveal his identity because the man currently holds another job. Hamp Scruggs will remain chief of the department's administrative bureau, he said.

Swanson, with his appointment, will be promoted to colonel, said Williams, adding, "Swanson now becomes the highest-ranking African-American in the history of the Sheriff's Department."

The jail operation makes up the bulk of the Sheriff's Department's staff and budget and has been a major factor behind sharp county tax increases in recent years.

Howell has had a lengthy law enforcement career, including stints as an officer with the Texas Department of Public Safety.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE



Bill McGhee

Retired geologist learns inmates make dedicated GED students

BY FRANK PERKINS
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

FORT WORTH — Bill McGhee's view of the prisoners at the new Tarrant County Corrections Center is different than that of a prison guard.

The guards see the prisoners as people whose conduct must be controlled and directed with fairness and humanity. And, the guards see them as people in jail for

committing crimes against the public.

McGhee, 69, is a retired geologist and oil and gas business developer who volunteers without pay in the jail's education department. He sees those same prisoners crouched over high school books, writing themes and struggling with geometry problems as they work toward a general equivalency diploma, a substitute for the high

(More on VOLUNTEER on Page 2)

school diploma they never earned.

"I don't see them as dangerous criminals because the dangerous criminals are kept across the street in an older jail. I see the inmates in the education program as people trying to better themselves despite their troubles, trying to make a difference in their lives.

"The fact that they volunteered for the schooling, are conscientious about attendance and doing the work indicates to us that they have some self-discipline, a trait most folks don't give many inmates much credit for having," McGhee said.

He does whatever must be done, from filing grade reports to answering the phone in department coordinator Don Walker's office, but most of his work is as a jail truant officer, finding out why inmate X is not in class.

"I spend a lot of time on the phone to the cell pod officers trying to find the missing. Most are absent because of a court appearance, or they are ill or have a conference with a lawyer. The majority of them show up later on when those appointments are over," he said.

McGhee is a member of Retired Seniors Volunteer Services, a non-profit organization in which retired executives volunteer for various community endeavors. He credits his wife, Beverly, known as "Bee," for his decision to begin volunteering at the jail in June.

"Bee should get the credit. She piqued my interest in volunteering when she remarked one day: 'You'll never know what you'll find until you cast your talents out there.' It's

been quite a satisfying experience for me," he said.

McGhee said he is continually impressed by the dedication of prisoners to earn a GED.

"I was surprised at the fact that most of the 100 or so prisoners enrolled in the GED program at the center are very regular in their attendance and eager to learn," he said. "In particular, those inmates who are interested in becoming classroom aides are very sincere and efficient in their studies."

The program has two Fort Worth school district teachers as instructors. They teach four classes a day from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Each class of approximately 25 prisoners may have two to three inmate aides.

"Those aides really help those teachers. They file papers and reports for them, explain the program to the inmates and help them with their class work," McGhee said.

The aides have more formal education than the other inmates and some would like even more.

"A number of them have approached Don and me about the possibility of carrying their education on past the GED level. I think that says a lot about them and the program," McGhee said.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FORT WORTH
STAR-TELEGRAM

05 January 1993

Show the sheriff to the door

Tom Wilder's really done it to us with his latest pawn in county government. The question is: Can Tarrant County taxpayers afford the newly sworn sheriff? I, for one, can't.

Sheriff David Williams' firing of three hard-working, dedicated employees on his first day in office demonstrates incompetence to the 10th power. Such actions are sure to cost us a bundle in litigation expense. Will it cost \$5 million per head? It will cost \$15 million, at least. Count on it! Straight out of your pocket and mine. Wasn't former Sheriff Don Carpenter enough?

Too bad we can't impeach Williams and reappoint Jim Minter. I concur with County Judge Tom Vandergriff, District Attorney Tim Curry and County Administrator G.K. Maenius in praising the fine job Minter's done of bringing order to a troubled department. He's a fine man and an excellent administrator, one who would continue to serve the county well as sheriff. I think it's obvious that Williams should tender his immediate resignation.

Richard M. Smith II
Euless

Loss of credibility

I heard the news Jan. 1 and read the Jan. 2 *Star-Telegram*. I am appalled at the actions of newly elected Sheriff David Williams.

Immediately after being secretly sworn in, at 12:01 a.m. Jan. 1, Williams sent out orders relieving acting Chief Deputy Jim Minter, Chief Deputy of Operations George Campbell and Assistant Jail Administrator John Pempsell of their duties. Minter was further humiliated by being served notice of the order at the public swearing-in ceremony at 10 a.m.

These actions smell of the same underhanded tactics used by criminals when planning a crime.

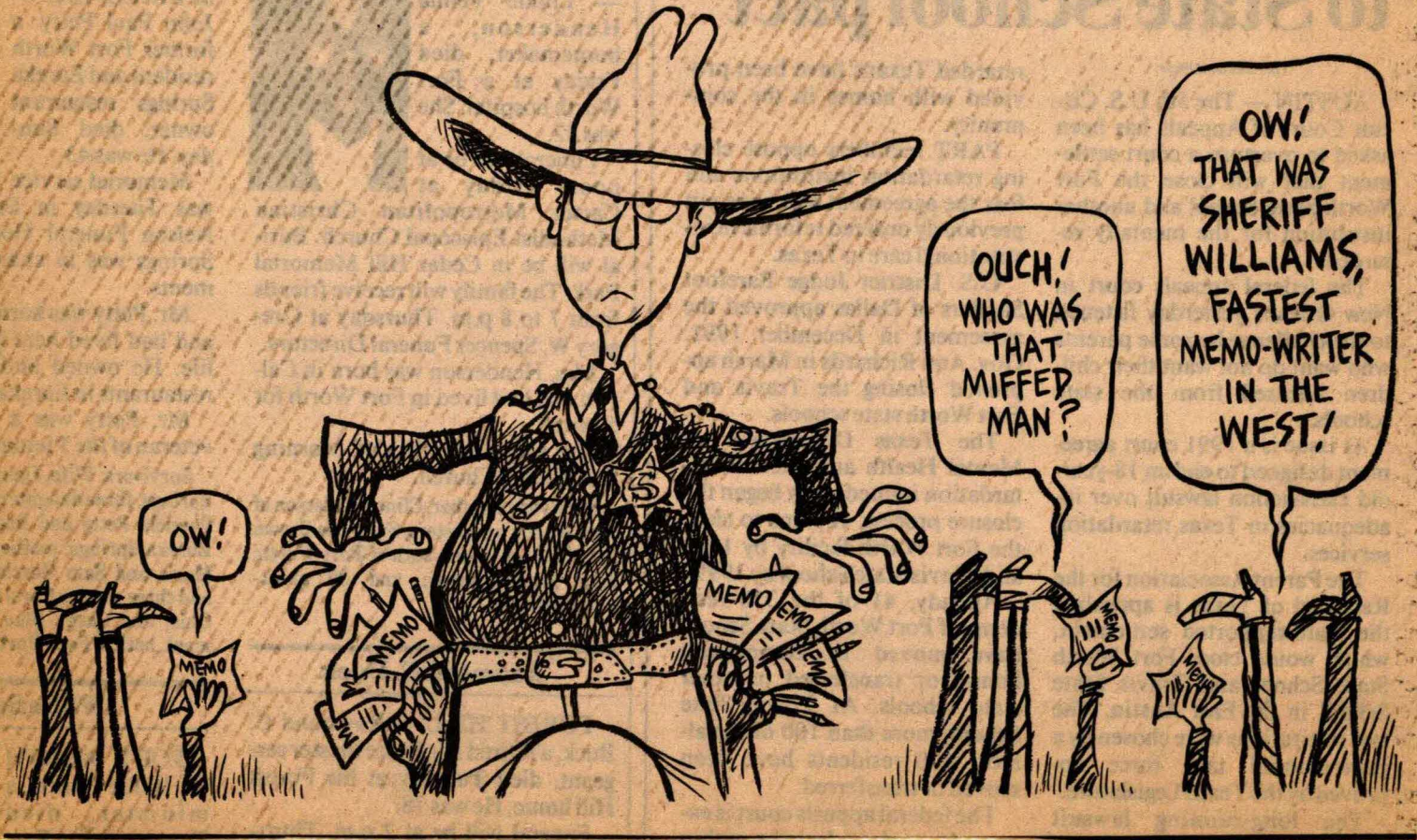
These three men, who have about 50 years' combined service to Tarrant County, were robbed of their positions and self-esteem.

The people of Tarrant County would be wise to take a long, hard look at the way Sheriff Williams conducts business. He professes to be a Christian, and I'm not here to judge his faith, but the Bible says in Deuteronomy 27:24: "Cursed be he that smiteth his neighbor in secret. And all the people shall say, Amen."

I am convinced it is not only these three men who have and will suffer. Sheriff Williams' actions have undermined his credibility with the people of Tarrant County.

Marta S. Curtis
Arlington

ETTA ©1993 FORT WORTH STAR-TELEGRAM
HULME



OW!

OUCH!
WHO WAS
THAT
MIFFED
MAN?

OW!
THAT WAS
SHERIFF
WILLIAMS,
FASTEST
MEMO-WRITER
IN THE
WEST!

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Williams' attackers out of line

The speed with which Sheriff David Williams' attackers (Debbie Price in her Tuesday column; Marta Curtis' Tuesday letter to the editor) mounted their assault on the Tarrant County sheriff's dismissal action is astounding. There is little doubt that they are world-class authorities on law enforcement in general and the sheriff's department in particular. They certainly have the first-rate information required to dictate Williams' actions. No doubt we can count on endless columns and letters about how things should be done in the future — primarily from those who voted for the other gentleman.

As for Williams, his actions have not undermined his credibility with the people of Tarrant County. He will bring law and order to the county if he is supported by the people and is permitted to enforce the law.

Joseph T. May
Fort Worth

Simmering about the sheriff

Sheriff David Williams has angered a lot of us in Tarrant County by his secret swearing-in ceremony and by firing people who have held this county together through very troubled times.

When do we hold a special election to oust our new sheriff?

Where does the buck stop? If it is with Williams, I will try to expedite the sale of my Tarrant County property. Former Sheriff Don Carpenter may not have been perfect, but do we need a Republican this bad?

I have some very good friends with the Sheriff's Department. May God bless them and spare them from the wrath of this — I hope — short-term sheriff.

We, the people, should rise up and realize what a horrid mistake has already happened.

Charles A. Arnold
Fort Worth

Who does Williams think he is?

What kind of person have we elected as our new sheriff? We've gone from a laughingstock to a dangerous, radical right-winger who has a clandestine swearing-in ceremony and a midnight massacre just like in the Nixon years.

As a lifelong Republican, I can say I'm embarrassed. We don't need a pseudo-military unit for a sheriff's department with army designations for rank of the employees. This is going to be a long four years. I can only hope the sheriff doesn't do too much damage.

Wanda Conlin
Fort Worth

Ex-deputies offered new jobs

3 expected to accept captains posts

By FRANK PERKINS
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

FORT WORTH — Sheriff David Williams, under fire for refusing to retain three former top-ranked deputies, offered them jobs as captains in his new administration this morning, an attorney for one of the three said.

"It looks like we have a deal, but I

want to look him in the face before it's final," said Jim Lane, the attorney for former acting Chief Deputy Jim Minter, who commanded the 1,400-member department from February until Williams' swearing-in New Year's Day.

In one of his first actions as sheriff, Williams on Friday said he would not redeputize Minter, as-

sistant jail administrator John Pempsell and George Campbell, the chief deputy for operations.

All three indicated yesterday they would appeal to the civil service commission, asking that Williams' action be overridden and they be returned to duty at the rank of their last civil service positions.

(More on SHERIFF on Page 2)



Fort Worth Star-Telegram / PAUL MOSELEY

From left, George Campbell, Jim Minter and John Pempsell listen to the tape of their final conversations with Sheriff David Williams this morning. At far right is Minter's attorney, Jim Lane.

Lane said Minter has been offered a job as captain over the training division, Pempsell as captain in the warrants division and Campbell as captain of the criminal investigation division.

Minter had been making \$69,600 as acting chief deputy and would earn \$35,148 to \$54,828 as training coordinator; Pempsell, whose salary had been \$64,032, would make \$32,772 to \$50,748 as warrants captain; and Campbell, who made \$52,848, would draw the same salary as Pempsell in his new job.

None of the three could be reached this morning to comment on Williams' offers, but Lane indicated they would accept the offers. Williams was in a closed-door meeting and did not return phone calls.

Lane said Williams agreed to compromise and retain the three after a series of meetings throughout the night with County Commissioner J.D. Johnson and Ed Max, the sheriff's main campaign financial backer and adviser.

Williams yesterday had said that he made the changes to get his own people in top positions, a goal not uncommon for a new sheriff bringing in a new administration.

The decision to appeal to the civil service commission was not intended to deny Williams the right to name his top aides, Lane said after Minter met with the sheriff yesterday morning.

"That is his right," Lane said. "But these three men are protected by civil service laws and those laws require that he put them back to the last nonexempt civil service position they held. He can't just fire them, and if you tell a man he has no authority, no responsibility, no command, no place to sit and no paycheck, he's been fired."

Lane had said that the ex-deputies, if not rehired, would take their case to the commission Monday "to seek extraordinary relief from this confusing order. We will ask the commission to stay Sheriff Williams' decision until we can have a hearing which we are entitled to have. We will exhaust all the ad-

ministrative remedies open to us and then we'll be in district court if that doesn't work."

Campbell, represented by attorney Bill Ray, and Pempsell, represented by Leonard Schilling, joined Minter in challenging the dismissals.

"We will explore every one of our options under the law," Pempsell said.

Williams told *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* columnist Debbie M. Price yesterday that he removed the three men because he wanted to put his own people in top positions. He confirmed that none of the men is under criminal investigation or suspected of administrative wrongdoing.

However, he declined to say why the men, all longtime employees, were not allowed to remain in the department in lower-ranking positions, jobs that he made available to them this morning.

"I feel more confident in having my own people in these positions," Williams said. "I made this decision based on what I think are the needs of my administration. I'm doing what I believe is the right thing to do."

Williams said that he was elected on a mandate of change. In addition, he said that the personnel changes enabled him to promote Maj. Savala Swanson "to the highest-ranking position that an African-American has ever held in this department."

Meeting with the three ex-

deputies in his heavily guarded office yesterday, Williams told them: "You are not terminated; I am exercising my option as sheriff not to deputize you," according to tape recordings made by the three ex-officers. Williams and the three deputies agreed to record their conversations.

State law requires deputies to be re-deputized when a new sheriff takes office, or a sitting sheriff is re-elected. The deputies' commissions expire at midnight Dec. 31 of the election year.

On the tape made by Minter, Williams said that there was no place for him on the force. "I . . . advise you at this time you've been relieved of command. . . . Just for the record, this is not a termination; you are not re-deputized."

Minter replied: "I have been advised you are not going to deputize me. I am very confused. Do I have a job?"

"Not with this administration," Williams replied.

"Have I done anything wrong?" Minter asked.

"You are not suspected of any wrongdoing," Williams replied. ". . . no criminal investigation of you is ongoing at this time."

"And you won't tell me why?" Minter asked.

"I've said all that I can," Williams replied.

"I wonder what I've done wrong," Minter pressed.

"Jim, I have to go back to my original comments — that I feel

more comfortable with my own people in these positions. At this time, I have to terminate this meeting."

Williams sent shock waves through the county on New Year's Day when he issued letters relieving Minter, Pempsell and Campbell of their duties minutes after he was sworn into office at 12:01 a.m.

The letter never reached Minter, and he learned of his status when he attended Williams' public swearing-in at 10 a.m.

Pempsell's letter was misdirected and fell into the hands of a Channel 8 News reporter who took it to his home around 6 p.m. Jan. 1.

Campbell's letter was delivered. "I got it, read it and then went deer hunting," he said yesterday.

Minter, a 22-year veteran, has been lionized by county officials and the news media for his handling of the department after Sheriff Don Carpenter was indicted last year on felony charges of giving guns in his care to friends.

Commissioners put Minter in charge of the department until Carpenter's legal problems could be resolved. Carpenter went to trial in late 1992 on one felony charge, which was reduced to a misdemeanor and then dropped because the statute of limitations had expired.

"He [Williams] had asked me to stay on as jail administrator in the presence of his main [financial] backer, Ed Max, after the election," Minter said yesterday. "I was really shocked. I've done nothing wrong."

Sheriffs in other counties replaced top aides

BY JACK DOUGLAS JR.
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

Sheriffs in Dallas, Houston and San Antonio said yesterday that they — like new Tarrant County Sheriff David Williams — replaced key officials when they were sworn in, but that generally they did so with greater tact.

The other urban-area sheriffs made it clear well before they took office that they were planning top personnel changes.

But the actions of Williams, sworn in at 12:01 a.m. on New Year's Day, apparently came as a surprise to the ousted deputies — Jim Minter, John Pempsell and George Campbell, all veterans of the department.

After being sworn in, Williams took away the duties of Minter, acting chief deputy, who had been running the Sheriff's Department; Pempsell, assistant jail administrator; and Campbell, chief deputy of operations.

This morning, after a series of all-night meetings, Williams offered the three jobs as captains in his new administration, said Jim Lane, Minter's attorney.

The three men said yesterday that their dismissals, which stirred controversy, came as a surprise.

Harris County Sheriff Johnny Klevenhagen said he would not relieve a veteran officer without sufficient warning.

Dallas County Sheriff Jim Bowles agreed, saying his personnel changes were made carefully to ensure a "calm, quiet transition."

Whether Williams has the authority to fire the three deputies remains in dispute.

"It is not at all uncommon for a new sheriff coming in . . . to make four or five appointments of preference," Bowles said. And, he added, people should be careful about criticizing Williams.

"Considering the turmoil the department's been in, it needs to get head-tall in the sun again before there's any criticism," Bowles said.

Klevenhagen and Bowles said they made changes in executive positions when they took office, but announced those changes immediately after they were elected. Both men first took office on Jan. 1, 1985.

Bowles said his predecessor's chief deputy and two assistant chief deputies voluntarily resigned, paving the way for new appointments. Klevenhagen said he replaced five administrative officers, including chief deputy and jail administrator.

Many new sheriffs in Texas are sworn in after the stroke of midnight in a new year, Bowles and Klevenhagen said. Though largely ritual, the early morning ceremony makes it easier for sheriff's department personnel to be re-deputized under a new administration, they said.

Ralph Lopez, who was sworn in as sheriff of Bexar County at 12:01 a.m. on Jan. 1, said he terminated 10 people from top-level positions in that Sheriff's Department. The terminations were not a surprise to those affected.

"I wanted my new team. I wanted professional, loyal employees that had law enforcement experience and administrative experience," said Lopez, a Democrat who defeated a two-term incumbent Republican.

The people he said he terminated included the previous administration's chief deputy, jail administrator, patrol commander and the chief of the criminal investigations division.

However, unlike William's secretive, wee-hours swearing-in ceremony in Fort Worth, Lopez said he invited the San Antonio media, including four TV stations, when he was sworn in just after midnight.

Lopez, Bowles and Klevenhagen said they have the authority to fire only the employees who are exempt from civil service protection, which is governed on a county-by-county basis.

Klevenhagen said his department cannot immediately fire a high-ranking employee if that employee once held a civil service position with the department. Instead, that employee has the option of being demoted back to the former position, the sheriff said.

What's going on?

New sheriff is off to a lousy beginning

If the other 1,459 days of David Williams' term as sheriff are anything like his first, then the people of Tarrant County had better duck and run for cover.

No sooner had Williams pinned on his badge than he pre-emptorily, nonsensically and unfairly stuck it to a trio of longtime sheriff's deputies, in the process getting his administration off to a strange, counterproductive start and confounding even some who have wanted him to succeed. Such shooting yourself in the foot, such supercilious midnight madness does nothing to return this vital office to normalcy.

No one questions Williams' right to make changes, to put people of his own choosing in top command. But what must be seriously questioned is the way he did it. Instead of doing the manly thing and looking three top, veteran dep-

uties (one of whom largely kept the office functioning properly in the past tumultuous year) in the eye and explaining his moves, he dispatched letters to them — the ultimate delivery of which would be farcical if this were not such a serious matter.

Then, when Williams finally did meet with them, he in effect stonewalled and played a silly, semantical, failure-to-redeputize-them word game. As a result, the affected employees were confused about their status, and Williams was faced with the prospect of costly, protracted, divisive legal action. He could have simply offered them other assignments, which he finally did yesterday.

Williams has said that, in due time, he will tell the full story of why he did what he did and that the people then will understand.

We're waiting, sheriff, we're waiting.

3 deputies back at work at lower pay

Sheriff critical of men he fired, then rehired

BY FRANK PERKINS
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

FORT WORTH — Holding lower ranks, new jobs and drawing less pay, three former top-ranked sheriff's deputies were back at work today — though not without scathing criticism from a new sheriff who initially dismissed, then reinstated, the trio.

Tarrant County Sheriff David Williams agreed yesterday to re-deputize the three, ending the furor created when, shortly after being sworn in New Year's day, he declined to retain them as deputies in his new administration.

The three — former Acting Chief Deputy Jim Minter, former assistant jail administrator John Pempsell and former Chief Deputy for Operations George Campbell — challenged Williams' action, contending they had been fired and arguing that civil service rules mandated they be returned to the highest civil service rank they had previously held.

Yesterday, Williams offered them jobs as captains and they accepted.

He witnessed their swearing in at 6:30 p.m., shook hands with them and left before they were re-deputized. He also released a statement critical of the three for making a public issue of their job situations.

"It is unfortunate that these men chose to go to the news media first, and only later bring their lawyers to come see me," the statement said.

"The news media is not the proper place to determine important internal personnel matters. Law enforcement officials know how to properly address these issues and we expect that this will be done in the future."

The three deputies, however, said they were simply happy to have jobs and were eager to return to the sheriff's department.

"I feel like a part of me is back in place," Pempsell said.

Minter praised the sheriff for retaining them as deputies.

"I think it's ended up well," he said. "I think the sheriff is to be commended for that."

And Campbell said he is relieved to be back on duty.

"I'm just tickled to death to have a job. I have no doubts that I will be a good and faithful employee of

Tarrant County," he said.

Their pay will be cut at least 5 percent to bring them in line with their lower ranks, according to County Personnel Director Gerald Wright.

Minter had been making \$69,600; his new salary range will be from \$35,148 to \$50,748. Pempsell's salary had been \$64,032; his new salary will be \$32,772 to \$50,748. Campbell, who had made \$52,848, would have the same pay range as Pempsell.

Minter will become a training captain; Pempsell will head the Warrants Division; and Campbell will take over the Criminal Investigation Division. Campbell replaces Capt. Bill Hardin, a 46-year law enforcement veteran who resigned yesterday afternoon as CID captain.

"I just quit," he said as he boarded an elevator outside Williams' third-floor office in the old Criminal Courts Building. "I'm just tired of the work and the politics."

The reinstatement and swearing-in of the three ends the first major personnel crisis of Williams' fledgling administration.

As the daylong drama unfolded, media crews trotted from Williams' office in the old Criminal Courts Building, to the district attorney's offices in the Tarrant County Criminal Justice Center, to the commissioners courtroom in the County Administration Building.

In meetings yesterday with the three, Williams repeatedly stressed that they had not been fired, but only not re-deputized.

Williams in his statement said the decision to change the sheriff's department's top staff was the result of a "mandate for reform" given him by voters in the November election.

"These actions were taken to carry out my mandate for reform and these men were not under any investigation for any criminal wrongdoing. This action was not in-

tended as a disciplinary action, nor was it intended to impugn their reputation or integrity," Williams' statement says.

Earlier yesterday, the board of the Tarrant County Deputy Sheriffs Association issued a statement supporting his decision to name his own top deputies. But the association added that the men stripped of those ranks should be handled under the civil service laws.

"I don't think anyone should lose his job over politics," said Lt. Ray Bell, the association's secretary and a member of the organization's board.

The reinstatements were accompanied by a 10-page agreement in which each side agreed not to sue the other.

The three also agreed not to sue anyone associated with the sheriff, including his transition and campaign teams. That was apparently a protection for Tom Wilder, who is on the sheriff's transition team and was his campaign manager, and Ed Max, a major campaign donor who is also on the transition team.

A source close to attorney Jim Lane, Minter's attorney, said that provision followed Lane's threat to sue Max and others on the transition team.

"As soon as he made that threat, he had agreement from the sheriff to rehire the three as captains in about 20 minutes," the source said.

But Williams said that he asked for the section barring suits against his advisers.

"There was so much talk in the media about Ed Max and Tom Wilder being the 'shadow sheriff' that I wanted to protect them for any suits. The decision to not re-deputize the three, and then to re-deputize them as captains, was mine and mine alone," he said shortly before last night's swearing-in.

He draws quick, shoots self in foot

FORT WORTH — Today is Day Six of the county's newest soap opera, *Young Sheriff David*, and please, hurry up with the episode where Tarrant County's new Young Gun takes a crash course in media relations.

There are several ways to provoke



BUD KENNEDY

reporters to report fervently in your general direction. One is to invite us to your swearing-in at 10 a.m., where we find out you

sneaked out on us and did it the night before.

Another way is to sack somebody who seems like a good guy, like Jim Minter, the former jail warden who treated reporters honestly in his 11 months running county law enforcement as an unofficial "acting sheriff."

Yesterday, new Sheriff David Williams of Watauga found the best way to get us all piqued off. He convened a press briefing, let TV reporters set up cameras and then had a deputy read only: "The sheriff reports he will not be able to attend."

All four TV news stations were there. He'd have been on more channels than Amy Fisher.

It turned out to be a remake of a much older movie scene: the one where Dorothy is told, "The Wizard says go away."

Look, I don't know how they handled media relations on Williams' old job out at pray-for-prosperity evangelist Kenneth Copeland's TV money-ministry.

But when you're elected to run the public jail, you'd better talk straight with the public.

Much of Williams' painful news coverage in the past six days could

(More on KENNEDY on Page 14)

Kennedy

From Page 13

have been avoided with even a shred of media savvy. The public should have been told of the 12:01 a.m. swearing-in (only a few reporters might have come, anyway).

When Williams chose new chief deputies, he should have introduced them to the people that day, instead of letting news coverage linger on the reassignment or release of Minter and two less beloved assistants (an event portrayed as some kind of clandestine New Year's Eve Massacre, but legally his privilege as an elected Texas sheriff).

When the *Star-Telegram* writes news reports saying, "The action caused jaws to drop across Tarrant County" and headlines like "Fur flies over dismissal of 3," Williams should calmly repeat to the public that he intended to disturb neither jaws nor fur but hopes to hire better people and run the sheriff's office a better way.

When the lawyers show up threatening litigation, Williams should face the people and answer questions the best he can, understanding that sometimes the only answer may be "I don't have that answer yet" or "I can't really talk about that."

Williams ended the day with a struggling, tersely worded statement reinstating the three to lesser positions and complaining because they took their case to reporters.

This almost Nixonian behavior is unusual, considering that we met Williams as a personable, downright bubbly community-relations police officer. He could talk forever then about Haltom City crime watch and anti-drug programs, but now he deflects almost all questions to his former campaign manager.

Yesterday, we couldn't even go near Williams' office. We had to stop at the administrators' front door.

"This is David's office now," one of his deputies said yesterday.

"You people have been writing bad things about us. You've just got to learn, this is David's jail."

Nope. It's the public's office. Our public building. And our public jail.

And I suggest the rookie boss study up on public relations.

The shadow sheriffs

Some wear badges, but who pulls the strings?



Tom Wilder

BY MAX B. BAKER
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

They're being called the shadow sheriffs.

They don't wear uniforms. They don't drive around in squad cars.

Yet the influence that political consultant Tom Wilder and campaign contributor Ed Max wield over Tarrant County Sheriff David Williams is so tangible that many say they can almost see the silver badges on their shirts.

Both have played key roles in the weeklong controversy over Williams' abrupt dismissal of three deputies immediately after he took office in the first minutes of New Year's Day.

Wilder, Williams' campaign manager and co-chairman of his transition team, knew about the planned dismissals before even the Tarrant County commissioners

(More on SHERIFF on Page 17)

Sheriff

From Page 1

knew.

It was Max, and not the sheriff, who detailed plans for the Sheriff's Department while negotiating an agreement with Commissioner J.D. Johnson to reinstate the three deputies.

Wilder and Max were so integral to the negotiations that attorneys for the deputies didn't know who was running the show.

"I came to the conclusion [during the negotiations] that Ed Max and Tom Wilder were a civilian review board on personnel matters," said Jim Lane, the attorney representing Jim Minter, one of the deputies who almost lost his job.

As a result, the compromise that won reinstatement at a lower rank for Minter, John Pempsell and George Campbell includes a section protecting Wilder and Max from future legal action for their roles.

Commissioner Bob Hampton, who as of Friday still hadn't been briefed by Williams about any of the events that marred the first days of the new sheriff's administration, said Williams will always be at the bottom of a deep pit if he

doesn't shed the perception that someone else is calling the shots.

A number of local Republican leaders are already distressed that any widespread changes Williams hopes to make in the troubled Sheriff's Department will be quashed if Wilder and Max aren't deposed.

"I think if they continue to be the cabinet or shadow sheriffs, it will be impossible for him to dig himself out of the hole," Hampton said.

For his part, Williams says he is not concerned about public misconceptions about his relationships with Wilder and Max. He thinks their portrayals as shadow sheriffs are being circulated by his political enemies.

"Every administrator has advisers," Williams said Friday in a telephone interview. "President Clinton. Governor Richards. All officeholders have other sources of input."

Williams, 38, a Republican political novice and former Haltom City detective, has been dogged by questions about his qualifications ever since he began his race for sheriff. Members of his own party wondered if the clean-cut former security guard for Kenneth Copeland ministries had the managerial background to oversee the 1,100-employee, \$44 million-a-year Sheriff's Department.

They were not soothed by his association with Wilder and Max.

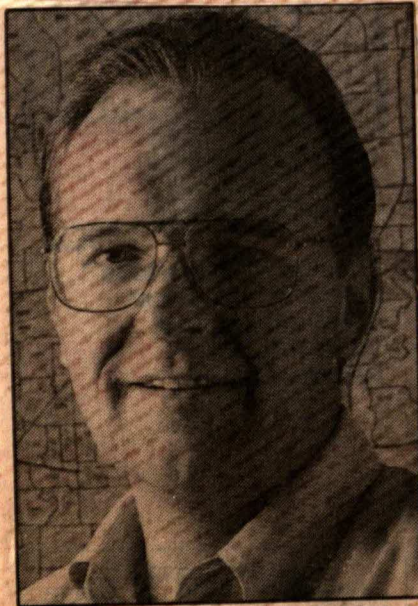
Wilder is an aggressive, 49-year-old Euless commercial real estate agent who admits that he has as many foes in his own party as among the rival Democrats.

Usually championing conservative causes, Wilder worked for former President Ronald Reagan's and former Gov. Bill Clements' campaigns. In 1984 and 1988, Wilder took on Hampton in two bitter GOP primaries. He attacked Hampton's moderate positions on taxation, accused him of improperly using county road equipment, and criticized his support of taxpayer-financed abortions at John Peter Smith Hospital.

"Mr. Wilder is the only person I've come in contact with in the political arena that remains a political enemy," Hampton said last week.

Wilder gained esteem as a politician who clearly understands modern campaign tools such as computers, polling and mass mailing.

However, he also won a reputation among some as an egomaniac who likes to drop names, throw bombs and take total control. On more than one occasion during Williams' campaign, Wilder was criticized for not letting his candidate speak for himself.



David Williams: Blames political enemies for portrayal of key backers

"There were a lot of people who felt that if you elected David Williams, you really were electing Tom Wilder," said Joe Cameron, a local GOP leader.

That fear seemed to ring true last week during the furor over the three deputies, when Williams was largely unavailable for public comment and Wilder was fielding reporters' questions for the sheriff.

In the wake of the firings, Wilder said he knew days in advance that

some type of personnel action would be taken against Minter, Pempsell and Campbell. He said he and Williams were evasive when talking to elected county officials about the planned staff changes.

"We were purposely vague, on the advice of counsel and for strategic reasons," Wilder said. "We didn't want to tell everyone our game plan."

Wilder says he was acting at Williams' behest. Everything he has done — from the campaign's first days to the first days of the Williams administration — is for the good of the taxpayers, he said.

"As a person who has been involved in the political process for 28 years, I feel it is my right and my duty to speak out on the issues that are important to me," Wilder said. "I'm nobody's yes man."

Justice of the Peace Sandy Prindle, who swore in Williams in a private and then a public ceremony Jan. 1, counts Wilder as a friend. While praising Wilder's political talents, Prindle admits that people who know Wilder are rarely neutral about him.

"Tom is a 100 percent person," Prindle said. "If he believes in something strongly, he will support it to the hilt. But I've never questioned his integrity."

While it is easy to mine opinions on Wilder, it is hard to find anyone who can give a very informed view about Max, 65, an auto parts dealer who lives at Eagle Mountain Lake.

Max could not be reached for comment. But his friends, family and those involved in the negotiations with him during the recent controversy said that all Max appears to want is good government.

"I know he doesn't have a personal agenda," said Commissioner Johnson, who held several long sessions with Max last week to resolve the deputies' futures. One meeting was at Max's home, with the sheriff present. But the deciding one, held

at the Harbor One restaurant on Eagle Mountain Lake, was between just Johnson and Max.

"He is sincere in getting good government and a Sheriff's Department," Johnson said. "... I think people will see that he means well."

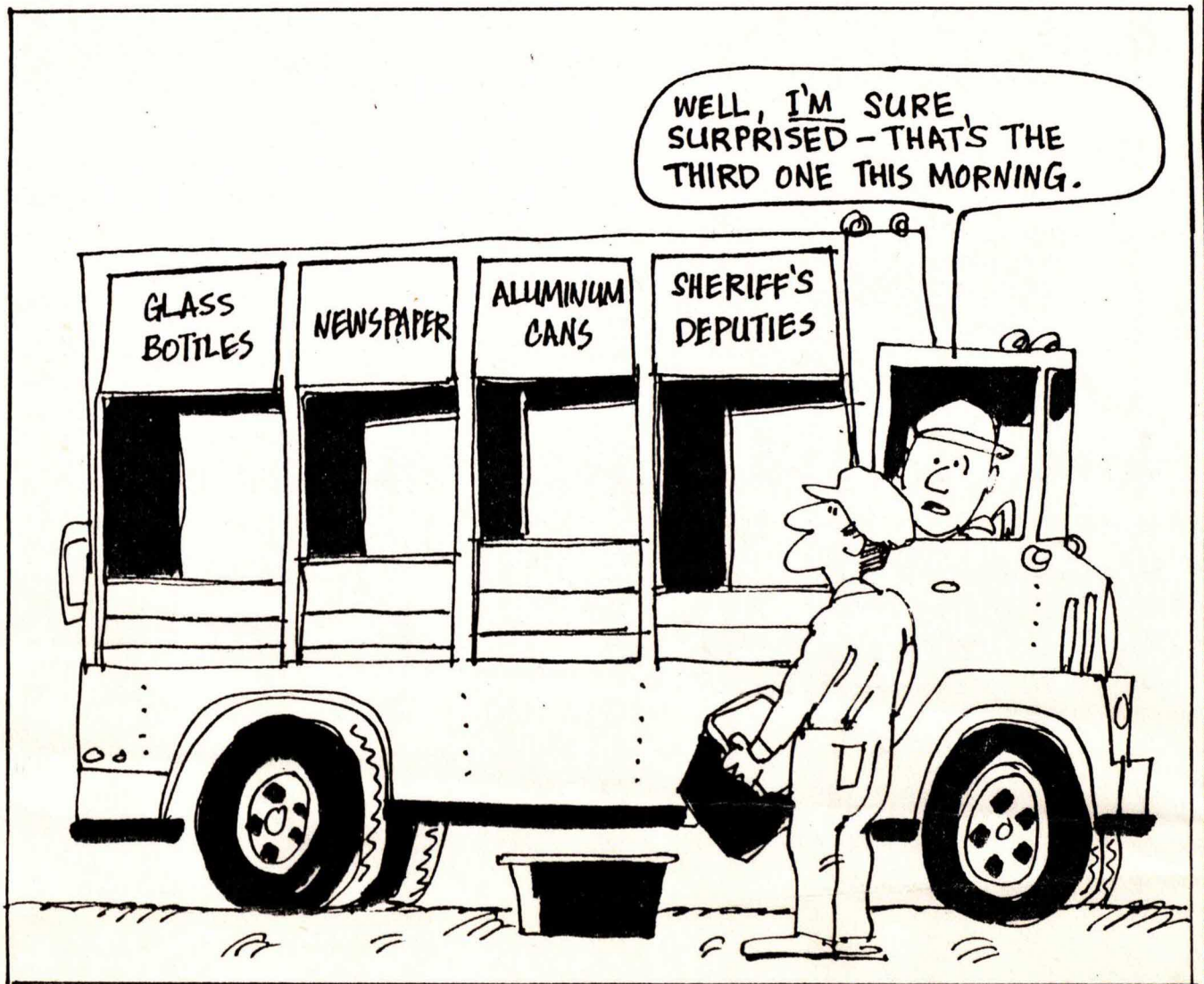
If Wilder and Max go on serving as intimates in the Williams administration, many of the new sheriff's supporters feel it could be a long, troubling four years.

"He would be a reverse back to the same old political trash we've had in the past," Cameron said. "If they don't back off, they will destroy what they intended to create."

The Fort Worth Star-Telegram

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January 7, 1993



9 JANUARY 1993

Inquiring minds want to know

Through the news media, the public has witnessed one sheriff's downfall because of unethical action that brought criminal charges. We have also witnessed the positive performance of former acting Chief Deputy Jim Minter and all the employees of the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department.

Support for these people was tremendous throughout the county. There is no explanation for Sheriff David Williams secretly having himself sworn in to public office and drastically changing so many lives and opinions.

The voters won't accept the blame for his actions. We don't approve of crude unprofessional methods being used to transition into a public office or the release of public employees.

Williams has reinforced why the public fears placing its trust in the political system and those running for office.

Another troubling point is that Williams has not offered any reasonable explanation to the public. Many a Christian supporter Williams gained while campaigning would like an explanation for his actions. That may erase some fears we have regarding his ability to administrate the sheriff's department in a fair, trustworthy and professional manner.

Cheryl Hope
Fort Worth

No standing ovation

What a way to start a new administration. Anyone could have done what Williams did and make a public fool of himself. It certainly didn't add luster to the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department, which has had more than its share of woes in the past several years.

No one disputes a sheriff's right to name his top aides. But there is a professional way to do it and an amateur's way of doing it. Clearly Sheriff David Williams has demonstrated what he has a penchant for — the latter.

I would wager that there are many Tarrant County voters who voted for Williams in the recent elections who now have second thoughts about their choice of a candidate. Likewise, many of those voters, as well as those who did not vote for Williams, are determined to see in the next election that "our hero" is a one-term sheriff.

Really, the circus that ensued was disgrace to the sheriff's department and to the county. Imagine the snickering and laughter in the rest of Texas and neighboring states when the press reported this debut performance by our new sheriff.

In the end, he came out with egg on his face. Please no encores, Mr. Williams. Let's get on with the show and act professionally. You owe that to the people who put you in office.

J.E. DiRocco
Hurst

Remember the sheriff

Newly elected and sworn-in Sheriff David Williams had better savor and enjoy his term in office because when election time comes around, the voters will recall and remember his underhanded expulsion of the three deputies.

Changes in personnel are more or less expected every time a new administration comes in, but Williams must be trying to be the "fastest gun in the West" and for the record for being most underhanded. We'll remember.

Betty Schmidt
Fort Worth

Crush a few egos

I wonder why it's only the egomaniacs who run for public office? Maybe it's been that way throughout history.

Gov. Ann Richards made her campaign promises and they sure sounded good. But instead of fulfilling her ideas, she has reigned as queen. Her highness, with a Travis County-sized ego, must demand several motorcades daily.

It doesn't get any better at the top, either. The only presidents in the last 46 years I would consider honest were Truman and Carter. Well, maybe Ford — but he pardoned Nixon.

And now Tarrant County has elected the ego to end all egos. David Williams became the emperor of Tarrant at 12:01 a.m. and couldn't wait even a few hours to strut his "I'm the man," stuff.

I'm not easily shocked at my age, but Williams' ignorance is overwhelming.

David Holmes
Granbury

Three officials fired by sheriff draw harsh criticism from peers

BY BOB MAHLBURG
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

On the morning Sheriff David Williams was sworn into office, Tarrant County Jail workers celebrated with "high-fives" when they learned that he had relieved three top bosses of their duties.

News of the sudden ousters on New Year's Day set off a firestorm of complaints from county officials. But to officers who had endured eight turbulent years under Sheriff Don Carpenter — marked by low morale, internal spying and coin flips to decide promotions — the dismissal order tacked to bulletin boards meant the promise of brighter days.

Then, within a week, came the jolt: The three officials were returning to work in lesser posts.

"Those three guys had carried the ball for Carpenter and when they went, deputies were literally dancing in the halls," said one 10-year veteran officer. "Then came the word they were coming back, and morale fell to hell."

Williams has repeatedly declined to give his opinion of the three officials he removed, citing advice from a private attorney. He said he removed the men primarily because he needs his own management team to carry out changes he promised voters. He declined to discuss other reasons and said that the full reasons behind his decisions might never be told.

"I just ask the people to trust that I'm acting in their best interests," he said by telephone Friday.

His first week in office left Williams in the unenviable position of

being criticized on one hand for ousting the officials, and on the other for taking them back.

In addition, the way Williams carried out the moves confused and concerned both camps; who, after Carpenter, were hoping for a period of calm.

Yellow pencils bearing the slogan "Sheriff Williams Makes Don Carpenter Look Good" began showing up in county buildings late last week.

But Williams said he is satisfied

"Those three guys had carried the ball for Carpenter and when they went, deputies were literally dancing in the halls."

— veteran officer
speaking anonymously

with his handling of the situation.

"My objectives have been attained and a leader in any position has to look at the results," Williams said Friday, adding in a clipped military voice: "Mission accomplished."

Despite the uproar, he said, the moves allowed him to put his own team in place within days and without a costly legal battle.

He conceded that he has suffered some political fallout but said that public reaction he has received has been overwhelmingly positive.

Williams notified the three officers in writing New Year's Day that they were relieved of duties, posted

a guard at their offices and declined to meet with them for three days. Given the opportunity, he would do it again almost exactly the same way, he said.

"My main motivation for the actions was I think it was imperative that I immediately install a management team in which I had absolute confidence to carry out the policies and programs I promised," Williams said.

However, his advisers and others close to the recent events say that Williams did not completely trust the three officers. They hinted that Williams feared opposition to his programs from acting Chief Deputy Jim Minter, Assistant Jail Administrator John Pempsell and Chief Deputy of Operations George Campbell. Minter had been running the Sheriff's Department for almost a year, since Carpenter took leave during his legal troubles.

"He was unwilling to begin his administration hamstrung and engage in a protracted legal battle to put in his own team," said Williams' adviser and campaign manager, Tom Wilder. By refusing to redepute the men as part of his new administration, rather than firing them outright, Williams believed he had "a slam-dunk way" to avoid lawsuits, Wilder said.

In making that decision, Williams relied heavily on advice from private attorneys and advisers, Wilder said. Neither Williams nor Wilder would identify those advisers.

Commissioner J.D. Johnson, who mediated the settlement to return the trio to work after threatened lawsuits, said that Williams



Jim Minter: Made enemies when he ran Internal Affairs Division

may have underestimated the intensely political nature of county government.

"What I honestly think is, he wanted to put some people in those top positions he could feel comfortable with," Johnson said. "[But] coming from the outside, maybe some mistakes can be made."

One former deputy said sarcastically that Williams' method actually was kinder than those of some past sheriffs, who exiled officers to the night shift in the jail to get them to quit.

"Williams must have gotten some bad advice," he quipped.

Williams and Wilder both declined to discuss whether the ouster decision was influenced by performance, ties to Carpenter or a perception of wrongdoing.

The reappointment of the three has opened deep scars for some sheriff's employees.

"These guys who were fired were slugs," said one jail officer. He said

that the three should be dumped permanently. Like most sheriff's officers, he asked that his name not be used for fear of reprisal. Williams has issued a written order barring employees from speaking to the media.

Many officers are especially upset about the praise heaped on Minter by some county officials who lauded his running of the department.

"The public perception is he was a good guy," one officer said. "Far from it. Everyone is running scared."

Minter made many enemies when he ran the department's Internal Affairs Division, which investigates complaints against officers.

"Nobody in IAD is ever very popular, but he was highhanded and arrogant and he fired folks Don Carpenter told him to fire," one five-year deputy said last week.

"I just ask the people to trust that I'm acting in their best interests."

— David Williams
Tarrant County sheriff

Other officers described Minter, Pempsell and Campbell as politicians more than officers and said that news reports have been unfair to Williams.

Minter declined to comment Friday on the officers' criticisms.

Firings during his tenure as head of Internal Affairs included several controversial cases, such as the chief bailiff and two officers who said they were targeted for founding a

jail employee association. Several firings were ruled to be unjustified and overturned by a civil-service panel.

Officers also criticized Pempsell, contending that he supported illegally withholding thousands of dollars in overtime pay. Critics also said that Pempsell muscled his way into his job as chief deputy while former Chief Deputy Bob Stone was hospitalized for a heart condition.

The county was ordered to pay the overtime wages; Pempsell said Friday that he was only following orders in the overtime situation. He declined to comment about Stone's job.

Still others took issue with Campbell, who like Minter and Pempsell reviewed some recommendations to fire officers in recent years. Many pointed out that Campbell has been arrested on drunken-driving charges.

Campbell responded that he has never been convicted of DWI and said that his DWI arrest record has been expunged from court records.

"I've never done anything knowingly to anyone in this department that isn't aboveboard," Campbell added.

Although many deputies may be angry about the men returning, Williams notes with pride that an association representing many deputies endorsed his legal right to make the changes.

Phone calls to the Sheriff's Department are also running overwhelmingly in favor of the moves, Williams said.

Staff writers Frank Perkins and Bill Hanna contributed to this report.

Williams takes a quick refresher course in Public Accountability

Well, it certainly didn't take long for Tarrant County's new sheriff, David Williams, to learn what life is like in the fishbowl. Those who thrust themselves willingly into the public fishbowl — and Williams did so thrust himself — should be prepared for intense scrutiny and criticism.

Many politicians undergo a metamorphosis between running for office and being elected to it.

Before taking office, they are champions of the public's right to know. On taking office, their attitude changes. They suddenly decide it is up to them to decide what public business the public is entitled to know about. Embarrassing incidents, like deeds of mischief, are frequently cloaked in secrecy. Officials suddenly think they are not accountable to the public.

Wrong!

Williams and other public officials need to remind themselves each day that they



Phil
Record
On the record

work for you and for me. We are their bosses, and in that capacity they are accountable to us.

One of the duties of journalists, when serving as surrogates of the public, is to remind officeholders constantly of their accountability to the people. Former U.S. Rep. Barbara Jordan, who has demonstrated on a number of occasions that she can put principle above politics, reminded some journalists of this duty several months ago in a speech in Austin:

"Do you know that most of the people in office would rather do their jobs without the nuisance of you? They would like to go closeted and cloistered and not let you have one little peek at what they are doing because they are afraid of the sunshine, and the only way the light of day gets into policy decisions is that you turn on that light and you have to do it.

"Now I know that media-bashing is a favorite sport of most people who talk about events of the day. But this year some-

thing very extraordinary is happening about the way you are being treated. Media people are now being treated as an identifiable opponent of those who would like to get elected to public office. Some people feel that running against you, those people who write the stories and turn on the sunshine and let fresh air through the windows, [is the way to go]; there are those who feel that you really should be shut out of the policy-making decision cloisters that occur in the government of the United States.

"You must be very, very insistent that you get your story. No matter what it takes, get your story. And the reason you have to get your story is that the people out there are depending on you. . . .

"I applaud you, and I congratulate you, because you know the one thing which could spell the death knell of democracy — and I am not being overly dramatic; I am being very truthful — the one thing that could spell the death knell of democracy is gross inattention by the people to the affairs of government."

We of the media must take these words to heart. So, too, should Williams and his colleagues holding elected office.

Williams needs to do a little attitude changing with some of his staff members, particularly the deputy who told *Star-Telegram* columnist Bud Kennedy:

"You people have been writing bad things about us. You've just got to learn, this is David's jail."

Wrong, Mr. Deputy. It is the people's jail, and David is their hired hand.

I received two calls from readers who thought we were being unfair to the sheriff by criticizing his midnight swearing-in and his desire to name his own right-hand personnel.

But I think this was more a matter of inference than implication. If we did imply that Williams erred in doing these things, we were wrong. It is not uncommon for a sheriff to be sworn in minutes after midnight because the deputies of the former administration lose their certification at the stroke of midnight and must be re-deputized. And nothing in the law says the public is entitled to be at such a swearing-in ceremony.

Sheriff's drug dog team to be trained in Kansas

BY FRANK PERKINS
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

FORT WORTH — Tarrant County's promised team of drug-sniffing dogs is taking shape today at a kennel in Newton, Kan.

"I promised the voters of Tarrant County a patrol canine narcotics unit, and I've kept that promise," Sheriff David Williams said in a telephone interview yesterday.

Sheriff's Deputies Jack Sartin and Rob Durko will be teamed with a pair of Belgian shepherd dogs to form the unit. The two deputies will spend the next two weeks training with the dogs at the Vom Kaiserhof Training Center in Newton, a major drug-dog training facility.

"I can hardly wait for the officers and the dogs to get back to Tarrant County and to work," Williams said. "Both officers have had prior experience with drug-sniffing dogs, and they volunteered for duty with the unit."

Williams said a \$20,000 grant from the Ed and Catherine Max Foundation will underwrite the cost of the dogs — \$4,500 each — the

training, veterinary services, food and other expenses. Wise County Sheriff Phil Ryan is a trustee of the foundation.

Max, a rebuilt-auto-parts magnate, was one of Williams' major contributors, donating some \$60,000 to the primary and election campaigns. He also was a major player in the behind-the-scenes negotiations that ended the sheriff's first personnel crisis.

The controversy ended Tuesday when Williams rehired three top deputies he refused to redeputize after taking office in a quiet New Year's Dayswearing-in. He took the three back as captains at considerable cuts in rank and pay.

Williams said the narcotics dog team would be available to county law enforcement agencies and school districts once it is in operation.

He said the German-bred Belgian shepherds have a "less intimidating aspect" than the traditional German shepherd police animals.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Fundamental things

I am at a loss to understand all the attention and criticism in the matter of Sheriff David Williams' secret swearing-in and immediate firings of top officials.

Williams, after all, is a fervent, if not fanatical, theocratic biblical fundamentalist. He cut his law enforcement teeth as a security guard for a televangelist. And as was pointed out well before the election in November by many, including a former Tarrant County Republican Party chairman, Williams is a member in good standing and now the chief spearhead in these parts of Pat Robertson's Christian Reich.

So it's only natural that Williams would seize his authority without a moment to spare, for God might take offense to dallying. Similarly, though the fired officials might be ever so competent and maybe even good, Christian folks, Williams must have staff who will first and foremost have an unquestioning allegiance to the word of God as heard on the *700 Club*. There's no secret, after all, about Robertson's plans for special Christian police who will apply the law, or break it if necessary, in the service of God's law.

So, once he thinks he's got the sheriff's department firmly in hand, don't be surprised if Williams starts aggressively enforcing Texas' anti-sodomy statute. Don't be surprised if Operation Rescue is welcomed to town and given free reign. And don't be surprised when a lot more taxpayer dollars are senselessly wasted in the courts over such contentious matters, regardless of the merits of the state's case. A bit of litigation over a few clumsily done firings is just the beginning.

Christine Bell
Arlington

Watchdog for the county

I do not agree with Paul Bartula [Jan. 7 letter, "Support your local sheriff"] at all, and called, wrote and did everything I could to save those deputies' jobs.

I voted for Williams, too, but I am real sorry for it now.

I do agree the sheriff has the right to appoint his top positions, but not to fire or what ever he did to three men who had given so much to the residents of this county.

I hope we still have a free society where Bartula, I (as I'm doing now) or anyone else has a right to complain about unjust things in the papers or on TV.

It is not Williams' jail, office, building or anything else down there. He and everyone down there works for me. My taxes pay all their salaries and built that building, bought autos, etc.

I'm so tired of government employees acting as if they don't have to be accountable to the residents of this free country of ours. This is why I voted for Bill Clinton. I just hope he doesn't let us down as Williams did.

Debbie Price's and Roger Summers' columns hit the nail on the head. I thoroughly agree with Summers that a jail administrator needs to be appointed by the county commissioners. This would allow the sheriff to have more time to tend to law and order, which is what I voted for him to do.

Doris Green
Fort Worth

Limit Williams' role

It is with great disappointment that I realize what the residents of Tarrant County did when they elected David Williams as sheriff. He embarrassed the county when he fired three leading employees and could not even do it in person, nor could he explain his reasons. Obviously, there was no reason for the firing of Jim Minter, John Pempsell and George Campbell except that their expertise posed a threat to the insecure Williams.

It may be too late to expect dignity in the sheriff's department. The residents of Tarrant County can hope only that County Judge Tom Vandergriff, the Tarrant County commissioner and County Administrator G.K. Ma will provide enough

guidance and leadership to limit the role of the sheriff. Or is it too late? Could Williams be impeached and Minter reappointed?

Gwen B. Preston
Fort Worth

Lott alters method in interviews

Potential jurors see suspect's gentler side

By TIM SULLIVAN
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

AMARILLO — By the conclusion of the third day of his trial yesterday, George Lott had already proved himself a very difficult man to predict.

The 45-year-old capital murder suspect, who started Tuesday's court session by making sexual comments about the prosecutors and went on to spend the day in seemingly uncomfortable interviews with potential jurors, showed yesterday that he can be animated, polite in a gruff way, and even somewhat friendly.

Although never able to approach the highly polished smoothness of the prosecutors, Lott — who is defending himself — seemed to warm yesterday to the people he was interviewing.

Nodding politely at their answers, Lott apparently tried to set the potential jurors at ease using gentle hand gestures and, in his own somewhat abrupt way, courteously encouraging them to answer questions.

For example, on Tuesday he asked one man if he understood that jurors should weigh evidence presented in court and "not suck it up like a vacuum cleaner."

Yesterday, he was far gentler in asking the same question.

"You have a certain amount of common sense and a certain amount of experience in life," he told one woman, "and you understand that you use that to filter the evidence."

At another point, he explained his questions by saying: "We're not trying to pick on you. . . . We're just trying to get some information."

Lott and prosecutors are expected to spend about three weeks interviewing potential jurors. Five people have been selected so far to return for the group from which the jury will be selected.

A former practicing attorney, Lott is accused of killing two men he didn't know and wounding three others July 1 at the Tarrant County Courthouse.

He later pleaded not guilty to all charges filed against him.

The trial was moved to Amarillo as a result of the vast media coverage in the Fort Worth area.

Yesterday in court, Lott seemed to realize how strange the potential jurors found some of his questions.

One question he asked, "Do you believe a person should be convicted of capital murder for lying?" brought quizzical looks from many people.

But by yesterday afternoon it appeared Lott had come to see their confusion and preceded that line of questioning by saying, "These questions may sound rather basic, but I'm going to go through them."

Lott also asked the potential jurors whether people should be convicted of capital murder for such things as being in the same building in which a murder takes place.

In another question that appeared to be linked to Lott's past, he also asked if the possible jurors could kill to protect their children.

Lott, who complained Tuesday about stains on his jail jumpsuit, appeared in court yesterday wearing jeans and a blue shirt. Judge Sharen Wilson told him Tuesday that that is normal jail attire.

Surprise, surprise

And I thought former Tarrant County Sheriff Don Carpenter was dumb! Enough said.

Al Vincent
Arlington

The

—Volume 2 Number 2—

Fort Worth Press

Fort Worth's Home Owned Newspaper

January 14, 1993

Fear, loathing, confusion, and paranoia stalk the halls of sheriff's department

Fear, loathing and paranoia are stalking the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department these days, gripping rookies, veterans and old-timers in the wake of the seemingly gestapo-like purge of New Year's morning.

Quite the contrary, say backers of new Sheriff David Williams, a man who they say wants to bring professionalism back to a department that seems to have lost it, a man they believe is sincere, honest and who wants to put the department above himself.

In between lie the differences of a myriad of opinions.

It's a Grand Canyon of the Trinity with enough differences of opinion to render trustworthiness a pit deep enough to hold many opinions.

The fabric of truth -- and truth depends on whom you talk to -- seems stretched asunder and ripped apart.

There are in other words two sides of the complex, emotional and explosive issue.

Add to this mix, some truth, some hidden agendas, outright declarations, obfuscations and downright lies and they are mixed like a State Fair margarita, virtually all lemonade with a half shot of watered-down cheap wine.

Based on scores of interviews by The Fort Worth Press, most of them under conditions of anonymity, with officials close to the unfolding situation, members of the department and other county departments, politicians and people who know those involved, here are some findings:

Williams' detractors say:

-- He lacks management skills; he is not a good speaker. He has to read his speeches and is easily thrown off and becomes highly flustered if he is questioned or interrupted. His initial news conference was considered a disaster of non-news.

-- He has used threats of reprisal, such as transfers to the third shift and to the outlying satellite holding facilities, to employees who were friends of what is regarded as the "old guard".

-- He seems to have given an inordinate amount of power to his former campaign manager, Tom Wilder, a man many Republicans say is best known for trying to promote himself to the detriment of those who he is supposedly advising.

-- Virtually all his campaign funds came from one man, Ed Max, a wealthy Fort Worth auto parts store owner. He is re-

ported to have spent more than \$60,000 on the race prior to the November general election and the final deadline for filing contributions is Jan. 15.

-- His ill thought out "firings" of three top officials -- and their quick reinstatement -- have created the general question among many employees of who is in charge and what is he doing.

-- Instead of the euphoria and the hope usually found in new administrations, there seems to be a prevailing feeling of "what bad can happen next and how soon is it going to be?"

Neither Williams nor Max would be interviewed by The Fort Worth Press, nor did they return phone calls.

Wilder did speak for Williams and addressed many of these points, which will be detailed later.

Williams does have his supporters. They say:

-- His experience as a security director for Kenneth Copeland Ministries and as a Haltom City police officer convinced the voters that he was the best qualified for the job.

-- He is sincere, honest and has begun making wide-ranging changes in the way that the department has been run. He has said it will be run more efficiently and with more orderly procedures than in the past.

-- He is a certified police instructor who has taken more than 700 hours of classroom instruction and is well versed in most phases of Texas criminal justice.

-- He has received an endorsement of support from the Deputy Sheriffs' Association.

-- He sets high standards for

"It looks like it's going to be a long four years," said attorney Jim Lane, one of two defense lawyers who represented Acting Chief Deputy Sheriff Jim Minter, who for 11 months ran the scandal-rocked county department following Sheriff Don Carpenter's indictments.

"It's going to be a very litigious term"

"It's going to be a very litigious term," added another lawyer who has close ties with both parties and said he voted a split ticket. He declined to say which way he voted in the Sheriff's election.

"I contributed to both," he said, a common practice among people who have to deal with whoever is in an elective office.

Minter, with two other key jail officials and longtime county employees, John Pempsell and George Campbell, were dismissed in letters effective at one minute past midnight by Williams who arranged a secret swearing-in ceremony on January 1, prior to the public ceremony later in the morning.

Pempsell was former Jail Administrator and Campbell was formerly Chief Deputy for Operations.

Combined, the three men have almost 70 years of service to the county. Strangely, in a document called "Minutes for Transition Team Meeting," dated December 21, Minter is singled out for high recognition.

Williams was at the meeting when it was noted that "J.C. Minter is tremendously appreciated for all he has done for the Sheriff's Department under some very trying circumstances. He has done a great job."

Even before the "firings", Williams was discussing the discharge of the three top aides, Minter, Pempsell and Campbell, with representatives of District Attorney Tim Curry's office.

Williams, sources said, wanted to fire them outright. Curry confirmed that Williams was told he could not do that.

Under Texas law, dealing with Public Officers & Employees, Title 5, Chapter 158.038: "A Sheriff's department in a county with a population of more than 500,000 may, in accordance with this subchapter, create a civil service system."

That law became effective in 1991 and Tarrant County clearly has more than 500,000 persons.

In the early morning hours of January 1, apparently neither Williams nor his attorneys knew of or understood the law

TARRANT COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

INTER OFFICE MEMO

Please Post

TO: All Sheriff's Department Personnel

FROM: Sheriff David Williams

REF: News Media Releases

DATE: 1-1-93

All inquires from the news media or news media releases, in reference to activities concerning the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department, will be directed to and authorized by Sheriff David Williams or his designee.

Pat Howell for David Williams
David Williams
Sheriff of Tarrant County

1-1-93 0001 hrs.

Incoming Sheriff David Williams apparently sensed his midnight termination of three top departmental aides would draw public inquiries.

Hence the note he had posted to all departmental employees at one minute after midnight on January 1, 1993.

Pat Howell, who signed it for Williams, is the new Chief Deputy Confinement Bureau.

himself and expects others to do so.

-- He takes issue with people who claim that he is closely affiliated with the religious right wing.

-- He will be a "hands on" administrator.

The pro and the con.

Now, a little background:

Threats of violations of civil and constitutional rights are already being discussed as Williams tries to correct some of the disastrous public relations of his first few days in office and as he tries to settle into office.

or of its' exemptions, according to persons involved in the bloodless coup.

Williams told the media he had discussed whether the three could be fired, rather than be offered other positions. He said on radio, television and in the daily print that he was told they could be discharged as county employees.

That portion of the law provides that a sheriff of a county with a population of 2 million or less - and again Tarrant County qualifies -- might designate as exempt from the civil service system as many as 10 persons.

Those 10 could include the position of chief deputy, four positions of major deputies, a departmental legal counsel and others whose duties are not specified.

The important legal point in the list of exemptions is subhead (d).

It provides that "At the time a new sheriff takes office, an employee holding an exempt position may be transferred to the nonexempt position held by the employee immediately before being promoted to an exempt position."

Pempsell, Minter and Campbell had, by virtue of their positions, been exempt from civil service.

But when they were threatened with being fired, Lane and three other attorneys on their behalf brought out the statute. The other attorneys were Michael Deegan, another attorney for Minter, I. E. Schilling for Pempsell and William H. Ray for Campbell.

Assistant District Attorney Ann Diamond represented Williams, who is the first sheriff in memory to be threatened with a lawsuit on his first day in office.

To replace the three, Williams appointed Hamp Scruggs, Chief Deputy Administrative Bureau, Pat Howell, Chief Deputy Confinement Bureau and Major Sevala Swanson, Assistant Chief Deputy over the Jail. Swanson has been promoted to Colonel.

In a document, entitled "Settlement Agreement and Release in Full," which is undated but which became effective on January 1, 1993, Williams agreed that Minter, Pempsell and Campbell will remain as Captains at the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department.

"It's like they (Williams) had a royal flush and got bluffed by two deuces," said one attorney not associated with the proceedings, but who watched them closely.

Their seniority remains intact, although their job titles were changed and they received a slight drop in pay and pay grade.

No one discussing these turns of events, which at times came close to rivaling the Keystone Kops, questions Williams' right to bring in his own team.

What is questioned, however, is what kind, if any, substantial management style Williams has.

Certainly, he has done a great deal to create disharmony and confusion in the ranks by his mishandling of the reassignments.

"It's like he wakes up in a new day about every 15 minutes," said one deputy who added, "I was proud to serve under Lon Evans (Sheriff before Carpenter); Carpenter was iffy but now this.

"If it continues to run this way, it may end up that Carpenter looks like a rocket scientist, compared to Williams."

By most accounts of people who have

talked to him and helped him with the transition, Williams apparently had little idea of the task facing him, its' problems and the way the department is financed.

Primarily, the Sheriff's Department is responsible for running a jail.

Of the approximately 1,400 people employed by the department, about 1,100 work in the jail. The remainder are staff and administrative people, warrant servers and patrolmen.

As the cities have grown in the county, however, there is less and less to patrol.

Currently, county records show there are 453 road miles that are patrolled by Williams' deputies in unincorporated areas of Tarrant County. The number declines each year.

For the 1993 fiscal year, the sheriff's department's budget is \$36,422,000 according to records kept by Commissioners Court.

Of that amount, \$2,546,000 is earmarked for patrol and investigation, or less than seven percent of the total.

The bulk, \$29.5 million, goes for confinement, the county's budget figures show. Other, smaller amounts go for administration services and civil and warrant deputies.

General fund for the county this fiscal year is \$196 million.

Out of 1.1 million residents only 37,000 live outside cities

Demographic records show that out of 1.1 million residents in Tarrant County, only 37,000 live in unincorporated areas. That number, like the number of miles of roads, decreases almost annually.

For comparative purposes, 34,000 people live in Hurst, which has 126.5 miles of city-maintained streets, not counting the miles of freeways that criss-cross the city.

The police department budget for Hurst is \$4.7 million, with patrol costs making up about 65 percent of the total.

That the patrolling is, perhaps, a misdirected priority is evidenced by the fact that eight items in the transition team meeting notes of December 21 are mentioned for possible action.

One of them says:

"It was suggested that David (Williams) go through the D.A. (District Attorney) to get the opinion of the Attorney General on whether it is a law that the Sheriff's Department is responsible for making pick ups at all the municipalities.

"However, the sheriff needs to be careful not to present this in a negative way to the local police chiefs. It is an issue which needs some planning applied to it to see if something can be done for the betterment of the law enforcement community, regardless if it is a law or not. This topic will be kept on the table until it is resolved."

Currently, most cities in Tarrant County deliver their prisoners to the jail.

Another sign of Williams' naivete is that he holds the purse strings for the department.

Wrong.

Williams can recommend and request public funds.

But the five-person Tarrant County Commissioners Court has the ultimate say in approving, disapproving or sending the sums in question back to the financial drawing board.

On recent television appearances County Judge Tom Vandergriff has made it clear that Williams was out of line and he said he hoped he would do better in the future.

Vandergriff is too much a gentleman to use threats.

But, he is also a strong enough leader that the point should not be lost on Williams.

As the elected official, Williams ultimately has to set the policies, procedures and goals for the office.

Still, Wilder seems to be Williams' alter ego.

He served as chairman of the transition team and, while he denied being the Sheriff's spokesman, he seemed to take pleasure in outlining -- but not in detail -- the reasons for Williams' actions January 1 and since.

"He (Williams) does not regret doing it the way he did," Wilder said.

"He did it because he felt it was in the best interest of the department. He felt that was the most expedient way to bring about changes he thought were necessary.

"And, certainly, he knew there would be criticism."

On further questioning, Wilder conceded that they did not expect the criticism to be as severe as it turned out to be.

"Of the telephone calls (shortly after the incident was first broadcast) we received, most were favorable," he said.

Television reporters on the evening news shows disputed that, saying calls to the stations were highly critical of Williams' action.

Wilder, who owns a commercial real estate firm and who said he "dabbles in politics," is criticized by many of his fellow Republicans. He is considered to be brash, abrasive, stubborn and a negative campaigner.

One politician said Wilder's judgement is sometimes wrong, "especially if it clashes with his own idea of self-importance and gets in the way of his ego."

Apparently Williams is still relying on Wilder for advise

"I think he also hurt Williams at the election box. The way it is now, a Republican candidate (in a general election) can count on 55 percent of the vote.

"Williams just got 52 percent and a little change. I think that anti-vote was due more to Wilder than to Williams."

Speaking for Williams, Wilder rejected criticism that the Sheriff, 38, did not have much management experience.

"Neither did any of the other candidates," Wilder said.

That is not accurate.

Both Tom Graves, an executive with Southwestern Bell Telephone Co., and Steve Marshall, an Assistant District Attorney, in the primaries and W.D. "Dub" Bransom in the general election,

had much more managerial experience than Williams.

Wilder, on several occasions during a 20-minute telephone interview, said he was no longer advising Williams. At other times in the same interview, however, he used the pronoun "we" in his conversation, meaning he and Williams.

Williams apparently is still relying on Wilder for advice and support.

Last week he urged Vandergriff to name either Wilder or Max to a vacancy on the Sheriff's Civil Service Commission.



Associated Press

A Tarrant County sheriff's deputy escorts George Douglas Lott, left, from the Potter County Courthouse in Amarillo.

Bailiffs watch as Lott grows angry in court

BY TIM SULLIVAN
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

AMARILLO — The defendant's silent but angry gestures came near the end of a day of jury selection in a capital murder trial. They carried a quiet fury that led three armed bailiffs to approach the defendant who is his own lawyer.

George Lott, who is accused of killing two attorneys and wounding three other people in a July shooting spree at the Tarrant County Courthouse, was questioning the last of the day's potential jurors yesterday when prosecutor Alan Levy interrupted twice in rapid succession with objections.

Slowly, Lott began to rock his head back and forth. Then, after a short silence, he spoke in a measured cadence and a derisive tone.

Lott asked a potential juror — the wife of a Potter County lawman — whether she would be predisposed toward law enforcement officers. After Levy's objections, Lott reworded his question.

"Let's just for a second," he asked the woman, "just this one small second, imagine that somehow or other you sat on a jury and found me not guilty. Could you live with the criticism within your own community?"

After she answered yes, Levy told the judge he had no challenge to the woman remaining in the jury pool.



George Lott: Protests choice of lawman's wife as juror

Lott, with an unspoken anger, gripped his desk and slowly raised himself to his feet, pausing for a few seconds as he looked toward the bench.

"I don't see how she could not be biased of me," Lott responded. "I don't believe if Jesus Christ himself came down here and told her I was innocent she would believe him."

Three armed bailiffs moved toward Lott after he rose to his feet to challenge the woman's selection. One of the bailiffs stood

behind the defendant in the fourth-floor courtroom.

Judge Sharen Wilson overruled Lott's challenge and the woman was told to return for the next stage of jury selection.

Yesterday, jurors were excused for a medical problem, illness in the family and religious beliefs. One was excused after saying he would believe a judge testifying as a witness no matter what.

"There will be judges as witnesses in this trial against me," Lott told Wilson before the man was excused.

So far, six potential jurors have been told to return as part of the group from which the final jury will be selected.

Lott's trial was moved to this Panhandle city after extensive media coverage of the July 1 incident, in which Lott is accused of opening fire in the 2nd Court of Appeals. Though Lott later that day confessed to the killings at a Dallas TV station where he surrendered, he later pleaded not guilty to the capital murder charges.

In the TV interview, Lott said he had done "a horrible, horrible thing" to make a statement about the judicial system. Before the outbreak, he had lost a bitter custody battle over his son.

Lott, who was not a practicing lawyer at the time of the shootings, could be executed if found guilty. The testimony phase of his trial is expected to begin in early February.

Under the law, three persons serve on the commission, one is appointed by the Sheriff, one by the District Attorney and one by Tarrant County Commissioners Court.

District Attorney Tim Curry has named Franklin Sears, a prominent attorney who is a former chairman of the Tarrant County Republican Party. His credentials are considered impeccable.

So are the credentials of the man appointed by Minter last year, Louis Sturns, a former district judge and popular attorney.

Williams reported told Vandergriff that he did not consider Sturns' appointment legal. The Commissioners Court disagreed and the Sheriff chose not to argue, given Sturns' power and popularity.

Commissioners voted to name Mrs. Kathryn Evans, a full time volunteer with the United Way and several other civic organizations and the woman who ran Vandergriff's congressional office in the early 1980's.

As said, the issues are complex. There are many sides to many arguments. Statements are made and disputed.

Caveat emptor, let the reader beware.

Koslow appeals, seeking

BY BILL HANNA
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

FORT WORTH — Two weeks after a judge reduced her bail by \$400,000, Kristi Koslow, who is accused of masterminding the death of her stepmother, is appealing the decision in hope of having it lowered even more.

On Dec. 29, District Judge

George Kredell lowered Koslow's bail from \$750,000 to \$350,000. Koslow's attorney, Tim Evans, filed a motion yesterday that appeals the judge's ruling to the 2nd Court of Appeals.

However, a hearing will probably not be scheduled before March, according to an appeals court clerk.

Koslow's attorney, Tim Evans,

further reduction in bail

was out of town and couldn't be reached for comment.

Koslow is charged with capital murder and attempted capital murder in the attack on Caren and Jack Koslow in the bedroom of their Rivercrest home March 12. Both were beaten repeatedly on the head, and their throats were slashed.

Kristi Koslow's boyfriend, Brian

Salter; and his friend Jeffrey Dillingham are accused of breaking into the home and attacking the couple. Police say that she masterminded the plan and promised the two men a share of her inheritance.

All three were arrested March 25 and have remained in jail. Bail of \$1 million each has been set for Salter and Dillingham, both 19.

Sunday, January 17, 1993

Lawsuit charges county with failing to pay overtime

BY BOB MAHLBURG
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

A jail captain in the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department is among several county workers who have filed a federal class-action lawsuit charging that Tarrant County government has failed to pay legally required overtime to county employees.

The suit, filed on behalf of all county employees, claims that the county has knowingly broken federal labor law by refusing to pay time-and-a-half when employees are required to work more than a 40-hour week.

The suit follows a similar dispute in 1988 in which the county paid thousands of dollars in back wages after a routine investigation by the U.S. Department of Labor found that more than 100 employees, many of them jailers, had not been paid enough overtime.

Sheriff's Capt. Ben Tahmahkera, the lead plaintiff in the suit, declined to comment yesterday, referring all questions to his attorney, Jim Lane. Lane, who filed the suit, could not be reached.

The eventual cost of the suit "could be enormous," said Leonard Schilling, an attorney for the Tar-

rant County Deputy Sheriff's Association, who referred some workers' complaints to Lane.

"It would be substantial to any county's budget," Schilling said. "There were a lot of unpaid hours that people were forced to work in this county, and it's been going on for a long time. Those guys have been abused, paywise and every other wise. It's about time somebody took the bull by the horns."

The total cost of back wages would depend on how many people join the suit, Schilling said.

County authorities, including personnel and legal officials, did not return calls seeking comment yesterday.

The suit demands that the county pay all unpaid overtime, plus an equal amount of money as a penalty, and all legal costs.

The department's overtime policy, which is the same as other county divisions, provides time off for most employees who work more than 40 hours in a week. That policy gives employees time-and-a-half off until a certain amount of hours are accumulated, and then money is paid at a rate of time-and-a-half of time worked. Others, such as those in senior positions, can accrue time off but cannot be paid overtime.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Tuesday, January 19, 1993 / Fort Worth Star-Telegram

Unite behind one badge

Eleven months ago, former acting Chief Deputy Jim Minter made a promise to me. Our new Sheriff David Williams also made the same promise in his campaign. Both men were making a commitment toward the same goal: to bring the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department together in harmony and dedication to do a job for which it was intended.

Minter promised to try to put an end to the discord, distrust and low morale that was created by oppressive action in the previous administration. He promised that job retaliation would cease and that he would have a listening ear to the many problems that have long plagued the department. The intent of his promise to me was to bring about a smoother transition period for the new sheriff. I sincerely believe that Minter kept that promise to me during his interim as acting chief deputy.

Williams had promised to reform a badly tarnished public office through new policies, sound management and trusted leadership. To fulfill his promise to the voters, he needed the undivided loyalty, dedication and mutual respect of the men and women of the department as well as his chosen top staff. He did not break his promise to the voters of this county. Instead, he immediately began the task at hand: to repair a broken spoke in the Tarrant County wheel of government.

The strength of Williams' leadership not only depended on removing the discord, distrust, low morale and embarrassment found in the department, but to remove the origin. Unfortunately, the positive service that Minter had given as acting chief deputy was overshadowed by a negative reputation from the previous administration.

It is hard to understand a chasm so deep that it can separate one promise from the other. Both men represent the same badge. I can only ask each to continue to honor their promise to me and allow that badge to represent wisdom in leadership from one man and loyal support from the other.

We must not allow the lingering mistrust of the previous administration erode the success of the future in the sheriff's department. The residents, political parties and elected officials of this county must now have faith and trust that the rebuilding process in the sheriff's department will be dedicated to do a job for which it was intended: public protection through enforcement of our laws.

Marilyn Lowrie
Fort Worth

Follow God's rule

I voted for Sheriff David Williams and am as sorry for that as anyone can be. There is no excuse for his sneaky swearing-in at 12:01 a.m. Jan. 1 and his immediate firing of three employees. He should be impeached.

However, I see no reason as Christine Bell did in her Jan. 13 letter to make inflammatory statements against the Rev. Pat Robertson and other believers in God and Christian ethics in general.

Whether atheists and agnostics like it or believe it or not, God created this universe and all that is in it. He gave us the Ten Commandments and more to live by, and if we all lived by them, this world would be a much happier place and bitter people like Bell would know the job of following Jesus Christ and his promise of happy eternal life.

If Williams should follow her impertinent suggestion and start enforcing Texas anti-sodomy statutes and welcoming Operation Rescue to town, he would be enforcing God's own laws, as well as Texas laws against sodomy and murder.

Williams was wrong but bitterness and hatred expressed by Bell and other similar to hers only reinforces that rebellion against God is at the root of our corrupt and murderous society today. You cannot have an orderly and happy society when the rule is "Every man for himself and do whatever you feel like doing no matter how it hurts others." God's rule of "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" was a blessing to this country for most of its 200-year history. We are now reaping the philosophy of the devil, which has taken over our people, laws and court system the last 35 years or so.

I ask that God will reach into the heart of Bell and those who believe as she does, bless her, and show her the joy and happiness that comes with believing in Jesus Christ and in His Father's word.

William L. Bacon
Benbrook

Clogged sewer closes kitchen in Tarrant corrections center

BY THOMAS KOROSEK
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

FORT WORTH — A clogged sewer pipe in the Tarrant County Corrections Center hampered food service in the jail yesterday when the subbasement in the 16-month-old facility flooded with 2 to 3 inches of water.

Maj. James Skidmore, a warden for the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department, said prisoners were given a cold meal for dinner last night and will receive a cold meal for breakfast today because of the flooding, which closed the kitchen in the subbasement.

He said the building suffered no serious damage.

The problem, which hit about

noon, was under control by 6 p.m. after county building maintenance workers found the clogged line, Skidmore said.

"We went to cold-type meals for dinner and breakfast tomorrow morning," Skidmore said last night, explaining that cold meals include dry cereal, milk and fresh fruit.

"It's not unusual to feed several cold meals during the summer, so it's not as if this is new to them," Skidmore said. "The inmates have been informed of the difficulty and we haven't had any problem."

He said yesterday's flooding problem was the first of its kind since the block-long jail opened in downtown Fort Worth.

Show the sheriff some respect

I am appalled at the obvious lack of respect the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* has shown David Williams, sheriff of Tarrant County. Most of your readers do not have any idea what has really happened at the sheriff's department during the past few years.

All I've read from the newspaper is how Jim Minter turned the sheriff's office around. Pooh! How can four months of fairly smooth sailing make up for eight years of dishonesty and backward law-enforcement strategies.

The *Star-Telegram* has not even interviewed employees who are now elated at the steps Williams has taken to gain control of his office. Who does the *Star-Telegram* interview? Dub Bransom, who lost the election for sheriff of Tarrant County. Who cares what this man thinks? He lost!

The people have spoken. They do not want another "good ol' boy" sheriff. They want a real professional — one who can turn the department around. The men and women who work as deputies want to be associated with a department and a uniform they will be proud of. Williams will make this happen.

I've never been so outraged at a series of newspaper articles as those I have read regarding Williams. I remind the *Star-Telegram* the election is over and the candidate it endorsed lost. The residents of Tarrant County need to support David Williams because we need the change!

D.A. Scott
Fort Worth

Christian unit at jail stirs complaints

Jail

Special treatment alleged by others

By JACK DOUGLAS JR.
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

FORT WORTH — Tarrant County Jail inmates who volunteer to bunk in a "Christian rehabilitation pod" have been receiving special privileges for months, including an organ for jail worship services.

County officials confirmed the existence of the group cell yesterday and said they have received complaints regarding the arrangement.

The American Civil Liberties Union said the privileges include more time to watch Christian-oriented TV programs, greater access to Christian literature and "extensive visits" from officials at

local churches and a Baptist seminary.

County Judge Tom Vandergriff said yesterday that he has known about the special 48-man pod since summer but only recently asked the district attorney's office for advice on whether the practice is constitutional.

A Jewish inmate complained about the practice in July. Officials with the ACLU and the American Jewish Congress then lodged objections with county authorities.

The organizations only recently learned that the pod is still in operation.

The pod, on the jail's eighth floor, is equipped with an organ that was do-

(More on JAIL on Page 2)

nated by a Christian group, said Chief Deputy Pat Howell, head of the confinement division of the jail.

Howell said the Christian pod originated under former Sheriff Don Carpenter and was "inherited" in early January when he became a jail administrator under new Sheriff David Williams.

"That's the first I became aware that there was such a pod that existed," Howell said. He said the segregated section was "dreamed up" by John Pempsell, former assistant jail administrator, and approved by Jim Minter, the acting chief deputy who was in charge of the Sheriff's Department until Williams took office.

Williams and Pempsell could not be reached for comment yesterday, and Minter declined to comment.

A member of Williams' administration said last night that nothing was immediately done about the pod because no one wanted to "rock the boat" by altering an existing jail practice.

Vandergriff said he has asked the civil division of the Tarrant County District Attorney's Office to investigate whether the arrangement should be stopped. He said he expects a decision within several days.

"A lot may hinge on whether county personnel, sheriff's personnel, are actually involved in the so-called educational process," the

county judge said.

Howell said, "I've made one trip up there to take a look at it to see if they were being afforded any privileges that other denominations were not getting."

He added, "I discovered that they did have an organ that was donated" by a religious group.

It has not been determined whether the operation violates any laws, Howell said. "If it's something improper I intend to correct it," he said.

Don Jackson, president of the Fort Worth ACLU chapter, said the Jewish inmate complained of special privileges for Christian prisoners that were not available for non-Christians.

Inmates in the pod were given more time to watch television, "provided it was turned to Christian broadcasting and/or Christian videotapes," he said.

Jackson said there were also "a lot of publications with religious contents that were available to people in that pod that were not available to the general [inmate] population."

There were also visits from church officials and Bible classes. "None of that was available to the general inmate population," he said.

Jackson said the special pod is unconstitutional because it violates the separation of church and state.

According to Jackson, a second complaint was made in December, this time by a former inmate in the pod whose Christian beliefs were "different than the predominant form of Christianity in that pod."

"His complaint was that you had to adhere to a dogma, or single point of view, in order to get along in the pod," Jackson said.

That prisoner, he said, asked to be moved from the group cell and was placed in an older, less comfortable area of the jail.

Jail's Christian unit got approval, warden says

By JACK DOUGLAS JR.
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

FORT WORTH — The civil division of the Tarrant County District Attorney's office gave its blessing last year before a Christian-oriented housing unit was formed in the Tarrant County Jail, the warden said yesterday.

"After presenting the program and its selection criteria to the district attorney's office, we were advised that there appeared to be no violations of inmates' constitutional rights," said Maj. James Skidmore, of the sheriff's department.

However, this week a half-dozen lawyers in the district attorney's civil division began investigating whether the group cell on the jail's eighth floor, known as the "Chaplain's Education Pod," discriminates against non-Christians and violates the constitutional provision of separation of church and state.

Former U.S. Attorney Marvin Collins, who became chief civil prosecutor for the county Jan. 22, said he was not aware that the sheriff's department had been advised earlier that the program was not in

(More on JAIL on Page 21)

violation.

County Judge Tom Vandergriff was also surprised. "This is the first I've heard that they've gotten any kind of opinion from the D.A.'s office," Vandergriff said.

He said he sought the district attorney's advice earlier this week after lawyers representing the American Jewish Congress and the American Civil Liberties Union indicated they would sue the county if the 48-inmate pod was not disbanded.

Officials for the ACLU and the American Jewish Congress, however, said no decision has been made on whether to pursue litigation if the Chaplain's Education Pod remains intact.

The operation, which offers Bible lessons and diplomas, began in May 1992 under the watch of former acting Chief Deputy Jim Minter.

Skidmore, who remained a jail administrator after Sheriff David Williams took office on Jan. 1, said that once the district attorney's office "told us [last year] they did not feel we were violating any federal laws, we started it up."

He said he considered the pod "a bona fide, legitimate activity" and "personally, I would like to see it continued. It's been very successful."

Collins said his staff will weigh the inmates' rights to practice their religion against the constitutional guarantee that government does not get "entangled in the establishment of a religion."

"We want to make sure we're not throwing up roadblocks to some successful rehabilitation effort that's taking place in the jail and

which gives the sheriff and jail administrators a more peaceful population to work with," he said.

Skidmore said the instruction and counseling for inmates in the pod are provided by church volunteers. He also said that non-Christian inmates are welcomed into the pod and are given equal opportunity to worship.

The majority of the inmates and the predominate teachings in the housing unit, however, are of Christian beliefs, Skidmore said.

Some former inmates have complained that those in the Chaplain's Education Pod were given special privileges, such as greater access to Christian literature and longer hours to watch Christian television programs.

But Skidmore said yesterday that there are no special privileges for inmates in the pod. The housing unit consists of 12 bunk rooms surrounding a common day room,

where there is a piano and organ for worship services.

"The rules are the same. They go to bed at the same time [and] the TVs are turned off at the same time," Skidmore said.

He said the Chaplain's Education Pod is based on a concept used by correctional facilities across the country. It is modeled after the Orange County Jail in Orlando, Fla., where inmates are segregated into a dormitory or a pod after volunteering to participate in religious classes.

Marshall Wilson, chaplain of the Orange County Jail, said: "We teach them Christian principles that can lead them to a better life . . . We're teaching them principles that allow them to change direction away from violence."

That program has never been the subject of a lawsuit, Wilson said.

Staff writer Frank Perkins contributed to this report.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 1993

Editor testifies on visit to station by a weapon-toting Lott

By TIM SULLIVAN
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

AMARILLO — A Dallas television editor today described how George Lott came to the station, admitted he was the gunman in the Tarrant County courthouse shootings and surrendered a gun and ammunition.

James Willett Jr., a former Arlington police officer now an assignments editor at WFAA/Channel 8, testified that Lott told a station receptionist about his role in the shootings.

Willett said he asked Lott if he was armed and Lott replied, "As a

matter of fact, I am."

Lott then revealed a pistol tucked in his pants and rolled down a sock to shot ammunition and a small penknife, Willett said.

Willett said he and John Gudjohnsen, WFAA news manager, took the items and placed them in a large envelope for Dallas police.

Yesterday, 11 witnesses took the stand and told their accounts of the shootings.

And piece by piece, from the woman who said she saw Lott sitting in a hallway before the shooting rampage took place to the man who described watching him calmly

walk toward the courthouse exit while panic raged around him, the story of the morning of July 1 came together.

Lott is charged with capital murder in the deaths of two attorneys that morning in the Tarrant County Courthouse. He also is accused of wounding three other people.

It was a morning, prosecutors said, that the 45-year-old defendant from Arlington had mapped out months in advance, studying weapons, the layout of the courthouse and the court's schedule.

Lott "attacked the system of justice. He armed himself with extra

[pistol] magazines and personally attacked the 2nd Court of Appeals," Assistant District Attorney Mike Parrish told the jury during the first day of testimony.

He said that Lott, upset over the way the court had ruled in an appeal regarding his divorce, began planning in the spring of 1992.

The judges wounded in the courtroom July 1 were not the ones who ruled on Lott's appeal.

Parrish said that Lott purchased a Glock 9mm semi-automatic pistol, made a reconnaissance trip to the courthouse and chose July 1 for the assault when he discovered that the

court would recess July 2.

A trained lawyer who is defending himself, Lott chose not to make an opening statement yesterday.

Witnesses yesterday identified Lott as the man sitting outside the courtroom before the incident and then pointed him out as the man who calmly stood from his seat in the spectator area and began firing.

Chris Ewing said she turned when she heard the first shot to see Lott standing with his arms together and a pistol in his hands, aiming.

"I saw him fire another shot and the flame came out [of the gun] and there was the smell and I looked in

his eyes and he was so calm," she said through her tears.

His demeanor led her to believe that Lott was a trained killer, she said.

"I thought he was a professional. I thought, 'This is the man's job,'" said the attorney, who was in the courtroom waiting with John Edwards, a Dallas lawyer who died in the attack after being chased onto a staircase and shot repeatedly.

Clyde Ashworth, one of three judges in the courtroom, calmly described how Lott wounded him and then came closer.

(More on LOTT on Page 24)

Lott

From Page 21

"He came around to the side of the bench and looked down at me and I looked at him," said the judge, who has therapy twice a week as a result of his injuries. Ashworth said Lott shot him again after telling him something to the effect of "I'm going to kill you."

Judge John Hill, who was shot before he had a chance to see the gunman's face, also testified yesterday.

Fort Worth attorney Carl Mallory described how he stood in a first-floor hallway as Lott walked toward an exit.

As courthouse employees ran for

cover, and as bailiffs stood, guns drawn, looking up a staircase where the shots had come from, Lott walked calmly toward the door, seemingly oblivious to the yelling around him, Mallory said.

"He was so very, very calm and walked so very, very slowly opposed to everyone else who was scared to death," said Mallory, who ducked into an office when Lott saw him looking at him.

"I studied Mr. Lott's face carefully because I knew that someday I would be sitting here," testifying, he said.

Yesterday, Lott was abrasive with the first few witnesses, often questioning them in a bored and sometimes snide tone of voice.

He was especially caustic when questioning Dan Hollifield, one of

the attorneys presenting his case to the appeals court when the shots rang out.

For example, Lott was not satisfied with Hollifield's answer after asking him how many people were in the court that morning.

"Can you tell us how many people were in the court," Lott demanded, "before you told us about everybody you knew in Fort Worth?"

And when Hollifield said he could describe the way the gunman was dressed, Lott sneered: "Good. Tell us."

But his demeanor changed considerably after a couple of hours, and he went on to ask most of his questions calmly.

Lott questioned witnesses on precisely where they were when they saw the gunman, how they described him in their initial state-

ments to authorities, and whether they had seen Lott on television, implying that news reports could have affected their identification of him.

Lott gave a rambling interview July 1 at the Dallas TV studio where he turned himself in, saying he had opened fire to draw attention to a crooked judicial system that had cheated him in a child custody dispute.

Many of the attorneys who took the stand did get a few extra questions, such as whether their firms were considered prestigious, and Lott asked one to explain the plea bargaining process.

The trial was moved to Amarillo because of publicity in the Fort Worth area.

This report contains information from The Associated Press.

Lott kept lists of addresses, trial shows

BY TIM SULLIVAN
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

AMARILLO — George Lott, who is accused of killing two attorneys, wounding another and injuring two judges in a July 1 Tarrant County Courthouse shooting spree, kept lists of addresses and phone numbers of people who work in the legal system.

At least one of the lists was confiscated from Lott's minivan, which also contained more than 600 rounds of ammunition and a police scanner when he was arrested, according to police witnesses and evidence yesterday in his capital murder trial.

The 45-year-old Arlington man, who is said to have placidly walked from the courthouse as workers fled in panic, drove the van later that day to the Dallas studios of WFAA/Channel 8, where he took responsibility for the shootings in a televised interview, saying he did it to bring attention to corruption in the legal system. Lott, once a licensed lawyer, is defending himself.

The lists, which appear to have been partially culled from tax



George Lott: Being tried on capital murder charges

records and legal directories, also include a few hand-drawn maps, at least one to a judge's neighborhood.

The names of the two attorneys killed and the two judges injured did not appear to be on the lists submitted yesterday.

The mostly handwritten lists do, however, contain the names of Joe Spurlock Sr. and Joe Spurlock II, both of whom served on the 2nd Court of Appeals. In 1991, Judge Joe Spurlock II rejected Lott's motion for a new trial in a child custody dispute.

It was in that court that the shooting started.

Spurlock was not one of the judges. (More on LOTT on Page 24)

Lott

From Page 21

es in the courtroom when the attack occurred.

Also on the list are 323rd District Judge Scott D. Moore, former 48th Civil District Judge William L. Hughes Jr., and 325th District Judge Mary Sean O'Reilly.

In testimony, a Fort Worth homicide detective said Lott also had 231st District Judge Maryellen Hicks on a list. Hicks has since been appointed to the 2nd Court of Appeals.

No testimony was offered on the purpose of the lists, but shortly after the July 1, 1992, shootings, sources told the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* that Lott had apparently targeted a number of other people for attack.

Much of the testimony focused on the physical evidence of the case, such as tracing the chain of possession of the Glock 9mm semiautomatic pistol that Lott surrendered at the TV station.

Yesterday's first witness, who was working as a bailiff in the courthouse on the day of the shooting, described finding John Edwards, a Dallas lawyer, fatally wounded on a staircase while fleeing the 2nd Court of Appeals.

"He said, 'Help me; please help me. I've been shot,'" said Louis England, who added that Edwards then "just died."

Two witnesses from WFAA described Lott as very calm when he walked into their office saying he was the person wanted in the killing of the judges in Fort Worth.

Jim Willet, a WFAA assignments manager, said that when asked if he was armed, Lott said, "As a matter of fact I am" and pulled up his shirt, turning to show a pistol shoved into his pants at the small of his back.

For nearly the entire day, Lott remained silent, making few if any objections and not even questioning many of the witnesses.

Twice, though, he asked witnesses whether they knew he had given a TV interview "critical of the legal system." Lott pursued the question no further when he got a positive reply.

The trial was moved to this Panhandle city because of extensive publicity about the shooting.

Lott jury deliberating in courthouse killings

BY TIM SULLIVAN
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

AMARILLO — A Potter County jury late this morning began deliberations in the capital murder case against George Lott, who painted a hypothetical scenario in asking the jurors to find him not guilty in last year's Tarrant County Courthouse shootings.

But prosecutor Alan Levy argued for a capital murder conviction against Lott, the non-practicing lawyer who served as his own attorney in the trial.

Recounting how Lott arrived at the courthouse July 1, Levy said Lott went into the 2nd Court of Appeals shortly before 10 a.m.

(More on LOTT on Page 4)

February 12, 1993 / Fort Worth Star-Telegram

Lott

From Page 1

"This man and no other, saying no words, stood up and began to fire. The entire courtroom was shot up," Levy said.

Two attorneys were killed in the shooting rampage; two judges were wounded and a third attorney also was injured.

Pointing at Lott, Levy continued his argument: "This man fired round after round after round, squeezing the trigger."

Rhetorically, Levy asked if the killings were intentional.

"That's not accident. He came to kill and he killed. Ladies and gentlemen, George Douglas Lott is a capital murderer."

Lott, however, posed a different scenario, saying he was the victim of mistaken identity as the killer.

"Take another look at what happened," he said, asking that he be found not guilty.

Then, speaking of himself in the third person, he said:

"This Lott fellow, maybe he was at the courthouse. Maybe he was at the law library. That's no crime. The shooting happened. This Lott fellow leaves."

He suggested Lott then had lunch, went about other business that afternoon and then "he might get to thinking. Times goes on and still there is no capture of this fellow [the gunman]."

"What does it cost to get five minutes of airtime?" on television, he said, an obvious reference to his surrender at a Dallas television station and an interview in which he took responsibility for the shootings.

"He gets this idea and goes to WFAA in Dallas. He turned himself in and said he did it. He makes a statement and goes on the air. He gets to make his statement about the legal system. The police haul him off, but that's the end of the investigation."

Lott earlier this morning called only three witnesses for brief, cursory questioning this morning before resting his defense.

Lott yesterday indicated he had planned to call five witnesses, but he whittled the number to three today and took only about 30 minutes before telling presiding Judge Sharen Wilson he had completed his case.

Prosecutors rested their case yesterday after three days of testimony from 30 witnesses, some of them survivors of the July 1 bloodbath.

Lott yesterday told Wilson he needed an evening to prepare his defense before he began questioning the five people on his witness list this morning.

Included on that list was Judge Maryellen Hicks, who was recently appointed to the 2nd Court of Appeals. Hicks, however, was not among the three Lott called this morning.

Lott specifically mentioned Hicks in an interview he gave at a Dallas television studio where he surrendered a few hours after the shootings.

Saying he had opened fire to focus attention on corruption in the legal system, Lott told a WFAA/Channel 8 reporter that Hicks, as a favor to a friend, had fixed a case in which he was involved.

Custody of Lott's son was awarded to his ex-wife in a 1990 trial in Hicks' court. Hicks' name and address were also said to have been found on one of the lists confiscated

from the van Lott drove to the television studios. The van also contained more than 600 rounds of ammunition.

The witnesses called by Lott this morning were Fort Worth homicide Detective Danny LaRue; attorney Vaughn Bailey, the guardian ad litem for Lott's son in the divorce case; and Judge David Farris, one of the three appeals court judges who was not wounded in the courtroom gunfire.

Lott asked LaRue if he knew one of the slayings victims and the age of the victim; in questioning Bailey, who testified he saw Lott outside the courtroom about 15 minutes before the rampage, Lott went into detailed questions about Bailey's precise location in the hallway when he saw Lott.

Farris, the last witness, was questioned about how his initial description of the gunman did not match Lott.

Farris acknowledged differences, then elaborated to say he had trouble sleeping the night after the shooting.

"I woke up and I saw your face over the gun," Farris said, identifying Lott as the gunman.

Lott then rested his case.

Yesterday, prosecutors called a witness who described seeing Lott at the courthouse a few weeks before the shooting.

Yesterday, as the day before, Lott barely spoke, letting witnesses answer prosecutors' questions without objections and not cross-examining four of the seven people who took the stand.

What few questions he did ask focused mostly on the technicalities of weapons testing.

The trial was moved to Amarillo because of extensive publicity.

JIM JONES RELIGION

Not everyone singing praises of 'God Pod'

The "God Pod" at the Tarrant County jail has raised some eyebrows. No wonder. Who expects to hear the sounds of *Amazing Grace* emerging from inside a jail?



Not often do you see a piano and an organ behind bars.

So as an inquisitive reporter I tried to get into the unit this week. It's off-limits to the news media.

But inmates in what is officially called the Chaplain's Education Pod are continuing to watch religious TV, study the Bible and even get certificates when they finish their course work.

Volunteer jail chaplain Jim Norwood of Arlington invited me to go into the special area with him on one of his regular rounds. He did the necessary paperwork.

But a friendly and polite jail spokeswoman called and told me that news reporters will be kept out of the pod until after the Tarrant County District Attorney's Office completes its investigation of the unit.

What prompted the investigation were complaints from former inmates that non-Christian inmates were discriminated against and that church-state separation principles were violated.

The American Civil Liberties Union and the American Jewish Congress complained about the unit on those same grounds.

Norwood — who said religion rescued him from alcohol and drug addiction — was one of the volunteer chaplains taking applications for the pod. He said there was no discrimination.

"It didn't make any difference whether they were Hindu or Buddhist or Jewish, we would accept them," said Norwood, who said he has given out copies of the holy book, the Koran, to Muslim inmates.

A Muslim and a Jewish leader expressed support for the religious pod this week.

"Muslims aren't complaining," said Imam Moujahed Bakhsh of Fort Worth. "I believe the inmates have a right to worship and practice what they believe in."

Bakhsh, leader of the Islamic Association of Tarrant County Mosque in west Fort Worth, said he thinks inmates are helped by having religious instruction.

Rabbi Keith Stern, leader of Beth Shalom, a Reform Jewish synagogue in Arlington, says he sees no harm in it, either, if Jewish inmates are allowed the same treatment.

"I wasn't overly concerned about it," said Stern. "Luckily, the issue of Jews behind bars is not a raging controversy. Jews are hardly perfect, but the percentage of [Jewish] inmates who are incarcerated is pretty small."

Spiritual healing is a big need of inmates, said Stern, who commended those in prison ministries of all faiths.

A man charged with armed robbery and formerly in the pod, R.L. Jackson, wrote *Star-Telegram* reporters Jack Douglas and Frank Perkins about the special unit. He said the jail ministry transformed him.

"I hope people understand jail is the devil's domain and we need God in jail to change men," Jackson wrote. "Every jail in the country needs a place like 58-C [the jail unit number of the religious pod]."

Stern said inmates are vulnerable and may be more open to religious instruction.

"I'm sure there are a lot of [temporary] 'jailhouse conversions,' but I'm prone to believe that most inmates are making a real and honest attempt to analyze where their souls are," the rabbi said.

Bakhsh says he often ministers to Muslim inmates and that Tarrant County jail officials are very cooperative. The Muslim leader said studies have shown many who embrace Islam in prison are changed and are less likely to return to prison.

"I think those who commit themselves to Christianity will be changed too — if they really practice their faith in God," Bakhsh said. "Religious faith will work whether you are Christian or Jew or Muslim."

The Rev. B.L. McCormick, a longtime civic leader and pastor of Baker Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Fort Worth, has a similar view.

He favors a jail ministry open to all religions and decries rulings outlawing public prayer in schools and at public events.

"This country has been going to pot ever since we allowed [atheist leader] Madalyn Murray O'Hair to take prayer out of the schools," McCormick said.

"We need to get back to the point in this country where we recognize the supremacy of God across the board," he said.

"God is still God, regardless of what name you call him."

Jim Jones' column appears Saturday.

Right to worship for inmates

It is sad to read that the ACLU believes that the Christian unit in the Tarrant County Jail is a violation of the First Amendment. The threat of a lawsuit is an attempt to limit religious expression. The First Amendment was written to guarantee religious freedom, not to deter its free expression. The proper course would not be to dismantle the Christian unit but rather to offer the same types of privileges the Christian inmates enjoy to inmates who have other religious convictions.

Robert Warden
Fort Worth

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 1993

Lott guilty of court killings

Jury still deciding sentence

BY TIM SULLIVAN
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

AMARILLO — George Lott was found guilty yesterday of killing two men in a Tarrant County courtroom July 1.

While the families and friends of the two dead men looked on from the forward rows of the courtroom's spectator area, the jury returned a capital murder verdict after less than an hour of deliberation.

Standing over his desk, his fingertips resting on the table, the 45-year-old former attorney from Arlington showed no reaction as the verdict was read.

He was convicted of killing Assistant District Attorney Chris Marshall, 41, and Dallas lawyer John Edwards, 33, in the historic Tarrant County Courthouse's 2nd Court of Appeals. He was not tried in the wounding of three others at the courthouse.

After a brief recess, the jury was called back to the courtroom so the punishment phase of the trial could begin.

Lott, who pleaded not guilty and defended himself, now faces death by injection or life in prison.

Earlier yesterday in his closing argument, Lott painted a far different picture of the events of July 1 than the scenario of planned killings of apparent strangers that prosecutors wove during three days of witness testimony.

Lott, the founder of a small protest group concerned with men's rights in the courtroom, told jurors that he had given himself up at a Dallas TV station a few hours after the shooting to get free publicity for his cause.

In an interview at WFAA/Channel 8 that day, Lott said he had opened fire from the spectators' section of the courtroom to focus attention on corruption in the legal system. But yesterday, speaking in the third person, he calmly spun a different scenario.

"This Lott fellow, maybe he was at the courthouse, maybe at the law library [near the 2nd Court of Appeals]. That's no crime," he said.

"Then the shooting happens. This Lott fellow leaves — I leave the place."

Still speaking in the third person, he said that Lott might have heard on the news about the shooting and that no gunman had been caught.

"He gets this idea and goes to WFAA in Dallas. He turns himself in and said he did it. He makes a statement and goes on the air. He gets to make his statement about the legal system.

"The police haul him off, but that's the end of the investigation," he said.

Standing at a podium facing the jury, Lott showed none of the sarcasm and vitriol that occasionally marked his court demeanor during the trial.

He questioned the ability of many of the prosecutors' witnesses to place him as the gunman, saying that many of them were too upset, surprised or tired to see the gunman accurately.

He also implied that the TV interview, which was broadcast that day, had tainted witnesses' memories of whom they had seen.

What viewers saw on television was "a person who more or less fits this [gunman's] description — click — there he is; we got him. The power of suggestion," Lott said.

Prosecutors, arguing for conviction, described a far different situation.

They reviewed witness testimony that Lott purchased a Glock 9mm pistol months before the shooting. They said he bought extra magazines and hundreds of rounds of ammunition and practiced at a gun range. They also established that Lott had gone to the courthouse to check schedules for the 2nd Court of Appeals.

Prosecutor Alan Levy said that shortly before 10 a.m. on July 1, "this man and no other, saying no

/ Fort Worth Star-Telegram / Saturday, February 13, 1993

words, stood up and began to fire."

"This man fired round after round after round, squeezing the trigger," he continued.

"He came to kill and he killed. Ladies and gentlemen, George Douglas Lott is a capital murderer."

Lott's defense, which took only about an hour, began and ended yesterday morning as he called three people to the witness stand.

In an often scattered and seemingly haphazard interrogation, the defendant talked to Detective Danny LaRue; David Farris, the one uninjured judge sitting on the bench that day; and Vaughn Bailey, the attorney appointed to represent Lott's son in a custody case. Bailey told police that he saw Lott outside the courtroom just before the shooting began.

On Thursday, Lott asked that Judge Maryellen Hicks, who he has said fixed his custody-divorce case for a friend of hers, come to Ama-

rillo to testify, but he never called her to the stand.

Prosecutors called five witnesses yesterday during the punishment phase of the trial, including a number of employees of the Tarrant County Jail, who described Lott as belligerent, and a Dallas police officer who arrested Lott in a 1971 incident in which the officer said Lott beat up two elderly men.

One Sheriff's Department deputy said that Lott would try to provoke him while he was being escorted in the jail. "Mr. Lott started stepping on my heels," said Paul Stephens, who said Lott also called him foul names.

Lott suggested during cross-examination that Stephens had shoved him and made up the name-calling story.

Testimony in the case, moved to the Panhandle because of pretrial publicity, is expected to continue today.

Lott receives death penalty

BY TIM SULLIVAN
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

AMARILLO — George Lott, the Arlington man who gunned down two lawyers in the Tarrant County Courthouse in the summer, was sentenced to death yesterday by a jury who heard prosecutors call him a man filled with envy and malice.

"Mr. Lott radiates hate like a stove radiates heat," prosecutor Alan Levy said.

"Each murder creates a little dying of the light," Levy said, telling jurors that it is morally

wrong to let the killings go unpunished. "Give him a date with the executioner because he deserves it."

Lott showed no emotion as the sentence was read, and he later calmly placed his arms behind his back so he could be handcuffed and led away. He has 30 days to file an appeal. If he does not, one will be filed automatically.

The jury took just under an hour Friday to find Lott guilty of capital murder in the deaths of Assistant District Attorney Chris Marshall and Dallas lawyer John Edwards. Jurors spent just

Verdict



George Lott

Staff writer Thomas Korosec contributed to this report.

over an hour deciding his fate yesterday afternoon.

After the jury foreman said that the group's decision had been unanimous, Lott asked that jurors be polled separately.

Turning his chair, Lott looked toward the jurors as each person's name was called out, and each one quietly answered, "Yes."

Judge Sharen Wilson pronounced the sentence, based on the jury's decisions that Lott is a continuing threat to society and that there were no mitigating factors to warrant a sentence of life

in prison.

Marshall's family, who listened to witness after witness describe the shooting, declined to comment after the trial.

John Edwards' widow, Martha, read a statement from the family saying that they were proud of Edwards, whose dash from the courtroom during the shooting may have saved lives by diverting Lott's attention. She thanked the jury for its work and the court for the added security in the Amarillo courtroom, which in-

(More on LOTT on Page 18)

cluded multiple armed bailiffs and a metal detector.

"We hope that in the near future, all courtrooms have a similarly secure environment," she said.

Lott, 45, was convicted of killing Marshall and Edwards during a shooting spree July 1 in the 2nd Court of Appeals in the old Tarrant County Courthouse. He shot Marshall twice and, chasing Edwards from the room, shot him six times. He did not know either man.

Lott is also accused of wounding two of the three judges sitting on the court's bench that morning and another assistant district attorney.

Lott, a one-time attorney who defended himself, called no witnesses during the punishment phase of the trial and cross-examined only a few of the witnesses for the prosecution.

His closing statement yesterday lasted only seconds.

"You are called upon to make a life-or-death decision," he told the six men and six women on the jury. He did not ask for leniency, but he told them to make their decision "such that you can be at ease with yourself and God."

Juror Samuel Burton said jurors believed that Lott's defense "was rather weak. He just really didn't put up much of a defense."

Burton said their minds were made up on his punishment based on "the nature of the crime itself: the ruthlessness with which he committed these acts, shooting a man in the back, shooting a man six times."

In arguments yesterday, the prosecution team of Levy and Mike Parrish had stressed the premeditation in Lott's actions. They said Lott had planned the attack months in advance, buying a semiautomatic pistol, extra clips, a police radio and hundreds of rounds of ammunition.

They repeatedly said that he had plenty of time to consider what he was planning.

Marshall "was shot in his face from four feet away. Mr. Lott could have thought about it then, before he shot him another time in the back," said Levy, his voice rising almost to a shout.

As the families of Marshall and Edwards wept, Levy told the jurors that what Lott did "is about lives whose promises are unfulfilled."

During Levy's arguments, some jurors were visibly shaking.

Parrish said Lott intended to kill

far more people in the courtroom than he did. Addresses he had collected of legal officials in Tarrant County and Illinois — where he was under indictment on charges of sexually abusing his son — implied that Lott's rampage might have continued, Parrish said.

Parrish said Lott had planned the attack "so that he didn't have to stand trial in Illinois for the sexual abuse of his young son."

Lott's ex-wife moved to Illinois with their son after their 1990 divorce.

Lott was arrested the day of the shootings after slipping quietly from the courthouse and driving to the Dallas TV studios of WFAA/Channel 8. There, in a rambling interview, he said he wanted to focus attention on corruption in the judicial system, saying he had been cheated in the custody fight over his son.

The 2nd Court of Appeals had once rejected Lott's motion for a retrial on his divorce-custody case.

Two appeals court judges wounded in the shooting — they had nothing to do with his legal problems — said yesterday that they thought the death sentence was fair.

"While I do support the death penalty, I feel any time a death is involved it is a human tragedy," Judge John Hill said. "It's a sad thing, but in this case the verdict was a fair one; it was required."

Judge Clyde Ashworth, who is undergoing physical therapy for partial paralysis in his right leg, said from his home in Arlington, "It is hard to say a person should give up his life, but we do have a death sentence, and I believe in this case it was appropriate."

Ashworth added: "Some time ago in my heart I forgave Mr. Lott for the injuries he caused me to sustain. I have prayed that Mr. Lott would realize the wrong he has done and the suffering he has caused the families of those who were killed."

The defense Lott presented during the five days of testimony was haphazard at best. He made almost no objections during the trial and called only three witnesses. He chose not to question many of the prosecution's witnesses.

Prosecutors said they were pleased with the verdict.

"We're not surprised by it," Levy said. "Mr. Lott's defense was about as valid as his actions on July 1. He is a terrorist . . . and the jury acted accordingly."

Lott's defense at capital murder trial surprisingly subdued

The courthouse shootings suspect did not use the Amarillo proceedings as a forum to criticize the judicial system.

BY TIM SULLIVAN
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

AMARILLO — It was to have been, many thought, George Lott's chance to take the stage, to use the courtroom as the platform from which he could decry corruption and injustice in the legal system.

As one Fort Worth attorney put it, Lott's choice to defend himself in his capital murder trial was little more than an attempt to engage in "guerrilla theater."

But the conventional wisdom

Analysis

turned out to be wrong, and the 45-year-old former attorney from Arlington, who was sentenced to death Saturday for killing two lawyers in a shooting rampage July 1 at the Tarrant County Courthouse, took little advantage of the trial to convey his views on the judicial system he believes cheated him, only raising the subject

occasionally during witness questioning.

His defense seemed half-hearted and often haphazard.

One juror told reporters after the trial that he didn't think Lott had defended himself very much at all.

Alan Levy, one of the prosecutors, said that with Lott, "it was kind of hard to tell what to expect."

Lott, a 45-year-old graduate of the law school at the University of Texas at Austin, called only three

witnesses during the course of the trial, and those he questioned for only a few minutes. He made almost no objections to prosecutors' questions and let many witnesses for the prosecution leave the stand without speaking to them at all.

He did manage the basics of courtroom procedure, though.

After watching Lott interview potential jurors, "I believed he'd get through the trial acting as a lawyer," said presiding Judge Sharen Wilson, "because he's proud to be a lawyer. . . . This was an opportunity for him to try to show he can be a good lawyer."

Occasionally, Lott did seem to grab on to an issue that might help him, such as the fact that some witnesses' descriptions of the gunman were vague or inaccurate until they saw him in a TV interview the night of the shooting.

Lott had slipped from the courthouse, where, in the 2nd Court of Appeals, he had stood from a

spectator's seat and begun shooting, eventually killing two men and wounding three more.

Later that day, he surrendered at a Dallas TV studio. In an interview before being arrested, Lott said the shooting was an attempt to draw attention to a dishonest legal system that he said had cheated him in a divorce and custody dispute.

But Lott never pressed the issue of the TV interview.

Unlike the prosecutors, who all but battered jurors with evidence that was harmful to Lott, the defendant seldom followed up on his questions. He would simply ask if a witness had seen him on television and let the matter drop.

He implied to the jury that the witnesses' memories could have been tainted by the interview. But he never drew that out until his closing argument, when he presented jurors with a scenario

that suggested that a man who had shot no one had surrendered at the station just to get publicity for a small legal protest organization he had founded.

That scenario may not have been very believable — as evidenced by the jury returning a guilty verdict in less than an hour — but it was well-organized and calmly spoken.

So what does explain Lott's defense? Perhaps he had given up; perhaps it was all a ploy to try to help him on appeal; perhaps he didn't know any better; perhaps he just couldn't think clearly; or perhaps it was the best defense he could mount.

Prosecutor Mike Parrish thought Lott's seeming ineptitude might just be an act.

"I consider that a possibility," he said, noting that Lott's choice to represent himself and dress in a prison uniform could all be attempts to try to gain the jury's sympathy.

Lott's courtroom performance never did answer the question of why he defended himself as he did, nor did it give much of an explanation for what drove him to commit such a crime in the first place.

He said he was trapped by a corrupt system, and that, combined with an overwhelming anger that burst out at least once during the trial, may explain a great deal.

In arguing for the death penalty, Levy told the jurors that "Mr. Lott radiates hate like a stove radiates heat."

Levy's words were not mere hyperbole or courtroom theatrics. Though only evident occasionally, Lott's fury could be completely palpable and, despite the presence of three armed bailiffs, also quite frightening.

Lott

During interviews of potential jurors in January, he once grew so infuriated with objections by prosecutors that he did seem to radiate hate. And although he never did anything more than move his head stiffly from side to side, grab his table and stand up to make a few comments in a derisive tone, the bailiffs moved toward him.

It went no further that day. Nor did Lott approach that anger again in the five days of testimony and deliberations that ended with Lott's receiving the death penalty.

Don Anthony, a friend of Lott's, came to Amarillo near the end of the trial to beg to stand up as a character witness for him.

Anthony said Lott's divorce and custody proceedings, which continued for years, "ate on him like a cancer, and it got worse and worse."

He remembers a kind and gentle man who, accused of sexually abusing his son, descended into a breakdown.

Lott was nearing a trial date in Illinois, accused of sexually assaulting his young son, when he opened fire in the courtroom. His ex-wife and son had moved to Illinois after the Lotts were divorced in 1990. Lott has denied the accusations.

Anthony, who said he and Lott have been friends for more than 20 years, had dinner with Lott a few days before the courthouse shootings.

"I said, 'When are we going fishing again?' and he couldn't even speak a logical sentence," said Anthony, who said he still does not know for sure whether Lott was the gunman.

Lott never called him to the stand.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Grant inmates their rights

The recent controversy at the Tarrant County Jail is a positive example of upholding First Amendment rights. For a change, church and state worked together for the betterment of the welfare of inmates.

Chaplains, funded by churches and not by the county, received permission from jail administration to use a wing of the jail to offer religious instruction and rehabilitation for those interested. Many inmates volunteered to participate in the program.

One person, however, took offense so the ACLU contends this is a violation of the First Amendment, namely, separation of church and state.

The words, "separation of church and state," are nowhere found in the First Amendment. But they are routinely stated in lieu of the First Amendment so the public is conditioned into believing that there should be no interaction whatsoever between church and state.

On the contrary, 200 years of American history show that the framers of the Constitution and the American people enjoyed much interaction between church and state.

For 200 years children in public schools prayed and read the Bible, while the Congress and Supreme Court invoked God's name for divine guidance. Our coins record "In God We Trust." And our new president swore on a Bible to uphold the Constitution as all preceding presidents have done.

To the best of my knowledge, neither Congress nor the county has established a law stating that jail inmates must be indoctrinated in the Christian faith. On the contrary, the county is upholding the First Amendment rights of the inmates by permitting them the free exercise of their religion. Thus the county has maintained the delicate balance that the framers of the Constitution fought and died for.

Should Jewish, Buddhist or Hindu inmates desire to be grouped together to exercise their faiths, they too should be granted space and supplied the appropriate chaplain by the respective religious community.

Church and state should not be viewed as two adversaries but as complementing institutions. Both church and state have as primary missions the preservation of law and order in the land.

As far as I know, jail cells in and of themselves do little to rehabilitate values or make inmates responsible citizens of society.

Conversely, innumerable inmates testify that the free exercise of their religion gives them hope, a purpose for living and a desire to become responsible citizens.

Let us not deny this part of our population a chance for hope and change. Let us continue to grant the inmates their constitutional rights and a better chance at becoming moral, responsible citizens.

Joe Herrera
*Pastor, The Evangelical Free Church
of Arlington*
Arlington



Sheriff's Deputies Rob M. Durko, left, and Jack Sartin work with marijuana confiscated at a home in far southwest Fort Worth.

Fort Worth Star-Telegram / RODOLFO GONZALEZ

Sheriff's Department seizes marijuana, gun

The Tarrant County agency also nets more than \$3,000 in a raid that the sheriff says marks a new emphasis for the department.

Fort Worth Star-Telegram

FORT WORTH — The Tarrant County Sheriff's Department seized nearly 40 pounds of marijuana, a 9mm handgun and more than \$3,000 yesterday in a raid that Sheriff David Williams called the beginning of a stronger emphasis on crime-fighting by his department.

Known mainly for its running of the county jail and serving warrants, the Sheriff's Department will attempt to enhance its law-enforcement activities, Williams said.

The sheriff, in uniform, was present during yesterday's raid in the 3100 block of High Lawn Terrace in far southwest Fort Worth.

Along with the confiscation of the gun, drugs and money, a 21-year-old

man and a 20-year-old woman were arrested in the 11:45 a.m. raid, which began with the help of the Fort Worth police special weapons and tactics team.

Charges were pending against the couple. A 10-month-old boy found inside the house was turned over to a family member, Williams said.

Two newly acquired drug-sniffing dogs named Kilo and Max assisted in rounding up about 38 pounds of marijuana and a white, powdery substance believed to be cocaine, the sheriff said.

Williams, who took office Jan. 1, has a criminal investigations division of 10 officers. Only four of them are active in the division, he said, with the others assigned to various task forces.

That is not sufficient to handle the caseload, Williams said, noting that between 40,000 and 60,000 people live in unincorporated areas of Tarrant County and "we're their primary police force."

He said he will ask the Tarrant County Commissioners Court for more people to fight crime. "I don't think it would be unrealistic to see at least 20 investigators" in the division, Williams said.

Sheriff's new drug-sniffers bark, but never in English

By MAX B. BAKER
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

Tarrant County Sheriff David Williams said he likes the idea that his department's new narcotics canine unit has such high-dollar animals that they don't speak English. All right, they only bark; but on the other hand, Max and Kilo — both Belgian shepherds — only respond only to commands in Dutch.

■ There's not much doubt that Tom Wilder has the ear of Tarrant County Sheriff David Williams and he has a badge to prove it — kind of. Nicknamed the "shadow



sheriff" by some, Wilder served as Williams' campaign manager during the fall campaign. Wilder was recently given a plastic badge by the Mid-Cities Rotary Club in Bedford as a joke. Wilder says he keeps the badge in his car, just in case he needs it.

\$1,000 reward offered in '86 slaying of deputy

By BILL HANNA
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

On Nov. 3, 1986, Tarrant County Sheriff's Deputy Frank Howell was overpowered and fatally shot after he stopped a car on a south Fort Worth street.

The man indicted in the slaying, Enrique Moreno Casas, 25, has never been found. Yesterday, Texas Crime Stoppers offered a \$1,000 reward in hopes of attracting information that will lead to Casas' arrest.

"We believe he is spending some time in Mexico," said David Cobos of Texas Crime Stoppers. "He has ties there. It is my understanding that he is going back and forth between Mexico and in Unites States. But we don't have specifics."

The reward is part of an effort to spotlight unsolved violent crimes across the state, Cobos said.

"Anytime you've got the death of a sheriff's deputy, it's obviously a major case," Cobos said. "And you'll be seeing us focusing on other serious cases in the upcoming weeks."

This is not the first time a reward has been offered in the Howell shooting. Fort Worth Crime Stoppers offered a \$1,000 reward after

Howell's shooting. And a reenactment of the shooting aired twice on the nationwide TV program *America's Most Wanted*.

Howell, 38, was a warrant officer at the time of the shooting. He was shot four times — once with his gun — and was found near his unmarked car in south Fort Worth.

Casas has tattoos of the Virgin Mary on his upper left arm and the Grim Reaper on his upper right arm, the release said. He has the name *Ricky* tattooed on his inside left knee; the name *Casas* across his stomach; and the letter *E* on his inside right knee.

"I urge anyone with information regarding the whereabouts of Casas to contact Crime Stoppers," Gov. Ann Richards said in the statement announcing the reward. "On a daily basis our law enforcement officers place their lives at great risk to protect us."

Texas Crime Stoppers can be reached at (800) 252-TIPS. Fort Worth Crime Stoppers can be reached at (817) 884-1204.

This report contains information from The Associated Press.

Tarrant law officers sent to Waco standoff

BY FRANK PERKINS
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

FORT WORTH — At least two Tarrant County deputy constables and three reserve deputies are at the scene of the Branch Davidian siege in Waco, although there has been no formal request for them from McLennan County officials, according to County Judge Tom Vandergriff and Sheriff David Williams.

Williams has offered McLennan County Sheriff Jack Harwell up to 75 Tarrant County deputies for relief duty on the perimeter of the siege, according to Lt. Sue Maddock, a department spokeswoman. So far, the Tarrant deputies have not been needed, she said.

But the two deputy constables and three unpaid reserve deputy constables have been relieving McLennan County agents since

Tuesday. The Tarrant County officers are using marked county cruisers.

Two reserve constables, Pct. 4 reservist Evan Scully and Pct. 7 reservist John Watson, were requested by name by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms because they are certified tactical paramedics and had gone through the ATF tactical medical course.

The ATF raid turned bloody Sunday when its agents tried to arrest cult leader David Koresh, who changed his name from Vernon Howell, at his 77-acre compound east of Waco.

"They wanted Scully there for his medical skills, not his law enforcement training," said Pct. 4 Constable Jack Allen.

The ATF wanted Watson for the same reason, according to Pct. 7

Constable Mike Honeycutt.

"He is a Mansfield fireman and the ATF alerted him Monday night for possible duty," Honeycutt said. "He went on down there with my deputy, Delton Thrasher, Tuesday." Honeycutt also dispatched his brother, reservist Gary Honeycutt.

Mike Honeycutt said he had gotten "an informal request" for help through Thrasher, who had contacted McLennan County officers Monday to see whether they needed any help.

"They said they would like some relief so some of the officers on the perimeter could go home and get a hot meal, shower and get out of their wet uniforms," Mike Honeycutt said. "I considered that an informal request and gave the go-ahead."

Mike Honeycutt passed the word for volunteers to Pct. 3 Constable Zane Hilger. Hilger sent his chief

deputy, J.R. Johnson.

Mike Honeycutt said some county officials were "upset with me" for sending the reserve deputies to Waco. But he stands by his decision.

"I didn't even think about telling anyone what I was doing because I considered it an emergency request. I take full responsibility for the decision and I probably would do the same again," he said.

Mike Honeycutt said his reservists are buying their own gasoline and meals. In addition, Thrasher is using vacation time for the relief duty.

"There is absolutely no cost to the county for this operation," Mike Honeycutt said.

But Hilger said he considers his chief deputy to be on duty and is drawing his usual pay for the time he spends in Waco.

Official supports 'God pod' cellblock

By BOB MAHLBURG
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

FORT WORTH — The Tarrant County district attorney's office says it sees nothing unconstitutional about a Christian-oriented cellblock in the county jail.

But area officials of the American Civil Liberties Union say that the county's position heightens prospects for a lawsuit.

Former U.S. Attorney Marvin Collins, now head of the district attorney's civil law section, delivered a legal opinion on the matter to county officials Friday. That opinion says that the 48-prisoner "Christian rehabilitation pod," nicknamed "the God pod," is legal because it receives no special public money and does not promote a particular religious view.

"Basically, our research into the facts and into the law shows there's nothing unconstitutional," Collins said.

Sheriff David Williams declined to comment yesterday on Collins'

"Basically, our research into the facts and into the law shows there's nothing unconstitutional."

— Marvin Collins
of religious cellblock

opinion, saying he had not read it when he got it late Friday.

Collins and ACLU leaders agree that 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.

Collins said he reached his legal conclusions on the jail pod after more than a month of research by up to six county attorneys. They scoured jail records and court decisions and talked with sheriff's officials and ACLU leaders about the pod prisoners' access to ministers, religious TV and an organ as part of a program designed to reduce violence.

"Our basic conclusion is that it does not involve an excessive entanglement of government with religion," Collins said. "There is no unique tax money designated. It was a program established by a non-

county-paid chaplain. It is a volunteer program. It has allowed in persons of different religious preferences.

"And as far as we can ascertain, there are no special privileges. The literature that is used in the program is not furnished by the county; it's furnished by an outside operation. Our investigation showed that what's furnished by the county is the food and the lights."

The program has reduced violence among prisoners, showing that it has a secular goal, he added.

But ACLU leaders say that maintaining the Christian-oriented pod in a public jail is government promotion of religion. Statements that prisoners volunteer to join do nothing to negate that, they say.

"They're setting up a religion to which everyone is welcome," said Fort Worth attorney Frank Colosi, an ACLU board member.

"It's the only one being subsidized. It's the only thing going. It's as if the state of Texas set up a church and said you can go to this church or not, which is essentially what Mr. Collins is saying. The government can't set up a church."

"The county is doing what it can to advance Christianity. That's not the county's job. In fact, it's a violation of every county official's oath," Colosi said.

Legal action will be on the agenda of the ACLU's meeting Wednesday, North Texas ACLU head Joe Cook said yesterday. Colosi said the dis-

trict attorney's opinion could hasten such a suit.

"It suggests there's not too much room for negotiation, so it leaves us with few alternatives," Colosi said.

Collins' opinion includes several recommendations, including a suggestion that the sheriff remove an organ and piano from the pod. Collins said that those items give the appearance of a special privilege for pod prisoners. He said he does not believe that those items pose a legal problem.

The county recently hired Hugh Atwell, a Baptist minister and retired Arlington police officer, as a full-time chaplain to counsel sheriff's officers, county officials said yesterday. Collins said the county has always used private, volunteer jail chaplains, and he examined the role of the publicly paid chaplain during his research. He concluded that the chaplain has "minimal involvement" with the Christian pod and also poses no constitutional problem.

Sniper kills officer, suspect found dead

BY JOHN COUNCIL
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

HALTOM CITY — Gunfire shattered the calm of a middle-class residential neighborhood yesterday, killing a Haltom City police officer as he arrived to investigate the shootings and seriously wounding three other people.

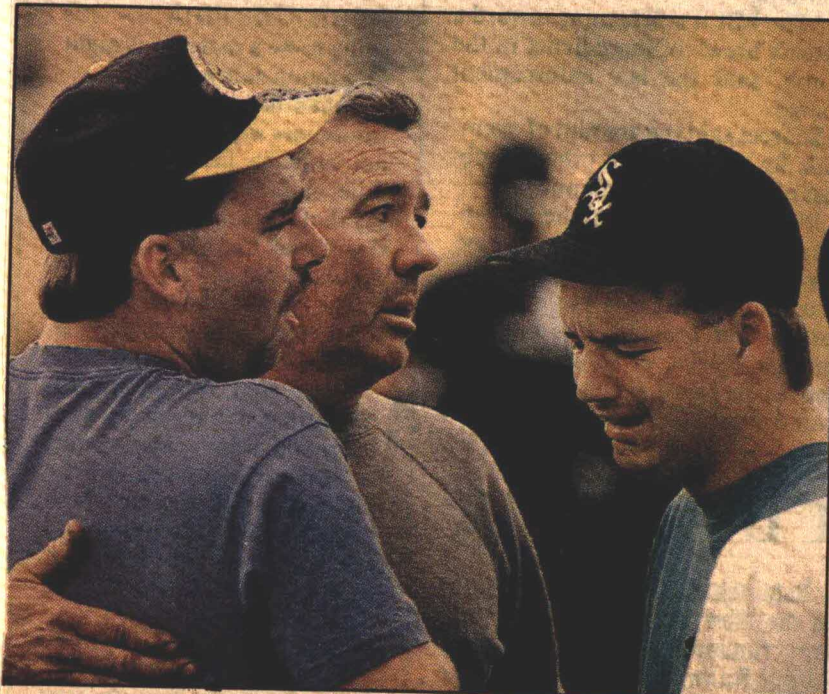
The assailant, believed to be the teen-age son of a Hurst police officer, was inside his home for more than six hours before North Richland Hills tactical officers entered the home about 11 p.m. There, they discovered the boy's body in a bedroom. He had apparently died of a gunshot wound, said Haltom City Police Commander R.W. McQueary.

"We don't know if he took his own life or was hit by a barrage of gunfire laid down by police officers," McQueary said. "As far as what happened here tonight, only he and the good Lord know."

Police said the teen-ager was in the home by himself from the time the shooting began until they found him. They stormed the home in the 6300 block of Solona Circle North after trying to contact him by phone throughout the night.

McQueary said that the Hurst officer who lived in the house had a number of guns inside his residence. The officer was not involved in the shooting but did arrive later and tried to help negotiators, authorities said.

(More on SHOOTINGS on Page 11)



Fort Worth Star-Telegram / JIM WINN

Shane Smith, right, and two unidentified onlookers react to the shootings on Solona Circle. Smith lives on the same street.

Police officials identified the slain officer as Gary Hires, a Haltom City officer for 18 years.

Neighbors described an hour of horror punctuated by several shots fired from the home at the end of the street. The ordeal began about 4:30 p.m. when several shots were fired in rapid succession and without warning. One neighbor, Randy Thompson, 32, called 911 after hearing the initial gunfire. He saw Hire's patrol car speed around the corner toward the sound of gunfire.

The patrol car skidded to a halt and then quickly sped in reverse before slamming into a parked vehicle, Thompson said.

Thompson, who said he has a police radio monitor in his home, heard the officer tell dispatchers that he had been hit. Gunfire continued sporadically on the horse-shoe-shaped street for more than an hour before Hires, 48, could be pulled from his car. He was flown to Harris Methodist Fort Worth, where he was pronounced dead.

An official said Hires died of three gunshot wounds to the head.

Hires was shot about 4:30 p.m.. Three other men in the neighborhood were also shot.

Two of the victims were brothers: Chris Greenwood, 22, and Bobby Greenwood, 26. Chris Greenwood was in surgery in serious condition at John Peter Smith Hospital, family members said. His brother was in serious condition at Harris Methodist Fort Worth with a gunshot wound in the side.

Kham Douangsavanh, who lives in the neighborhood, was in serious condition at JPS, a hospital spokeswoman said. He apparently was shot as he stood in a doorway after stepping outside when he heard the shots.

A family member said that Chris Greenwood was apparently shot, along with the family's Dalmatian, during the early moments of the shooting. They believe that Chris Greenwood was shot as he tried to catch the dog, named Domino.

Bobby Greenwood was shot as he tried to help his injured brother, family members said.

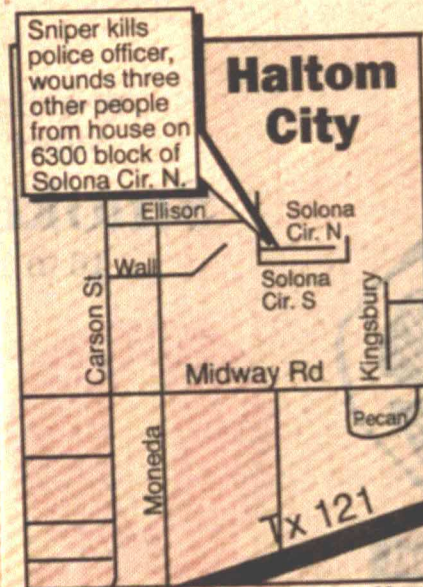
Why the shooting started was unknown last night.

For more than six hours, police tried to contact the assailant by telephone. No one answered or re-



Fort Worth Star-Telegram / JIM WINN

Ambulance personnel load an injured police officer into a helicopter after a shooting in Haltom City.



Fort Worth Star-Telegram / LINDA MEYER

sponded to messages left on the answering machine.

Thompson said that Hires "was pinned down in his car by the shots coming from the house."

The shooting kept up for more than an hour, neighbors said, while police tried to rescue the four shooting victims.

Eventually, Hires was pulled from his car by two fellow Haltom City officers under a hail of gunfire intended to protect them.

Tarrant County Sheriff David Williams, a former Haltom City detective, arrived at the scene later last night. He said he was there because he knew many of the officers involved.

He said he had known Hires for several years and had worked with him in Haltom City.

"He was a really compassionate man, with a wife and family," Williams said. "He was a really decent man and a good officer."

"He was always a good backup officer, too."

Many of the neighbors were caught unaware as they went about their chores and activities before the shooting. The Greenwoods' mother, Patsy Greenwood, said she was just returning from the grocery store with food for a family barbecue.

"Just before I turned the corner, our neighbor started screaming, 'We've got a shooter, we've got a shooter,'" Greenwood said. "So I just backed up in my car. I was trapped there all that time."

Jarrold Greenwood, 21, said he was in his back yard when he saw his brother Chris get shot. Chris Greenwood was pulling out of the driveway when he stopped his truck in the street and got out.

"I saw him double over," Jarrold Greenwood said. "He said he had been shot, that someone was shooting."

Jarrold Greenwood said he went in the house and told his brother, Bobby, that Chris Greenwood had been shot. "Bobby went out and he got shot," Jarrold Greenwood said.

Bobby Greenwood made it back to the house, Jarrold Greenwood said. Then, Jarrold Greenwood watched his wounded brother, Chris, climb a 6-foot privacy fence to get out of the line of fire.

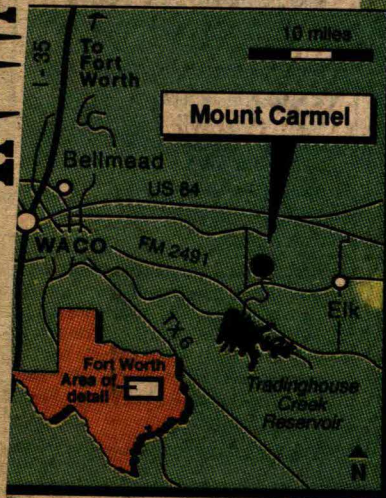
Staff writers M.C. Moewe and Domingo Ramirez Jr. contributed to this report.

WHAT WENT WRONG IN WACO?

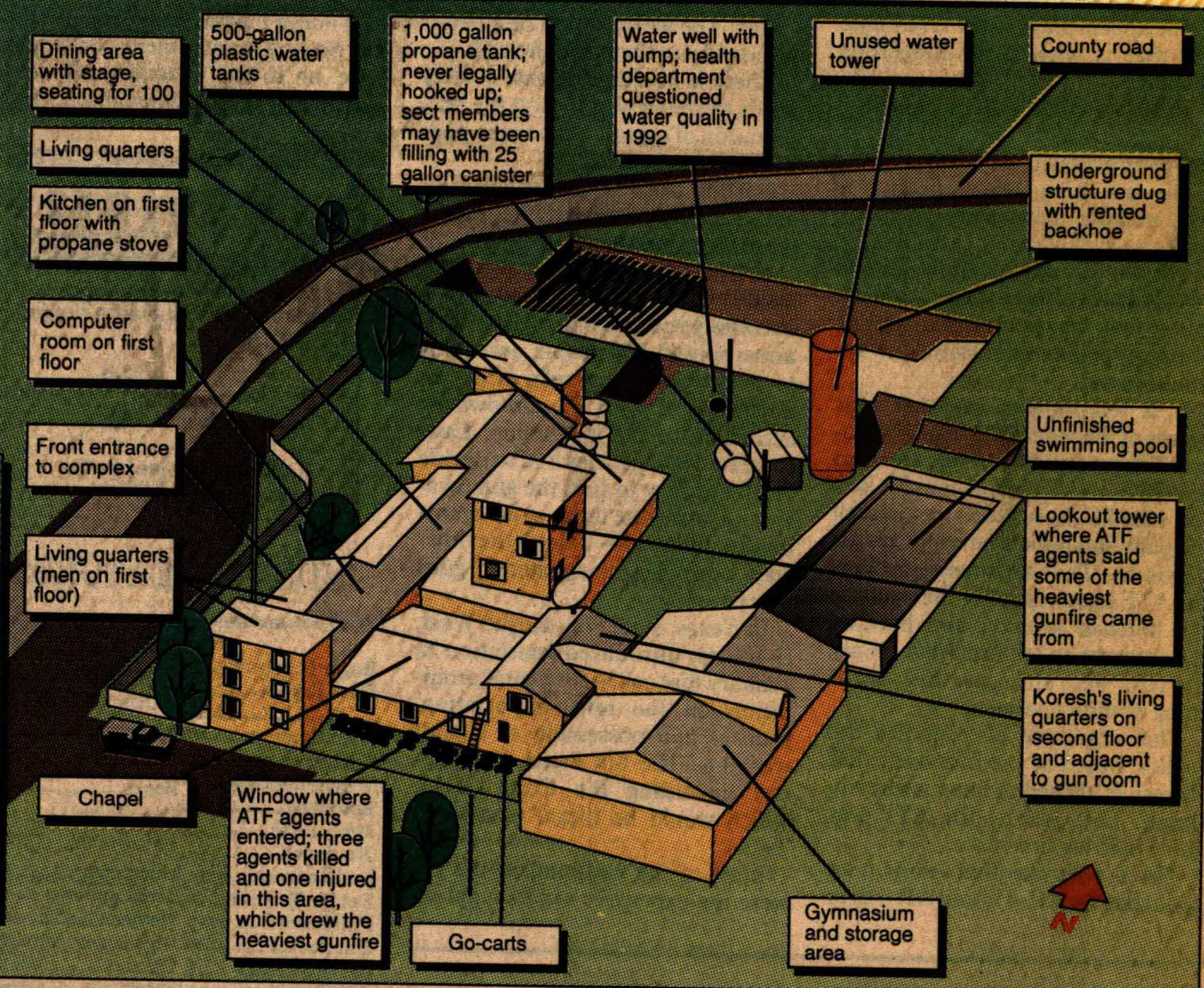
By Bob Mahburg
and
Dave Montgomery
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

Inside the compound

The Branch Davidian compound apparently is well-stocked for a long wait, according to authorities and Waco area merchants. The sect reportedly has a five-year stockpile of food, including caseloads of canned vegetables, pasta and juices. According to some reports, the compound has a generator.



Compiled by Michael Whiteley / Dave Montgomery



Fort Worth Star-Telegram / JIM ATHERTON / DON COOK



FBI promises fairness, urges Koresh to give up

BY KATHY SANDERS
AND JOHN GONZALEZ
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

WACO — Federal officials appealed publicly and directly yesterday for the surrender of Branch Davidian leader David Koresh, promising to treat all cult members fairly if they leave the compound where they have been holed up for a week.

FBI agent Bob Ricks said, "If he is listening, we want to give him and his followers our assurance that he and everyone inside would be treated fairly and humanely if they come out." The FBI has said that Koresh often monitors broadcasts of news briefings.

Loud music began coming from the compound area after 10 last night and could be heard 2½ miles away. It could not be determined who was playing the music, but such tactics have been used in other standoffs to try to force people to surrender.

Koresh and his followers remain in the rural compound, where a week ago they held off more than 100 agents of the Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms Bureau. The federal agents had intended to arrest Koresh and search the compound for illegal weapons. Four agents and at least two cult members were killed in that shootout, and 16 agents were wounded.

Ricks said that authorities doubt Koresh's claim that the 107 people still in the compound can leave anytime they wish.

"We are not treating this as a hostage situation as of this time. We have no specific information that they are being held against their will," Ricks said. "The point we're making is that we

have information that a number of people would like to go out, but they still look at Mr. Koresh as their leader, and if he gave the word that they were free to leave, we believe that they would do so.

"We are trying to appeal to Mr. Koresh to let those people go who want to go," Ricks said.

Officials said that Koresh, who sees himself as a prophet, has been questioning negotiators about the criminal justice system, its fairness and the treatment of people who might leave the compound.

Negotiators have told Koresh what charges are facing him and stated that other adults in the compound will also be charged with felonies. They also have assured Koresh that "there will be no retaliation taken by anyone in the federal government as a result of what transpired during this tragic incident," Ricks said.

He said that officials do not know whether Koresh is telling his followers everything about his discussions with federal negotiators. "We do know, however, that he is the leader of the people in that compound, and we believe he will give information to the people that he deems necessary," Ricks said.

He said that negotiators continue to try to talk Koresh into letting other followers leave. No one has been released since Friday morning, when a 9-year-old girl left the compound. During the week, 21 children — none of whom are Koresh's — and two elderly women were released.

By Koresh's count, 17 children, 47 women and 43 men remain inside the compound.

Officials said that Steve Schneider, a cult member who is a lawyer, asked negotiators late Friday for permission to remove a body from the compound. No agreement on that matter had been reached yesterday morning.

Federal officials believe that as many as 10 cult members may be dead in the compound, but Ricks said that Koresh will not discuss the issue of other bodies.

"We have somewhat of a concern when he talks with regard to one

body being in the compound, because our opinion is we would like to get everyone out of the compound," Ricks said. "We have no idea why one body is being brought out, but he refuses to discuss the possibility that others are there."

One body, believed to be that of a cult member killed in a Sunday afternoon gunbattle with agents, was recovered Thursday. Sources said that another cult member was fatally shot from the compound's watchtower Sunday morning and remains in a tree where he fell.

Koresh said early in the standoff that his 2-year-old daughter was killed. Officials have not been able to confirm that or to learn what is being done with the bodies inside the compound.

Koresh's health is also a continuing theme in the negotiations, Ricks said.

"We have no indication of a deteriorating situation with regard to his health. He does have moments where he expresses pain, but he appears to be able to readily overcome those instances where he does have pain," Ricks said.

On Friday, Koresh asked for and received medical supplies to treat a wrist wound that he said was chang-

ing color, indicating the possibility of infection.

Ricks said that agents used an armored Bradley fighting vehicle to deliver the medical supplies to a spot near the compound.

"In this case, those supplies would be dropped out from a secure location behind the Bradley, then we would remove our personnel from the location," he said.

The site of the ongoing siege, and the resulting crowd of media, attracted sightseers yesterday. They gathered on an overlook a few miles from the compound, 10 miles east of Waco.

Nearly 20 cars lined the highway at the overlook as people walked to a grassy hill to try to see the compound. Some carried video cameras and children.

ATF officials have drawn heavy criticism for their handling of Sunday's raid. They maintain that an unknown person informed Koresh that agents were preparing to raid the compound and that the agents unknowingly walked into an ambush. They said yesterday that agents trained for the raid at Fort Hood in buildings similar to those at the Branch Davidian compound.

BY SIG CHRISTENSON
Special to the Star-Telegram

WACO — A heavily armed religious cult locked in a three-day stand-off with federal agents after a fatal gunbattle Sunday spent years building underground tunnels and rooms at its residential complex, a McLennan County law officer said.

The Branch Davidians, living at a compound about 10 miles east of Waco, even buried a bus as part of the underground complex, said Sgt. Ronnie Turnbough, head of the McLennan County Sheriff's Department criminal intelligence division.

Since 1987, Turnbough said, the Davidians have been incorporating cement passageways and underground rooms into the compound. They also have buried at least one bus for use as an underground room.

"We saw them building rooms and passageways, and burying at least one vehicle," said Turnbough,

Sect's compound has underground rooms, tunnels, officer says

who said he did not know the precise layout of the underground system.

He said officials saw the construction via aerial reconnaissance after observers outside the compound re-

ported seeing construction equipment go in and out of compound.

"We saw one [bus] to my knowledge, and then there were other concrete passageways being poured into large concrete rooms underground

with connecting concrete tunnels."

The underground construction work coincided with a clash in 1987 between current cult leader Vernon Howell, who has changed his name to David Koresh, and George

Roden, son of the man who started the cult. After a gunbattle involving the rivals, Howell gained control of the 77-acre site. Roden is in a state mental hospital after being found not guilty by reason of insanity in an

Odessa killing.

"It looked very much like they were building a defensive compound in anticipation of something like this happening," Turnbough said.

A tragedy that no one understands

Ridiculed by other kids, Juan went his own way

BY MARY GAY JOHNSON
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

HALTOM CITY — He was the pudgy boy in school, the one other kids loved to ridicule.

The one who wore white socks and brown loafers; the one who sang choir songs aloud to the pet gerbils and rats in his science class; the one who preferred to get off the school bus alone and shuffle home while he picked up twigs and stray pieces of paper and dreamed of becoming a famous inventor.

(More on RAMON on Page 5)



Juan Ramon

Ramon

From Page 1

Fourteen-year-old Juan Ramon silently endured the taunts of his eighth-grade classmates at Haltom Middle School, ignoring them as they called him "fatty." He never showed his anger or hurt feelings, even when they called him a "stupid idiot" because he failed to kick the soccer ball, even when they derided his clothes as cheap and out of style.

Then on Saturday afternoon, police say, the only child of Jesus and Twila Ramon unleashed a torrent of rage, spraying bullets down the block for hours. Police say he shot a neighbor trying to save his dog and shot the man's brother as he tried a rescue, driving him with bullets until he escaped over a fence. He shot another neighbor, a teen standing inside his front door.

He shot and killed Haltom City police officer Gary Hires, 48, picking him off while he was still in his patrol car several houses away, police say.

Barricaded in his bedroom, Juan continued to fire, exchanging shots with police. He was armed with several guns and a stockpile of ammunition owned by his father, a Hurst police officer. Sometime before midnight, in the bedroom adorned with a poster of a unicorn jumping through a rainbow, Juan was killed by police fire.

What prompted the violence? Perhaps poor marks on his latest report card, some of his friends said yesterday. As a result of low grades, neighbors said, Juan was not allowed to accompany his parents to the movies Saturday evening.

"That's OK, Mom," he said. "I'll stay home and tend to the civil war." That was his reply, Juan's parents told neighbors. Police said that the couple could shed no light on his motives. The Ramons, who moved to the neighborhood a few months before their son was born, reportedly were in seclusion and could not be reached for comment yesterday.

Classmates who talked to Juan after report cards went out Friday said he didn't appear depressed about his grades. They wonder whether pressure from the school's "cool clique," a group of boys who

regularly picked on him, pushed him to the edge.

"He was real nice and real sweet. He acted like a church boy and hardly did anything wrong. It was always, 'Yes m'am, no m'am,'" said Juan's friend, 13-year-old Heidi Walker. "Knowing him, he must have finally gotten real mad."

His close buddy Randall Thompson, 14, said he believes that Juan must have just "gone berserk."

"Whatever flipped in his mind just flipped," said Randall, as he and Heidi stared across Solona Circle at the modest tan-brick home of their dead friend. Juan's bullet-ridden bed frame was visible through the hole where his bedroom window had been shot out; a mangled screen lay in the front yard.

"He was a real good kid. He's not the type that would do something like this," said Randall, who met Juan eight years ago in the neighborhood where they both live.

Friends, neighbors and teachers spent much of yesterday trying to reconcile the two Juans: The boy who got A's as well as C's, respected his parents and never caused any trouble at school; and the angry teen-ager who died as 50 to 60 bul-

lets tore apart his room.

"He just never was in sync with the rest of the kids," said Haltom Middle School teacher Barbara Kelly, who taught Juan last year in her life science class. "He wasn't in the mainstream with the rest of them."

Neighbors lining the streets yesterday each had a recollection of Juan, a boy who liked models, telescopes and video games and was more at ease with adults, animals and young children than with his peers.

Mary Linamen remembered his welcoming her to the neighborhood in the fall and placing a pine cone on the porch for her: "I started to kick it away, and then I realized he must have left it here for me," she said. "I know you hear this all the time, but he really was a good kid."

Others told stories of Juan's planting flowers for a disabled neighbor; of his playing school with the young children on the block, casting himself in the role of teacher; of his amusing adults with detailed plans for scientific inventions that would one day make him a millionaire.

One scheme he concocted in-

cluded underground propellers engineered to work like automatic sprinklers, which would cut grass instead of watering it: "He talked about it for an hour," neighbor Ruth Isbell said with a sad smile, "and you listened to him because he was very intelligent and he was always thinking."

While a white ice cream truck maneuvered through the crowded street piping out a nursery jingle, parents spoke of how they trusted Juan with their children.

"There's just too many guns out there that kids can get a hold of," neighbor Cindy Coulson said.

One of the ironies of Juan's young life may be that his parents tried hard to protect him from the world, to keep him safe, to shelter him.

Neighbors and friends spoke of his being allowed to ride his bike only on the street in front of his house. Each school day morning, they said, his mother drove him to the nearby bus stop and the two waited in the vehicle until the bus came.

"He couldn't come out unless he was watched," said neighbor Sherry Cates, "but he was real loved."

Friends and neighbors said that

Juan knew how to handle guns, having hunted with his father. Whatever provoked the teen toward the confrontation with police, those who knew him said, it wasn't planned.

She said that Juan craved attention and needed a boost in self-esteem. That was one reason she made him her science aide, giving him the responsibility of caring for the class pets.

He was gentle with the animals, Kelly said, but he could be willful — for instance, taking apart an intricate wiring system for the class fish tank without first asking permission.

On the last day that Ramon would ever attend school, he made sure the rats and gerbils would be comfortable over the weekend, cleaning their cages and putting out their food.

He also asked Kelly for extra science work sheets because he wanted to start a tutoring program for some of the younger children on his block.

"I'm just baffled by all of this. I was never afraid of Juan; I don't think anyone was afraid of Juan," Kelly said. "He had future plans; he had things he was going to do."



Gary Hires

Haltom City policeman was devoted to his job

BY SUSIE STECKNER
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

HALTOM CITY — To one neighbor, he was the man who helped prevent a burglary at her home.

To a family friend, he was the fellow who toiled in his vegetable garden; to members at the American Legion post, he was the volunteer who served free holiday dinners to the elderly.

But to fellow police officers, Gary Hires was the committed cop who put police work before everything

(More on HIRES on Page 5)

Hires

From Page 1

else — everything, except maybe his church.

Late Saturday, Hires died working his beat.

"He was an exemplary officer," Haltom City Police Chief Tom Cowan said. "Gary was one of those people that truly is the backbone of the police department."

Hires spent nearly 20 years on the Haltom City police force, patrolling the streets, serving warrants and working with juveniles. On Saturday, after reports of gunfire, he was the first officer to arrive at the scene.

Hires never made it out of his patrol car. A 14-year-old boy, firing handguns and rifles from inside a house down the block, hit the car nine or 10 times. Hires was shot and then trapped inside his car for about an hour while other officers tried to

rescue him.

Fellow officers said they believe that Hires, 48, is the first Haltom City officer to be shot and killed in the line of duty.

The boy who killed him — Juan Ramon, the son of a Hurst police officer — was later killed in an exchange of gunfire with police.

A member of Hires' church said she can picture the officer now. "He's probably got his arm around the boy, saying, 'What's wrong?'"

Yesterday, family members and friends gathered at Hires' home; officers kept watch at the shooting site less than two miles away.

Time and again, all described him as a compassionate man, devoted to his career, his church and his wife and three sons: Gary John, 22, a college student; and Stephen, 18, and David, 16, students at Haltom High, the school Hires had attended.

Hires' wife, Stephanie, is a teacher's aide for the Birdville school district. Relatives would not comment

yesterday but allowed family friend Claudia Bowden to speak for them.

"He served the city quietly, but he cared a lot about the community," recalled Bowden. "He stayed in contact with his community."

"That was important."

Hires, known for his quiet manner and his dry sense of humor, joined the Haltom City Police Department two decades ago after serving four years in the Navy. After stints with the department's criminal investigation unit, working with juveniles and serving warrants, his most recent duty was as a patrol officer.

He received an associate degree in law enforcement from Tarrant County Junior College and was awarded two commendations for helping solve property crimes.

"He liked what he did and was a good cop, very dedicated," recalled police Commander Wayne McQueary. "What you saw was what you got. There was no glitter."

Neighbor Lona Flood, 33, can at-

test to that.

It was Hires, she said, who spotted a mysterious car outside her home one day and went to investigate. Although a window had been broken, nothing was taken inside the home.

"He knew that we worked during the day and that our cars wouldn't be here," she recalled. "He checked the license plate and everything."

"They [the burglars] probably saw him and left."

Because of his investigation, she said, "I felt safer. It was really nice having him there."

Away from the Police Department, Hires worked as a part-time security guard for a bank and the American Legion Post No. 655 in Haltom City.

He had served as a member and guard with the post since 1984, said Commander Billy Nixon. Whether patrolling the parking lot at night or serving Christmas dinners to the elderly, Hires was a familiar presence.

"If we ever needed him, we called him and he was always here," Nixon said.

Perhaps what most remembered yesterday was Hires' devotion to his religion and to his church. He was a charter member and elder with the Trinity Christian Church in Hurst.

Yesterday a sign outside the church read, "Gary Hires is with God."

"Gary was always here working when he was not working or with his family," the Rev. Gary Wyatt said.

When Trinity Christian was formed four years ago, the church building, a onetime restaurant, was in a "disastrous" state, Wyatt said. Hires was one of the many volunteers who helped with extensive repairs.

"The best way to see his devotion is to see the church," Wyatt said. "A good part of that work was done by Gary himself."

"You knew he was not doing it for public applause, he was doing it because he wanted to do it. That's the thing that made him stand out."

Police, family hunt for motives in shootings

BY SUSIE STECKNER
AND MARY GAY JOHNSON
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

HALTOM CITY — What remains now is a picket fence peppered with bullet holes; shards of glass; tatters of yellow police tape; and a looming question: What might have provoked a 14-year-old boy to unleash a barrage of gunfire that killed one and wounded three?

As police and relatives of the victims try to piece together Saturday's tragedy, authorities say the motives behind Juan Ramon's actions are still unclear.

What is known is that Juan is dead. A Haltom City police officer is dead. Three neighbors are seriously wounded.

Was it resentment resulting from classmates' relentless taunting that pushed Juan to his limit? Was it frustration over poor grades on his latest report card? Was it anger at not being able to accompany his parents to the movies, a punishment for his failing marks?

"We don't know any more now than we did last night," said Haltom City police Commander Wayne McQueary. "There is absolutely nothing new at this time.

"We may never know what happened."

It was Saturday afternoon when shooting started in the modest neighborhood in south Haltom City. Juan, the son of a Hurst police officer, was holed up in his bedroom and firing from a front window.

The shots struck a dog, Juan's neighbors and Haltom City officer Gary Hires. When police returned the gunfire, Juan was hit and killed.

Hires and Ramon each died of a head wound and both deaths have been ruled homicides, according to the Tarrant County Medical Examiner's Office.

Weary and saddened Haltom City police officers worked throughout Saturday night and late yesterday, combing the crime scene and interviewing victims, witnesses and Juan's family. They expect to continue their investigation today and talk with Juan's teachers at Haltom Middle School.

Yesterday, the neighborhood that had been held hostage Saturday was jammed with gawkers, friends and media crews. Neighbors hugged each other, offering condolences, and curious children rode their bikes past the crowds.

Someone had placed a bouquet of pink flowers on the grassy site where Hires was killed; a clergyman stood nearby reading from the Bible.

Along with the grief, there was disbelief.

"He was never violent; he never got angry," said Juan's 15-year-old neighbor, James Singleton Jr. "I know what he did was wrong, and I couldn't believe it was him until I looked out my window and saw his figure, and I knew it was Juan."

Shortly after 4:30 p.m. Saturday, Haltom City police received a call reporting that a torrent of gunfire

was coming from 6333 Solona Circle North.

Chris Greenwood was the first victim, shot as he ran to rescue his Dalmatian, Domino, from a hail of gunfire. Bobby Greenwood was wounded as he ran to help his brother.

Douangsavanh, called Kham Do by his senior classmates at Haltom High School, was shot in the shoulder as he stood inside the glass front door of his home, said his sister, Mandy Douangsavanh.

She said that her family barely knew Juan and can't imagine what drove the teen-ager to violence. "This has been a pretty safe, quiet area. With a police officer's house here, we felt safe," she said.

The Douangsavanhs and Greenwoods had become friends during the decade they lived on Solona Circle, Mandy Douangsavanh said. Chris' and Bobby Greenwood's father, J.W. Greenwood, helped carry her wounded brother out of the house, she said.

Jim Greenwood, the eldest of seven children, remembers seeing Juan Ramon as a child, pedaling around the neighborhood on his bicycle. But he was not closely acquainted with him or his father, Hurst police officer Jesus Ramon.

And he is sure that Juan had no reason to target his brothers. "I think they were just movement. He was shooting at movement. Just like people go out and shoot varmints or something."

Chris Greenwood, who was shot below the rib cage on his right side, is at John Peter Smith Hospital. "He's a fighter. They all are," said his wife, Pam.

Bobby Greenwood, a father of three and a machinist who just started a job with a new company, is at Harris Methodist Fort Worth.

A memorial service for Hires will be held at 3:30 p.m. Wednesday at Bethesda Community Church, 4700 N. Beach St., and he will be interred in Mount Olivet Cemetery. Visitation will be at Mount Olivet Funeral Home, 2301 N. Sylvania Ave.

Hires is survived by his wife, Stephanie; three sons, Gary John, Stephen and David; and two brothers, Mickey Hires of Copperas Cove and Randy Hires of Springtown.

Information on Juan's funeral was not available, and his family could not be reached for comment.



Fort Worth Star-Telegram / JERRY W. HOEFER

Haltom City police Detective J.R. Wilson stands guard yesterday at a house where a policeman was killed Saturday.

Shooting was a living nightmare

BY DOMINGO RAMIREZ JR.

Fort Worth Star-Telegram

HALTOM CITY — It was a police officer's nightmare. It was a father's worst fear.

On Saturday night, Jesus Ramon lived through both.

Fellow officers who witnessed that agony recounted it yesterday.

A 13-year veteran of the Hurst

Father-policeman suffered double loss

Police Department, Ramon was called to his neighborhood Saturday night and joined the effort to stop a sniper barricaded in his home. From a temporary command center, he provided police a diagram of

his house and told them who was supposed to be inside.

As the shooting continued, Jesus Ramon realized that his only child was the sniper who killed Haltom City officer Gary Hires and wounded three other residents of his neighborhood. When police returned fire, Juan Ramon, 14, was hit and killed.

"He was an officer when he arrived, and he was a father in the end," said Haltom City officer Ronny Rutledge.

Jesus Ramon and his wife, Twila, remained in seclusion yesterday and granted no interviews.

But Hurst and Haltom City police officers shared in their grief as they mourned a police officer and the son of a police officer.

Flags were at half-staff at Haltom City and Hurst police departments. Hurst police are scheduled to attend Hires' funeral tomorrow; Haltom City officers hope to go to Juan's service on Thursday.

"We lost a good officer," said Haltom City Commander R.W. McQueary. "And a chubby little boy who was the son of a police officer also was killed. That's the way many of us are looking at it.

officer, they looked at it differently," McQueary said.

"Some haven't changed their opinions and you will never be able to change their minds."

Some officers acknowledged their ambiguity.

Yesterday, Rutledge felt the weight of both families' grief. He had worked with Hires for years, and he had taught with Jesus Ramon for about two years at the regional police academy at Tarrant County Junior College's Northwest Campus.

Like other officers, Rutledge wore black tape across his badge yesterday in honor of Hires. He also quietly mourned the death of Juan, a Haltom Middle School student.

Rutledge was a tactical officer at the scene Saturday when Jesus Ramon arrived in the Solona Circle neighborhood.

Gary Hires

HALTOM CITY

— Funeral for Gary Hires, 48, a Haltom City police officer who was shot to death Saturday, will be at 3:30 p.m. Wednesday at Bethesda Community Church. Burial will be in Mount Olivet Cemetery. Mount Olivet Funeral home is in charge of arrangements.



Officer Hires was born in Jessup, Ga., and had lived in Haltom City since 1957.

He was a member of the Fraternal Order of Police Officers, and was a Navy veteran, a member of the Haltom City American Legion and an elder and chairman of the property committee at Trinity Christian Church.

Officer Hires was the first Haltom City police officer to die in the line of duty.

Survivors: Wife, Stephanie Hires of Haltom City; three sons, Gary John Hires, Stephen Christopher Hires and David Matthew Hires, all of Haltom City; two brothers, Mickey Hires of Copperas Cove and Randy K. Hires of Springtown; stepfather, Harold Smart of Copperas Cove; and half sister, Diane Hires of Jessup.

Yesterday, off-duty Hurst officers helped with the cleanup at the Ramon home.

Officers arrived early, some carrying their own tools, to help board up windows and move furniture so the carpet could be cleaned or removed. They worked side by side amid a handful of onlookers and reporters.

"Police departments are pretty close-knit organizations," said Hurst Assistant Police Chief Roy Bell, who was working at the home. "Any time someone needs help, you have lots of people volunteer.

"It needed to be done, so we just came over and did it."

Rutledge was back on the beat yesterday.

"We had two losses this weekend," Rutledge said. "For me, it's the only way I'm looking at it."

Staff writer Susie Steckner contributed to this report.

Sheriff will keep Christian jail pod

DA's office says it's constitutional; ACLU wants compromise

By JACK DOUGLAS JR.
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

FORT WORTH — Tarrant County Sheriff David Williams said last night that he has decided to continue to operate a Christian-teaching inmate pod at the Tarrant County Jail after receiving a legal opinion that says the pod is constitutional.

Williams said he made the decision late yesterday after conferring with Marvin Collins, head of the

civil division of the Tarrant County district attorney's office.

Collins said last weekend that the 48-prisoner pod, which teaches Christian Bible lessons and is equipped with a piano and organ for choir service, does not violate the civil rights of non-Christian inmates. Nor does it go against the constitutional guarantees of separation of church and state, Collins said.

The district attorney's office

began reviewing the pod after several non-Christian inmates, the American Civil Liberties Union and several Jewish organizations complained that it favored Christian prisoners.

Don Jackson, president of the Fort Worth chapter of the ACLU, said a meeting will be held next week between the district attorney's office, the ACLU and representatives from a "variety of religious" (More on POD on Page 12)

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Pod

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organizations" with the hope of

working out a compromise.

"I think there's a decent chance that we'll work out an agreement rather than file a lawsuit," Jackson said. "We're trying to settle it if we can."

The group will also meet with the

newly appointed jail chaplain to see whether the "program can be broadened to include other religious points of view," he said.

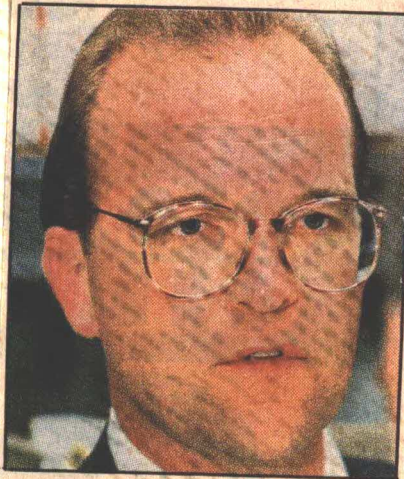
Jackson said the ACLU and the district attorney's office agreed that no special privileges should be offered to inmates, based on their religious beliefs.

Williams said he authorized the continuance of the "Christian education pod to operate in view of the information the district attorney's office has provided me with."

Collins had suggested that the piano and organ inside the eighth-floor pod be removed. But Williams said yesterday, "I think at this time I'm going to leave them. . . . I don't think it's unreasonable to leave them in there."

In hopes of satisfying non-Christian prisoners in the county facility, Williams said he will actively recruit clerics from other faiths to preach and counsel at the jail.

He said, however, that he does not anticipate any additional housing pods for other religious groups inside the jail.



David Williams: Will keep Christian jail pod open.

STANDOFF AT MOUNT CARMEL



Fort Worth Star-Telegram / MILTON ADAMS

The Rev. W.N. Otwell gives journalists his views on the standoff in McLennan County.

Otwell defends cult leader's stance

BY TIM SULLIVAN
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

WACO — The Rev. W.N. Otwell, a former Fort Worth minister who had legal entanglements with authorities regarding an unlicensed children's home, defended cult leader David Koresh yesterday.

Otwell was at the media check-point outside the Branch Davidian compound east of Waco to gather material for a radio talk show in Nacogdoches. He said that the Feb. 28 raid on the compound by federal agents was an attempt to suppress the religious cult simply because its members live communally and by their own rules.

"I don't think this guy is crazy," he said, referring to Koresh. "I just think he has an idea he is willing to die for."

Otwell added, "If Jesus was on this Earth today, he'd be called a cult leader."

He said the Branch Davidian group had become a threat to government.

"The government has become a police state . . . they want everybody to bow down to them," Otwell said.

He said the raid's violence, which left four ATF agents and at least two Branch Davidians dead, was the fault of the government.

"I don't think they're a violent people. You attack a man's home" and he will fight back, he said. "I think they [agents] have to take full responsibility for all the killing."

As to reports that the group had amassed a vast stockpile of weap-

ons, Otwell simply said, "That's their business."

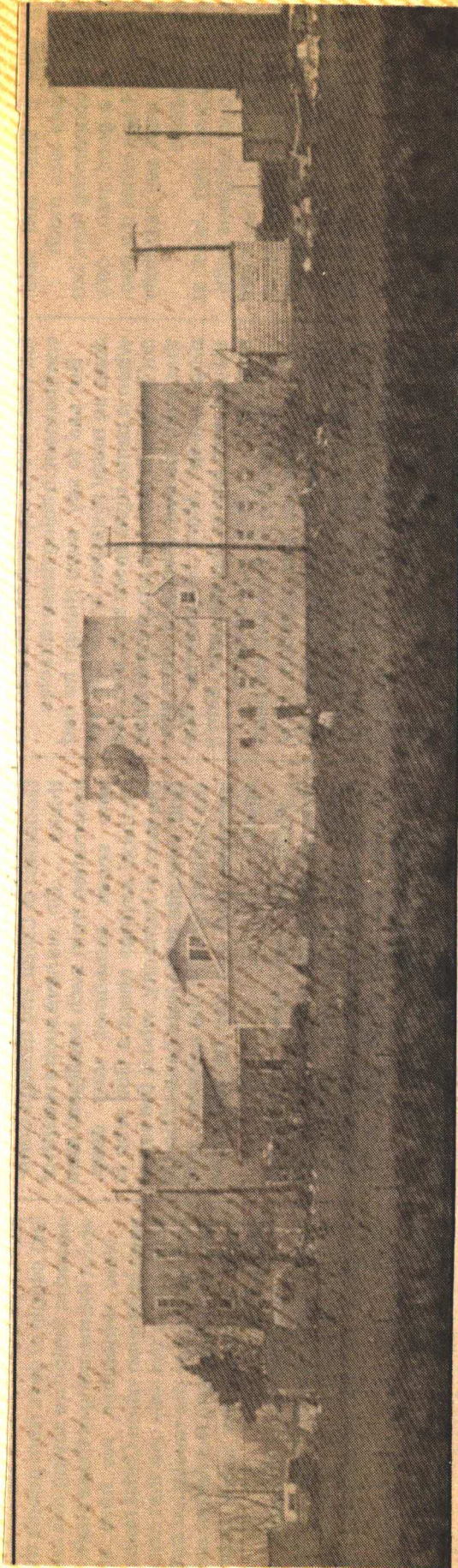
Otwell, who compared the siege at the compound to his own 1986 standoff with authorities over his refusal to license a Fort Worth children's home, indicated he believed that government officials may have actually been hoping for bloodshed.

"I just think that this probably, no doubt, was a setup. Just to get anybody who is different," he said. "I'm not against law and order. I want people to understand the government doesn't always act properly." Otwell said he doesn't think Koresh should be charged with murder in the death of the federal agents.

"I don't think so," he said, "he didn't initiate it."



Vernon Howell's message was read over radio station KRLD yesterday.



Fort Worth Star-Telegram /
At least one bus was buried to be used as an underground room of the cult's building complex, a McLennan County Sheriff's Department officer says.

Prisoners of the Lord

With Tarrant

County Sheriff

David Williams

keeping the

"God Pod"

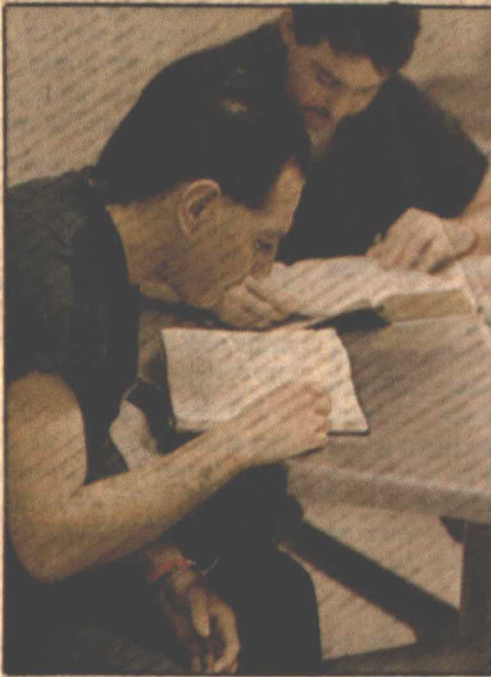
open, prisoners

there proclaim

that their faith

is genuine.

Studying the Bible at left are Esau Ochao, left, and Ronnie Vick. At right, Kevin Brown accompanies fellow inmates.



Fort Worth Star-Telegram / RON JENKINS

BY JACK DOUGLAS JR.
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

FORT WORTH — Prisoners cited Scripture, sang a hymn, spoke of past evils and promised to "do the Lord's work" in the future during a media tour yesterday of the Tarrant County Jail's "God Pod."

The tour came after the Tarrant County district attorney's office determined this week that the Christian-oriented housing unit was constitutional.

With the district attorney's approval, Sheriff David Williams said he will keep

the Chaplain's Education Program, dubbed the "God Pod" by the media, open despite protests that it discriminates against non-Christian prisoners.

During the tour, Bible-toting prisoners talked of their glee that the unit will remain open.

"It's a good thing for everyone who wants to come in here and learn about Jesus," said Frank Herrera, 27, of Haltom City.

"I just couldn't get my life straight until I came here to jail," said Herrera, a 9-month resident of the pod.

The prisoners — most of whom were either holding or reading a Bible — talked with reporters and photographers, adamantly proclaiming that their new faith is genuine and not just an act to impress a judge and jury at trial time.

They said they hope the tragedy near Waco — where a raid ended in death for federal agents and members of a religious cult — will not make people skeptical about their transformation from criminal to Christians.

"I pray for those people and that man

that they've been hypnotized by," prisoner Kevin Brown said, referring to Branch Davidian leader David Koresh and his followers, who are still holed up in a compound surrounded by federal agents.

None of the prisoners interviewed would elaborate on why he is in jail.

"I'm a prisoner for the Lord, just put it that way," said Brown, 28, adding: "I can tell you all about the Lord because that old Kevin has gone away."

Lawrence Postel, 22, of Arlington said



Fort Worth Star-Telegram / Wednesday, March 10, 1993

Prisoners

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that he has been in the county jail since Sept. 22 but that he has only been in the Christian-oriented pod for just over a week.

In other parts of the jail, Postel said, "there's total negativity, swearing, people taking the Lord's name in vain. Up here, it's not like that."

Several non-Christian prisoners, the American Civil Liberties Union and several Jewish organizations have complained that the pod offers special privileges for Christian inmates and violates the constitutional guarantee of separation of church and state.

The prisoners in the Christian pod disagree, saying that people of all faiths are welcomed. Savala Swanson, assistant jail administrator, said that prisoners of other faiths will be invited to join the pod, which is equipped with an organ, piano and pulpit for sermons and

choir service.

ACLU representatives said that they will meet next week with area religious leaders, civil lawyers and the district attorney's office in an effort to reach a compromise out of court.

The sheriff said yesterday that he does not plan to attend the meeting. "I don't see that that'll serve any purpose," Williams said.

Vigil honors slain Haltom police officer

Hundreds gather to remember Gary Hires and to console one another over his death.

BY SUSIE STECKNER
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

HALTOM CITY — As he spoke, veteran officer Rocky Roper tugged at the silver badge pinned to his uniform.

Hundreds of people at last night's candlelight vigil for slain officer Gary Hires listened intently.

"All of us wearing these badges know every day when we leave the house we might not come back," said Roper. "We don't dwell on it. Gary Hires didn't dwell on it."

"Gary Hires did his job."

The glow from hundreds of candles illuminated the faces of police officers, firefighters and others gathered at Broadway Park to remember the officer. At times, some quietly wept; once, as a fellow officer shared an anecdote, some smiled.

One of Hires' sons, 18-year-old Stephen, stood surrounded by friends. One kept an arm around the teen.

As the candles burned, police chaplain Brian Hamlin reminded onlookers: "Gary Hires has uniquely reflected on your lives."

On Saturday, Hires — an 18-year veteran with the Police Department — was shot and killed when he responded to reports of gunfire. Juan Ramon, 14, had opened fire on his neighborhood, wounding three men before Hires arrived. Hires died in the barrage. Ramon was

killed as police returned fire.

The three men remain hospitalized.

Longtime Haltom City officers say they believe that Hires is the first officer in the department to be shot and killed in the line of duty. It has been 10 years since a police officer was killed in Northeast Tarrant County.

Wives of fellow police officers organized last night's vigil to celebrate Hires' life and contributions. A few dozen officers from Haltom City and neighboring police departments were among the crowd.

Many talked among themselves about how they had known Hires, whether as a co-worker, friend or simply the officer who had protected their streets. They shared

memories, clutched tear-stained tissues and embraced.

Throughout the half-hour vigil, they sat side-by-side on picnic tables, listening to a handful of speakers, including Hamlin, Hires' pastor and Mayor Charles Womack.

Hamlin remembered Hires for his compassion.

"Every officer that's in your department got into this business at some point and time because they cared about people," Hamlin said. "Gary Hires got into this business because he cared about people."

"Tonight is a time when we can look back and see how he had impacted our lives."

But it was brief tributes from Roper, who had worked with Hires for eight years, and Haltom City Police Chief Tom Cowan that

evoked the most emotion from the crowd.

Cowan described Hires as an officer of "great integrity" and one "who led by example."

"I never had the opportunity to tell Gary how much I loved him," Cowan said. "I'll never make that mistake again. I love my Police Department."

The vigil ended in prayer.

Afterward, some lingered at the park. Officers huddled together, arm in arm, holding back tears.

"We've really been helping each other," Hamlin said. "We just broaden our shoulders and help each other."

Hires' funeral will be at 3:30 p.m. today at the Bethesda Community Church, 4700 N. Beach St. in Haltom City.



Wives of fellow police officers organized last night's vigil to celebrate Gary Hires' life and contributions.

Fort Worth Star-Telegram / RON JENKINS

