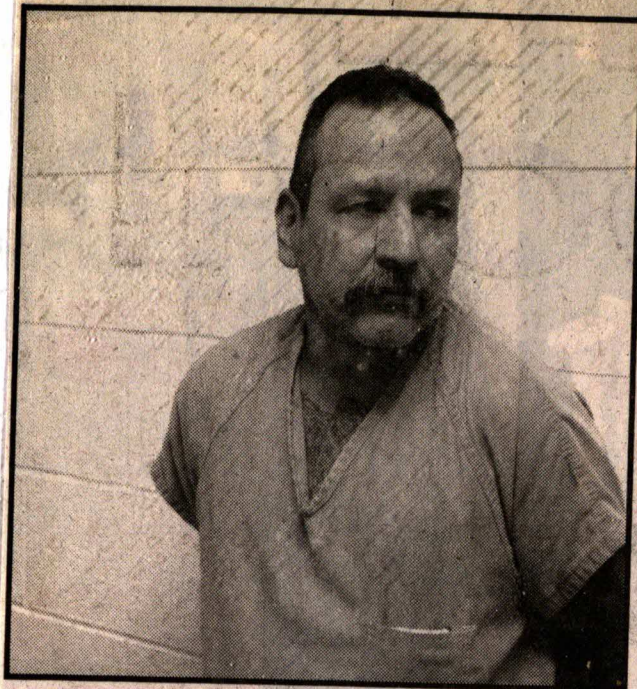


INMATES' STORIES



STAR-TELEGRAM/RODGER MALLISON

DANIEL GONZALES

All Daniel Gonzales wanted was relief from the tooth that had been aching off and on for more than two months.

The jail dentist told him four teeth would eventually need to be pulled. The dentist sent Gonzales back to his cell after pulling one tooth.

But it was the wrong tooth, and Gonzales was left in pain.

"It wasn't the one I asked him to pull," Gonzales said in March.

The next visit, the dentist pulled three other teeth, leaving Gonzales with a two-fingers-wide gap in his lower jaw.

The dentist, Jayesh Patel, had told Gonzales, 49, that although three of those teeth might be considered salvageable in the outside world, extraction was the practice in the jail, Gonzales said.

Patel, who has since quit his jail job, acknowledged in a March interview that extraction was his main method of dental treatment. Wright Lassiter III, until recently a JPS vice president, said that although that attitude is fairly typical of jail dentists, a common joke about Patel was that "You don't ever want to be sitting still, because just sit in a chair and chat with him for a little bit, he'll pull a couple of your teeth."

Lassiter said he hopes to improve the jail's dental care and has hired two part-time dentists who try to use extraction as a last resort.

But many inmates' teeth had been ravaged by years of neglect, he said, and extractions are often the only answer other than expensive work.

"Putting in thousand-dollar crowns in inmates' teeth isn't going to go over very well with public funding," Lassiter said.

CRESTON REEVES

The father of one inmate got a call: Your son is in the hospital.

C.T. Reeves wanted JPS to tell him more: Why was his son in the hospital? Was it serious? Should Reeves drive from his home in Hot Springs, Ark., to Fort Worth?

"We can't tell you that," was the only reply, Reeves recalled.

Because the call came late in the afternoon Monday, Jan. 26, 2004, and JPS had given him no reason to think it was urgent, Reeves ran some errands. He didn't leave for Fort Worth until the next morning.

Reeves was not prepared for the news he got when he arrived at the hospital: His 51-year-old son, Creston, was on life support.

"I am of the belief that he died actually on Monday and they kept his body alive until I got there to say pull the plug," the father said.

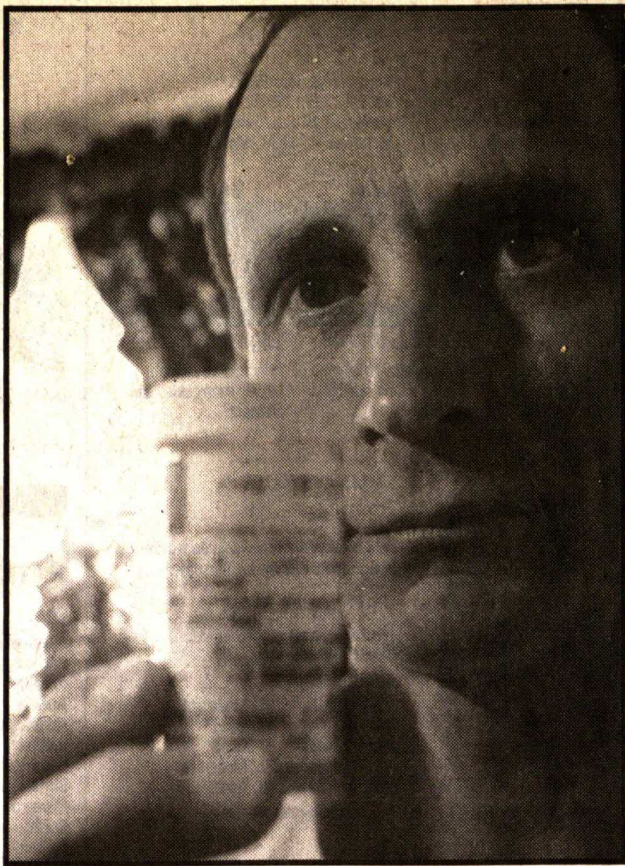
Creston Reeves had been found unconscious in his cell that Monday. His cellmate told sheriff's officers that Reeves had been suffering from an ear infection.

An autopsy showed that the earache was a sign of bacterial meningitis.

Reeves wishes he could have said goodbye to his son.

"I'm a realist. But I do miss him," he said.

INMATES' STORIES



STAR-TELEGRAM/RALPH LAUER

GEORGE BRACKEEN

George Brackeen said he has relied on the drug Dilantin to control seizures since he suffered head injuries in a train accident in 1989.

When he was booked into the Tarrant County Jail on Dec. 28, he was handed one dose but didn't get any more.

"They would skip the Dilantin. They would say, 'You've already got it,'" he said. "I just think they didn't want to give it to me."

On Jan. 6, while taking a shower, Brackeen started feeling odd.

"I grabbed hold of the shower curtains and went down," Brackeen said.

The 44-year-old quit breathing and turned purple. A fellow inmate began mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, which Brackeen believes saved his life.

JPS officials would not comment on specific patients. But they acknowledge that glitches sometimes occurred in the drug-distribution system at the jail. They say they've fixed the problems by setting up optical scanning technology to send prescriptions to the JPS pharmacy.

JPS also added a certified pharmacy technician to monitor the jail prescriptions and added medication aides at the jail.

"I feel very comfortable that we have the appropriate mechanisms in place and the appropriate staffing in place and the appropriate management oversight," said Wright Lassiter III, until recently JPS senior vice president for operations.

CONTINUED

Employees were being added. Temporary workers would be hired to fill the gaps — both in the nursing ranks and other areas, including medical records. New equipment would be ordered. Inmates' medical requests would be reviewed, even if JPS had to bring in an army of workers to do it.

In March, a new physician, Alan Byrd, began overseeing the medical care at the jail. He says that inmate requests for treatment now are screened within 24 hours.

A cordial relationship

Why did it take indignant outbursts from the sheriff and a critical report from outsiders before extensive changes took place?

Cecero says JPS didn't have the system and the people in place to alert top administrators to the problems.

He hadn't known about staffing problems at the jail. Staff turnover and vacancies are not the kind of details that reach him, he said.

Cecero also said that his health network had not been sued over its jail care in more than a decade. In fact, JPS or its employees were named in 11 federal lawsuits by inmates since Cecero was hired in 2001, although most were dismissed quickly.

And Cecero said he never heard from inmates or their families. JPS has a system for patients to file complaints, and at least eight inmates did just that, including one who addressed his complaint to Cecero. Another inmate, Ambrosio Salinas, said he wrote to Cecero in February about not getting prescribed antibiotics.

Apparently, the complaints didn't make it to Cecero's office.

"What I'm saying is no one has written to my attention directly," Cecero said. "But if there had been, we would deal with it straight up and directly."

Cecero said JPS employees at the jail were not adequately trained. He also said that the jail lacked proper medical resources and blamed his own staff for that.

"They didn't ask for them," he said.

The hospital system relies heavily on its management team to alert it to needs, Lassiter said. "And I would tell you that the needs of the correctional health function were not being advocated for as strongly as I would expect a department head to advocate for."

The on-site supervisor was scolded by her superiors in early 2004 for failing to communicate to senior management information that may have "potential unfavorable consequences" for JPS, documents show.

Cecero said he has put more competent people in place. Four managers are no longer involved with jail operations, including the on-site manager and a vice president who had overseen the jail.

Changes in management and staff were designed to change the culture at the jail, too, Lassiter said. "In some cases, we had folks who had been there a long time and liked things the way they were," he said. "We are trying to ensure there is as much sensitivity to the incarcerated population as there would be for the nonincarcerated population."

Lassiter and Cecero said that medical care at the jail now meets or exceeds requirements for accreditation with the Texas Commission on Jail Standards, a state oversight agency. Officials from JPS and the sheriff's office meet regularly, and Anderson said his working relationship with Cecero now is cordial.

Improved care

But more work may be needed.

As recently as late July, the *Star-Telegram* and JPS received anonymous letters from people who said they work on the jail medical staff. The letters listed numerous concerns, including that "inmates on seizure, blood pressure, cardiac and AIDS medication still go for weeks without medication."

JPS officials said that in the past three months, a small number of inmates failed to receive medications because of staffing issues on two occasions. On one of those dates, three of five employees did not report to work and others had to fill in, JPS spokeswoman Drenda Witt said.

"Things take time. We're not perfect, and there's still more that I want to accomplish," Lassiter said in July.

Inmates say they still had woeful experiences with JPS medical staff. On the advice of attorneys, JPS would not comment on the treatment of individual patients, citing potential litigation.

Daniel Gonzales had rectal bleeding around Christmas and saw a doctor, who told him that colon cancer was a possibility.

In June, he was sent to the hospital for a colonoscopy. But JPS failed to arrange the required all-liquid diet the day before, so the colonoscopy was unreadable. He said a second colonoscopy also was unreadable — for the same reason.

Finally, a third colonoscopy was completed. Doctors detected no colon cancer, but believed that Gonzales might have hepatitis, his wife, Vickie, said. Gonzales, 49, was scheduled for further tests but was transferred to a state prison in August before they could be performed.

Wright, who suffered from the brain abscess, remains bitter over the ordeal he endured this spring.

A jail doctor first told him he had a sinus infection. After his abscess was removed, pain still crisscrossed his scalp. One eye drooped.

"I was supposed to be getting the medicine twice a day," Wright said. "But the medicine sometimes wouldn't be in the cart. So one of them would say, 'I'll give you a double dose next time.' But it might be a different nurse or they would

forget or something."

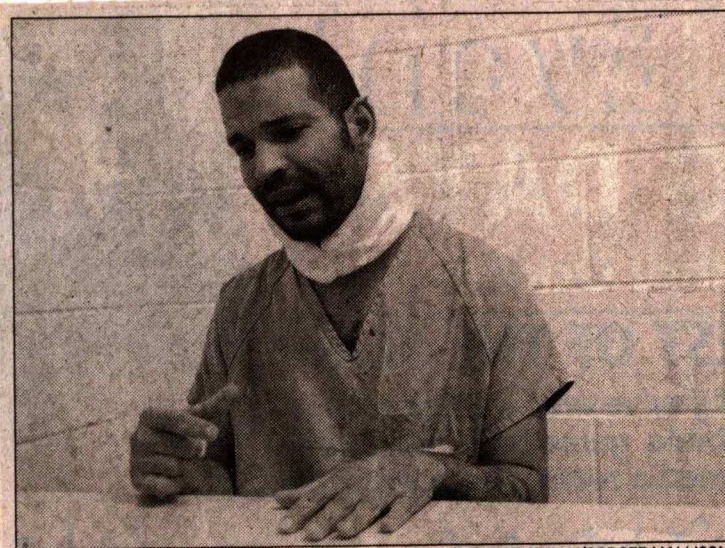
Wright said he put in 13 requests between April 2 and April 25 to see a doctor. Finally, on April 26, a doctor saw him for his scheduled postoperative checkup.

Alarmed by his symptoms, the doctor sent Wright back to the hospital. Another abscess had developed, most likely, Wright says doctors told him, because of missed antibiotics.

But when Wright returned to jail in May, the care was much better.

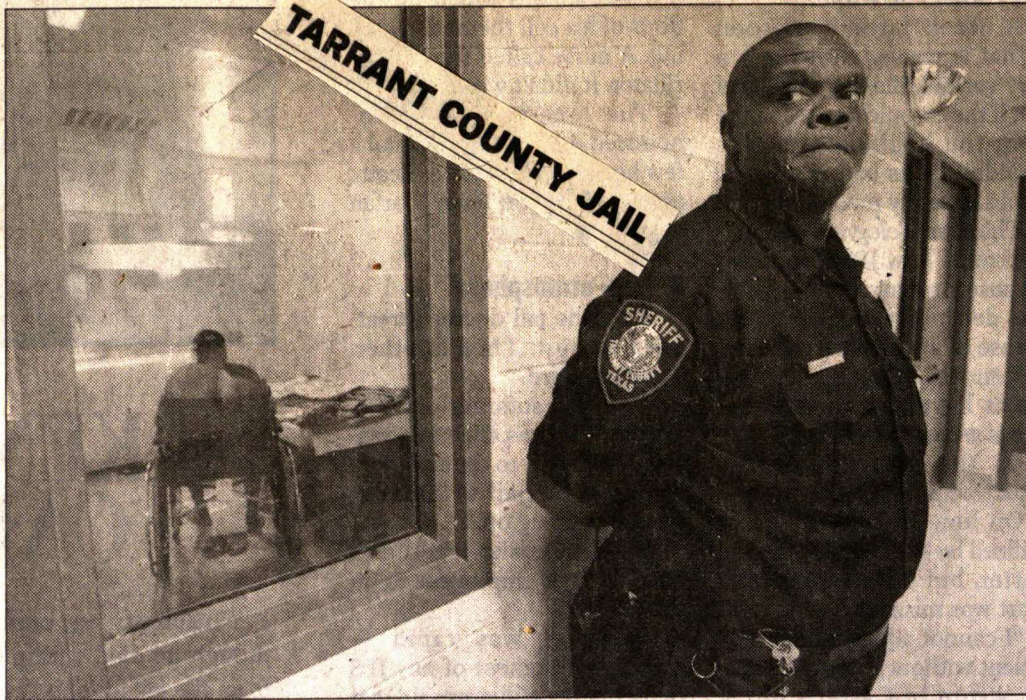
He was placed in the infirmary and given antibiotics intravenously eight times daily. But his left side is still so weak he must use a walker.

"It's so sad," Wright said. "But what the heck, I'm just an inmate, right?"



STAR-TELEGRAM/RODGER MALLISON

Inmate James Wright had a brain abscess removed but didn't always get his antibiotics. By the time a doctor finally saw him, another pus-filled abscess had developed.



STAR-TELEGRAM/RODGER MALLISON

Sheriff's officer K. Chambliss stands guard outside the Tarrant County Jail's medical unit in September 2004. JPS employees said they worked with broken equipment and out-of-date supplies at the jail.

Problems at the Tarrant County Jail's medical unit

In written correspondence, physicians, JPS employees, independent consultants and others reported problems with medical care of inmates. Among their concerns:

- Some jail medical equipment was broken or obsolete, such as 20-year-old defibrillators. When nurses tried to use a defibrillator on a dying patient, it didn't work.
- Some equipment was locked where nurses and doctors sometimes couldn't use it. Some supplies, such as IV fluids, had expired.
- Medical tests and lab tests ordered by doctors were not done or the results were not available on the doctors' next visit. Ultrasounds were a particular problem.
- Prescriptions went unfilled or backlogged. After the pharmacy

- closed for the day, pharmacy technicians went in after hours to fill prescriptions, in violation of the law.
- Medications were ordered but not always provided to patients. In some cases, these were life-sustaining drugs for patients with AIDS or kidney diseases.
- Registered nurses and licensed vocational nurses were asked to make medical decisions outside their scope of practice. Only one RN was on duty at night for all four jail facilities.
- Vacant doctor positions caused a backlog of inmates' appointments. Appointments for obstet-

- ric and gynecological visits were canceled half the time.
- Requests to see doctors also backed up. The backlog of requests, known as kites, reached 3,000 and weren't reviewed for six weeks.
- Despite the backlog, some doctors had downtime because of scheduling policies of the Sheriff's Department.
- Patient charts were unavailable half the time, undermining care. In some cases, charts weren't available because the Sheriff's Department didn't always move medical records when it transferred inmates.

Improvements to jail health care

Over the past year, the JPS Health Network has implemented a number of changes at the Tarrant County Jail. As a result, spending for jail health care has increased to \$11 million, compared with \$7.6 million two years ago. Here are some of the notable changes.

Staffing:

- A fourth physician has been added.
- A physician's assistant has been hired.
- Sixteen registered nurse positions have been added.
- Four medication aide positions have been filled.
- Four emergency medical technician positions have been filled.
- Two employees have been added to file medical charts.
- A certified pharmacy tech has been added to track jail orders.

Equipment and supplies:

- Optical scanning technology was installed to transmit prescriptions.
- A new fax machine, telephones and computers have been installed.
- The pharmacy has prepared starter kits of common medications.

Operations:

- Weekend clinics have been expanded.
- An AIDS clinic has been reinstated at the jail.
- Inmates with similar health needs are being grouped together at the jail.
- JPS hospital tries to group inmates together.
- Requests for medical care are reviewed within 24 hours by medical staff.

Jail: JPS was slow to address complaints about health care

CONTINUED FROM 1A

It wasn't just the acutely ill who suffered.

Even routine care wasn't reliable. Requests to see doctors were stuffed into filing cabinets, unread for weeks. The inmate who discovered a lump in her breast had no better chance of her request being noticed than the one who griped about his shower shoes.

Inmates reported that broken arms weren't set. One inmate was given an over-the-counter laxative, but his attorney pointed out that the inmate was suffering from diarrhea.

Wright Lassiter III, a vice president who recently left JPS, said no one should think that such problems indicate that something was fundamentally wrong with medical care at the jail. "I think the biggest issues in the jail were gaps. You do things right most of the time, but then there were gaps in how things were accomplished," he said.

Yet JPS' rank-and-file employees at the jail complained about crucial positions left unfilled amid rapid turnover. They worked with broken equipment and out-of-date supplies. Their pleas for help were directed to managers who either accepted the status quo or couldn't change it.

To be sure, the blame is shared.

Sheriff Dee Anderson, who runs the jail, issued ultimatums to JPS while he didn't fix problems in his own department. Doctors came in late and didn't always work scheduled shifts.

Nonetheless, JPS was culpable for many deficiencies, according to consultants hired by the county last fall. Among their findings: Medical records were "in a state of chaos" and some of the sickest inmates couldn't count on life-sustaining treatments.

For all this, JPS officials displayed little sense of urgency. For many months, Chief Executive Officer David Cecero could not find time to meet with the sheriff. Real change came only after the consultants' damning report.

Cecero doesn't see much point in rehashing the problems.

"I think it is more appropriate and more important to talk about where we are at today," Cecero said in a July interview.

JPS, he said, has increased its correctional health budget by millions of dollars, adding staff and new equipment.

But some inmates say there can still be long waits for medication. And it was just this April that Wright was delayed in seeing a doctor for his abscess — months after JPS told the public the system was well on the way to being fixed.

Troubling allegations

Few people might weep for the James Wrights of this world.

But most of the 3,200 people in Tarrant County Jail — even those convicted of serious crimes — will eventually be released. Without medical care, some could pose public health threats and increase the burden on taxpayers.

That began weighing on Anderson soon after he became sheriff in 2001.

Grievances over medical care were cascading into Anderson's department. And inmates' relatives were calling, pleading for him to intervene with JPS' jail staff. Some of their appeals touched the sheriff.

"Your brother could be in my jail. Any of us could have a relative there," he said.

Anderson said that the more he investigated complaints, the more concerned he became. An inmate's request to see a doctor might not be reviewed for six weeks, he said.

He remembers one case in which an inmate told the JPS employee at the receiving desk on a Friday night that he was a diabetic and needed insulin daily. The inmate was told he couldn't have his insulin until he saw a doctor the next Wednesday.

Luckily for the inmate, Anderson said, he was released from custody by Monday. By

that time, the inmate was so ill that he went straight to the hospital to have his blood sugar adjusted.

Anderson had another worry. As sheriff, he's bound by federal law to provide adequate medical care for inmates. Yet he had no authority over JPS and its health care system, because county commissioners contracted with JPS to provide the service.

Anderson feared losing a court case, and he was already seeing lawsuits with troubling allegations.

Arthur Delgado Jr. said a jail nurse confused him with somebody else. She couldn't be persuaded otherwise, even when the treatment she claimed he was getting didn't match his symptoms.

He wanted to see the doctor to be checked for diabetes. But the nurse told him he had already been seen.

"When I tried to protest, she showed me my file indicating the date seen and medicine creams ordered," Delgado wrote in his 2002 lawsuit. "When I stated, 'That was not me,' she treated me with total disregard."

The sheriff wasn't the only one concerned.

Registered nurse Thomas Williams started work in October 2003 and immediately noticed expired intravenous fluids and 20-year-old defibrilators.

"When I walked into the jail, the problems were like neon signs," Williams later wrote to JPS administrators. He declined to be interviewed by the *Star-*

Telegram.

The jail doctors, who work for a physicians group through a contract with JPS, reported that they were hampered at

their jobs.

"I'm having multiple complaints about the doctors not having enough staff, medical records are awful. It just goes on and



ANDERSON

on," said Dr. Wayne Williams, an administrator with North Texas Affiliated Medical Group.

But if the doctors, the Sheriff's Department and JPS' own medical staff knew the situation was deteriorating in 2002 and 2003, JPS administrators didn't grasp it. They told the sheriff he just didn't understand health care.

Anderson came to believe that nothing would be improved unless he met directly with Cecero. Yet, Anderson said, Cecero kept canceling meetings. When they finally got together, in October 2003, Cecero left the hourlong meeting and talked on the phone for 20 minutes.

Cecero said he left to take a call from a county commissioner and thought he was leaving the discussion in the good hands of his chief operating officer. But Anderson was livid.

A month later, Anderson wrote Cecero that since the meeting, health care services at the jail had gotten even worse.



LASSITER

He blamed poor physician coverage and a lack of leadership from JPS management. The sheriff notified Cecero that "immediate corrective action must be taken" and hinted that if things didn't change, he would try to have JPS replaced.

Cecero assured the sheriff that all the issues of concern would be resolved in 2004.

Warning signs



CECERO

Inmates began dying. In the first three months of 2004, the Tarrant County Jail had three deaths in custody — the same as in all of 2003. The year before, two inmates died.

Eventually, ten inmates would die at the jail in 2004 — none because of violence. In comparison, Dallas County Jail, with twice the average jail population, had 12, according to statistics provided by the Texas Attorney General's Office.

Even though some inmates arrive at the jail with severe health problems, the health system is required to investigate whether its medical policies and procedures are a factor in any unanticipated death. Results from such investigations are not public in Texas, so it is impossible to know what JPS did.

But a *Star-Telegram* review of several of the deaths found warning signs that the system was struggling.

Christopher Brown's death might have raised questions about whether inmates could get their medicines and see a doctor.

In the weeks before Brown's death at 31, he pleaded for help, according to documents released by the Sheriff's Department.

Complaints about lack of care

A pronounced increase in grievances about the medical care provided to jail inmates caught the attention of Sheriff Dee Anderson. These are among the complaints from inmates, their family members or attorneys.

"I have been here two weeks come Monday and have yet to see or talk with a doctor or be called to sick call to see the doctor. I was told I would be put on the list. Put on the list! Put on the list. I am having more and more pains in my chest cause of my heart which is why I have Nitro and Metoprolol pills for my heart."

— Letter to Sheriff Dee Anderson, Jan. 25, 2003

"I sat in the visitor booth and was told it would be a little

while before I could see him, because he was having a seizure. ... He was brought in weeping and covered in urine. I got the attention of a guard and was told that he wasn't allowed a change of clothing, because someone from MHMR had to be present. I asked to see a supervisor and sat there another 20-30 minutes with no response. I got on the elevator intercom and asked again and finally saw the corporal in charge at the conclusion of my visit. He told me a completely different story than the guard and said they didn't change Matt because they didn't want to delay my visit. I told him that I would have gladly waited. He assured me that he would be changed immediately. I found out later that instead of being allowed a change of clothing Matt was strapped to a chair for hours in the same clothing after I left."

— E-mail from an inmate's father, Sept. 19, 2002

"Since I've been here I have been denied my medicines ... I have ulcers and I haven't eaten in 3 to 4 days, because I can't keep food down. I am spitting up blood. They tell me they can't find my chart. It has nothing to do with ulcers. I was kept in the jail infirmary for three days. And was given Zantac and antibiotic and saline LV. They say that on my chart, but then again they claim they can't find my chart."

— JPS Health Network patient complaint form, June 6, 2002

"As you are aware [my client] gave birth,

via a Caesarian section, to a beautiful young boy late last Thursday. Apparently, within a day, she was placed in the general population and is only allowed to have aspirin. This is wholly unacceptable. There is a serious infection risk. Why was this patient not assigned to the infirmary?"

— Dallas attorney Jason Charles Ciarochi, Aug. 18, 2003

"Wife called. Said he has had surgery before he was transferred here. She said he has been bleeding and couldn't get medical treatment. I gave her the number for medical. After I hung up, I called [the sergeant] and asked him to have someone check on the inmate since medical wasn't answering."

— Sheriff's Department correspondence, Sept. 22, 2003

"I lost my toe due to an infection and I got inside this jail!

Now, another doctor is trying to help me not only lose my more of my foot, but my life! I have a 10- and 11-year-old boys that I'd like to see again! Even after I returned from JPS and the doctors' calling to be sure the orders were understood, I still don't have my meds! My seizures are getting worse. Please do something about this before it's too late. I am scared! Please help!"

— Grievance form filed with the Sheriff's Department, Aug. 7, 2003

"My client, who has been experiencing intestinal problem,

was put in the medical facility for examination and diagnosis. ... He was given nothing other than over-the-counter medications, which did not solve the problem. ... His problem has gotten worse. Today ... there was delivered to him two over-the-counter medications — Metamucil and Milk of Magnesia. Both of these are laxatives. One of Brian's symptoms is severe diarrhea."

— Arlington attorney John V. Dowdy Jr. to the Sheriff's Department, July 22, 2003

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Life-term prisoner numbers growing

■ The population of inmates serving life sentences has almost doubled in the past decade, contributing to a trend unprecedented in U.S. history.

By ADAM LIPTAK
THE NEW YORK TIMES

HARRISBURG, Pa. — In the woods near Gaines, Pa., in late December 1969, Charlotte Goodwin told Jackie Lee Thompson a lie. The two 15-year-olds had been having sex for about a month, and she said she was pregnant. He shot Charlotte three times at close range and then drowned her in the icy waters of Pine Creek.

A few months later, Judge Charles Webb sentenced him to life in prison. But the judge told Thompson, "We have found that, in the past, quite frequently, if you behave yourself, there is a good chance that you will learn a trade and you will be paroled after a few years."

Thompson behaved himself. So exemplary is his prison record that when Thompson, now 50, asked the pardons board to release him, the victim's father begged for his release, and a retired prison official offered Thompson a home and a job.

"We can forgive him," said Duane Goodwin, Charlotte's father. "Why can't you?"

The board turned Thompson down.

A few decades ago, a life sentence was often a misnomer, a way to suggest harsh punishment but deliver 10 to 20 years.

But now, driven by tougher laws and political pressure from governors and parole boards, thousands of criminals serving life sentences are going into prisons each year, and in many states few are released, even in cases where judges and prosecutors did not intend to put them away forever.

In the past 30 years, the United States has created something unprecedented in its history and unheard of worldwide: a booming population of prisoners whose only way out is likely to be inside a coffin.

A *New York Times* survey found that about 132,000 of the nation's prisoners, or almost one in 10, are serving life sentences. The number of prisoners serving life sentences has almost doubled in the past decade, far outpacing the overall growth in the prison population. Of those sentenced to life between 1988 and 2001, about a third are serving time for offenses other than murder, including burglary and drug crimes.

The United States is housing a large and permanent population of prisoners who will die of old age behind bars. At the Louisiana State Penitentiary in Angola, for instance, more than 3,000 of the 5,100 prisoners are serving life without parole, and most of the rest are serving sentences so long that they cannot be completed in a typical lifetime.

Some critics of life sentences say they are overused, pointing to people like Jerald Sanders, a small-time burglar serving a life sentence in Alabama.

Under the state's habitual-offender law, he was sent to prison after stealing a \$60 bicycle.

By a conservative estimate, housing America's prisoners serving life terms costs \$3 billion a year.

Studies show that most prisoners become markedly less violent as they grow older. "Committing crime, particularly violent crime, is an activity of the young," said Richard Kern, the director of the Virginia Criminal Sentencing Commission.

IN MY OPINION

Man's dream stolen by mistaken arrest

■ A veteran peace officer lost his job, home and businesses because he was falsely accused of a robbery that may have never happened.



Bob Ray Sanders

Although tears come easily for Larry Brantley these days, he is a man who refuses to give up on life or on his faith.

Still haunted by an unfortunate incident at his workplace two years ago that changed his life for the worse, Brantley has adopted a philosophy that gives him incredible strength as he continues to fight for the justice he believes has been denied him.

"God allows us to go through things," he said in a recent interview.

"I haven't lost my soul. I've lost a lot of my belief in mankind, but not my faith."

Brantley, a licensed peace officer who is a security guard at the prestigious Fort Worth Club, grew up in Midland.

Among his extensive files, which include mostly commendations from his military experience and work as a sheriff's deputy, is a photograph of his Little League baseball team. He

proudly points to his picture and then to another kid kneeling on the front row, the one who would grow up to be president of the United States — George W. Bush.

He used to smile when he pointed to that photo. But he rarely smiles these days.

His troubles began in July 2003, when police officers came to the Fort Worth Club, told him he was under arrest for armed robbery, handcuffed him in front of club guests and employees

More on SANDERS on 7B

Sanders: Man doubts robbery happened

CONTINUED FROM 1B

and escorted him out of the building to be jailed.

Brantley, 52, had retired from the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department and had recently bought a business of dollar-type stores. He had an impeccable record of employment and money in the bank and had recently bought a spacious new house.

He would spend 17 days in jail until his \$50,000 bail was reduced to \$25,000.

No one who knew him, especially his employer, believed that he had been involved in a robbery.

Once he learned that the robbery he was accused of had occurred seven months earlier, on Dec. 21, 2002, it didn't take him long to realize he had a perfect alibi.

Brantley, who had never called in sick at his security job, was on duty that day at the Fort Worth Club at the time the crime was alleged to have happened. Nine people, including employees and guests, signed statements to that effect.

A security guard is not allowed to leave the premises even for meals, and there are 64 security cameras in and around the building that would have recorded his actions had he left the property.

The robbery supposedly had taken place at Sally Beauty Supply on Alta Mesa Boulevard in far southwest Fort Worth.

I say "alleged" and "supposedly" in reference to the crime because Brantley and his attorney now believe that no robbery ever occurred. But I'll get back to that.

Brantley apparently became a suspect after a female police officer answering the "robbery" call took down the license number of a white car as she entered the parking lot of the shopping area where the beauty supply store was located. Police later determined that the car was registered to Brantley.

He did own the car, but all witnesses at the Fort Worth Club swore he never drove that car to work. It was his wife's, and she had been to the shopping center that day with her two children. She has a dated receipt to prove it.

At any rate, police later showed a photo of Brantley to the clerk who claimed to have been robbed, and she identified him as the person who committed the crime.

Things went downhill for Brantley from there.

As a result of being charged with a felony, he had to surrender his peace officer's license, which meant he lost his job. The Fort Worth Club did allow him to continue to work in another capacity at lower pay. He also lost his three stores.

A condition of his bail was that he not be allowed to leave the county, and this provision is one of the things about which he is most bitter.

"My mother passed away during this time, and after waiting for permission from the probation office to go home to Midland, Texas, to bury her, she decomposed to the point that she had to be cremated," he said. "Her memorial was held on my birthday, Oct. 10."

With all the facts on his side, and all the support from co-workers who signed affidavits, Brantley was no-billed by a grand jury and got his license and his old job back.

But he hasn't gotten the one thing he wanted the most: an apology from the Fort Worth Police Department for arresting him and for the way the investigation was conducted.

Brantley said one high-ranking Fort Worth official has apologized privately, but that is not enough.

He has sued the city of Fort Worth, the Police Department and Sally Beauty Supply for damages.

The suit points out that during the robbery, a clerk alleged that a black man came into the store and handed her a note on a napkin that read, "I have a gun. Put the money in the bag."

The clerk claimed that when she had trouble opening the register, the robber took the gun out of his pocket and pointed it at her. She then gave him about \$200 in cash, she said.

According to the lawsuit, there were two other employees in the small store at the time, but they weren't aware of the robbery, and the note on the napkin has never been found. Also, there had been at least one other similar claim of a robbery at this store.

"Larry Brantley believes, as a black man, he was singled out for racial discrimination and profiling as a result of the careless, negligent investigation of what was, in all probability, a phony robbery claim of an employee, either acting alone, or in conjunction with others at Sally Beauty Supply," the suit says.

Shortly after the incident, the clerk left town without leaving a forwarding address.

One of the club guests who was in Brantley's company at about the time the robbery was alleged to be occurring across town was Tarrant County District Attorney Tim Curry, the suit says.

In its answer to the lawsuit, Sally Beauty Supply "denies generally and specifically the material allegations in Plaintiff's Petition"

The city's response raises the issue of immunity for municipalities and police to such lawsuits under state law.

"The City affirmatively pleads that it cannot be held vicariously liable as a matter of law for any negligent and/or grossly negligent acts of its police officers and/or employees," the city states in its answer.

While the wheels of the justice system slowly turn, Brantley continues to suffer.

Last month, he lost his house. Because of the family's new location, his children have had to withdraw from schools they loved and enroll in new ones. In an essay about his troubles, Brantley referred to his ordeal as *Stolen Dreams, Stolen Joy*.


He began, "A highly decorated Vietnam era veteran. Stellar Military and Law Enforcement Career, spanning some twenty-seven plus years. Mine is a story of stolen dreams, stolen joy and learning to be thankful for the thorns in my flesh."

Although cities and police departments don't like to admit mistakes or apologize, Fort Worth and its Police Department owe Brantley a public apology ... and more.

Monday, October 24, 2005

John E. Moilanen



 **FORT WORTH** — John E. Moilanen, 85, passed away Saturday, Oct. 22, 2005, in Fort Worth.

Funeral: 3:30 p.m. Tuesday at Greenwood Chapel. **Burial:** Greenwood Memorial Park. **Visitation:** 6 to 8 p.m. Monday at Greenwood Funeral

John was a 32nd-degree Mason of Arlington Heights Masonic Lodge 1184, a life member of Veterans of Foreign Wars, member of Moslah Temple Shrine and American Legion. He was a planner for many years at General Dynamics until he transferred to manufacturing engineering from which he retired. John also had his own insurance company with Farmer's Insurance Group for 16 years and was an officer with the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department. He enjoyed many adventures on his travels with his wife, all over the world.

John was preceded in death by his brother, Arnold Moilanen.

Survivors: Wife of 40 years, Verne Moilanen of Fort Worth; adopted daughter, Mary L. Buddin and husband, Everett of River Oaks; stepsons, Jeremy Brent of California and Fred Horner and wife, Honey of New York; sister, Effie Typpi of Naperville, Ill.; brothers-in-law, Jack Alston and wife, Eleanor of Choctaw, Okla. and Edward Alston and wife, Ola of Houston.

Greenwood Funeral Home
3100 White Settlement Rd., (817) 336-0584
View and sign guestbook at
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COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Sheriff bans tobacco use on duty

By **ANTHONY SPANGLER**
STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

No whiffs, cans or butts.

Beginning Jan. 1, Tarrant County sheriff's employees will be banned from smoking or chewing tobacco while working, even if they are not in uniform. Those in uniform will be prohibited from using tobacco while driving to and from work, sheriff's spokesman Terry Grisham said.

"We've already made buildings, the jail and county vehicles smoke-free," Grisham explained. "It's a voluntary policy. You just can't work for us if you smoke or

chew tobacco."

The policy is intended to improve productivity and employee health and to eliminate packs of smokers at employee entrances, Grisham said.

But some employees are fuming.

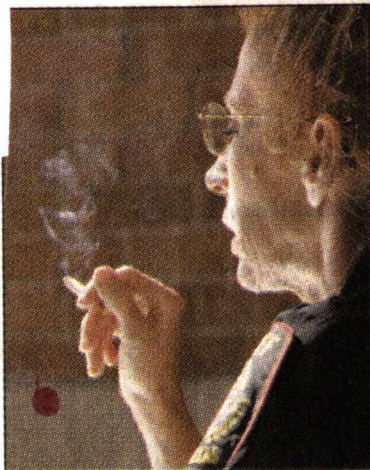
"It sucks," said one sheriff's employee who did not want to be identified for fear of repercussions. "I can't believe they are trying to tell us what to do when we're not on the clock."

Detention officer Cynthia Lipe said the new policy may help some workers kick the habit.

"I can understand the need for a good public image," said Lipe, while smoking outside the downtown Fort Worth jail. "I think a lot of people will take the opportunity to quit."

The county's employee wellness program is ready to help those who want to quit, coordinator Kay Hancock said.

"It's not going to be an easy thing and some people are going to be scratching the walls," said Hancock, who quit smoking 21 years ago. "We've even talked about setting up a system where a smoker has a support buddy."



STAR-TELEGRAM/RON T. ENNIS

Tarrant County detention officer Cynthia Lipe takes a cigarette break outside the jail in Fort Worth.

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Leaders to be updated on newest jail proposal



ANDERSON

■ The sheriff wants to avoid high-risk transports.

By **ANTHONY SPANGLER**
STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

The latest \$87 million plan to renovate the Tarrant County Corrections Center would add more single-bed, maximum-security cells to the downtown jail, but would also require hundreds of the most-dangerous inmates to be transported to and from court hearings – a security risk the sheriff doesn't want to take.

Tarrant County commissioners will be briefed today on jail options that could be included in a \$350 million bond proposal, which officials hope to take to voters in May. They have to detail the costs of major improvements in the bond issue by February.

Cost estimates for some of the projects have already been given to commissioners. Last week, they were told it would cost \$122 million to build new medical examiner facilities and a new civil courts build-

ing and expand juvenile services. A consultant is helping county officials choose from among 120 transportation projects submitted by Tarrant County cities that would share \$200 million.

The latest jail plan would renovate five floors of the corrections center and add new buildings to the Green Bay property at Interstate 35W and Loop 820.

The proposed renovations would provide 380 new maximum-security cells in the downtown jail, but jeopardize 648 medium-security beds that were converted into double-bunk cells in the early 1994.

"I think we're still searching for solutions," Sheriff Dee Anderson said after reviewing the latest plan. "I need more maximum-security downtown where we don't have to transport dangerous inmates across the county."

Commissioners hope to achieve a compromise between Anderson and down-

town business leaders who have opposed any new jail facility in the heart of Fort Worth.

Sheriff's officials would prefer that the new jail be built in the 500 block of West Belknap Street, where the Mueller Building is currently used to store court records. The building has an underground tunnel that would allow jail inmates to be moved to and from court appearances.

Three other proposals already considered by commissioners include a \$47.1 million expansion of the Green Bay facilities, a \$92.6 million jail on the Mueller Building site, and an \$87.7 million project to replace a county building in the 300 block of West Belknap Street.

County officials have focused on the building at the Green Bay site because the cost of land acquisition would be cheaper.

Anthony Spangler, (817) 390-7420
aspangler@star-telegram.com

Face-off arises over jail location

■ The sheriff vows to fight the bond if the jail isn't downtown.

By **ANTHONY SPANGLER**
STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

Sheriff Dee Anderson vowed Tuesday to campaign against the county's bond election if county commissioners propose building a maximum-security jail anywhere other than downtown Fort Worth.

At a contentious meeting, the five-member Tarrant County Commissioners Court narrowed the list of options for new jail facilities, which is expected to go before voters next spring as part of a \$350 million bond package.

But one of the two remaining options that commissioners are considering would expand existing jail facilities at the Green Bay site off Interstate 35W near Loop 820 in north Fort Worth. Construction costs for that option would be about \$40 million cheaper than the alternative plan to demolish an old jail building in the 300 block of West Belknap Street downtown.

Anderson is opposed to the Green Bay expansion, which he says would require transporting high-risk inmates to and from court appearances and to medical services.

"We will not house maximum-security inmates at Green Bay as long as I'm sheriff," Anderson said. "I will not put the public at risk."

Transportation costs would also rise significantly, Anderson said, if more inmates are housed at the Green Bay site.

Downtown business leaders have been opposed to construct-

More on JAIL on 14B

Jail: Discussion of options spurs heated exchanges

CONTINUED FROM 1B

ing a new jail in the heart of Fort Worth. And some commissioners say downtown land owned by the county would be better used as commercial real estate than as a jail site.

Discussion of the various jail options sparked heated exchanges between Anderson and county commissioners.

"What happens if we elect to provide jail beds somewhere where you do not want them?" Precinct 1 Commissioner Roy Brooks asked Anderson.

"First of all, I won't support the bond election," Anderson responded.

Precinct 3 Commissioner Glen Whitley fired back sharply, with his voice raised: "I don't think we are reaching any compromise when the first words out of your mouth are that you will not house prisoners at the facility if we build it,"

Whitley told Anderson.

Whitley said he would like to see a corporate headquarters built on land owned by the county in the 300 block of West Belknap Street or high-rise apartments built where court records are now kept in a one-story warehouse in the 600 block of West Belknap Street.

"I think there has been some interest in those plots of land," Whitley said, "to turn around and build signature buildings like the RadioShack building."

Precinct 2 Commissioner Marti VanRavenswaay sought compromise with the option of building a new jail at the site of the old jail building, which is next to the Windham Building that houses the Fort Worth police headquarters. Some upper floors house county jail cells.

The plan to demolish the old building and construct a

new jail on that site would require some land acquisition from Fort Worth and cost nearly \$88 million.

But Fort Worth is negotiating with Tarrant County about using the county jail once again to house its prisoners, Precinct 4 Commissioner J.D. Johnson said.

In December 2001, Fort Worth ended a contract with Tarrant County to book and house its inmates. After four years of sending its inmates to Mansfield, Fort Worth officials are trying to return to the county. A larger booking area would be necessary to accommodate Fort Worth's prisoners, county jail officials say.

"I would favor tearing down the old county jail ... and we would be the owner of the city/county jail," Johnson said. "In 1987, the county was leaning to-

ward building this new high-rise jail and courts building out on Kimbo Road. But what killed it was the transportation costs and the public's safety."

Commissioners, who have until February to detail the costs of the major projects in the bond proposal, are expecting to get another briefing in two weeks to including operating costs for the jail options.

Last week, commissioners were told that it would cost \$122 million to build new medical examiner facilities and a new civil courts building and expand juvenile services. The county is also sorting through 120 transportation projects submitted by Tarrant County cities that would share \$200 million of the bond package.

Anthony Spangler, (817) 390-7420
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LETTERS, FAXES AND E-MAILS TO THE EDITOR

They may need the smokes

Whoa there, Wyatt Earp! Did the good people of Fort Worth elect a sheriff or a dictator? Telling people what they can do in their own cars? When the sheriff provides every employee with a county-owned vehicle, then maybe! (See Nov. 4 news story "Sheriff defends ban on tobacco.")

Why is it that when you give somebody a little power, that person turns into some kind of Third World dictator? It never fails.

It's probably tough enough dealing with thugs, criminals and who knows what else all day long without having a smoke now and then. If it were me and I had to deal with that all day, I'd wind up in therapy for sure!

I don't know how much a deputy is paid — probably not a lot. I've never seen one driving a Rolls-Royce. So, Wyatt, why don't you let these people who

must immerse themselves in the sewer of humanity every day at least have a smoke break now and then? After all, it's just a jail, not a four-star hotel.

Bill Woodard, Fort Worth

I fully understand why the Tarrant County sheriff is prohibiting officers from using tobacco while in uniform. (Tobacco is extremely detrimental to one's health.) But I'd hate to be pulled over by an officer who's at the end of his or her nerves because of dire need for a cigarette.

We would hope that many of the officers will quit using tobacco because of the sheriff's ban. However, it doesn't seem smart to put someone as uptight as a person trying to quit smoking in the position that many officers face every day.

Sarah MacLean, Southlake

Sunday, November 20, 2005

Heidi McLamore



NORTH RICHLAND HILLS — Heidi McLamore, 44, passed away Thursday, Nov. 17, 2005, in Denton.

Funeral: 1:30 p.m. Monday in Mount Olivet Chapel. Burial: Garden of Memories Mausoleum. Visitation: 4 to 6 p.m. Sunday at Mount Olivet Funeral Home.

Heidi was born Oct. 26, 1961, in Landstuhl, Germany. She worked 15 years for the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department.

Heidi was preceded in death by her father, John N. McLamore Sr., and brother, "Johnny" McLamore Jr. She will be dearly missed by her friends and family.

Survivors: Mother, Charlotte Saenz; sister, Lydia Rambo; niece, Charlotte Carpenter; great-nephew, Hayden Sullins; and extended family in Germany.

Mount Olivet Funeral Home
2301 N. Sylvania Ave., (817) 831-0511
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County close to picking jail site

■ County commissioners abandon a plan that would have moved the criminal justice system out of downtown.

By **ANTHONY SPANGLER**
STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

Tarrant County commissioners said Tuesday that they will likely propose building a new maximum-security jail in downtown Fort Worth despite opposition from downtown business leaders, rather than expand a jail on the northern edges of the city.

A majority of commissioners, minus Judge Tom Vandergriff who remains hospitalized with flu symptoms, also agreed that it would be cost-prohibitive to move the criminal justice system — courts, jails, attorneys and clerks — out of downtown.

It would cost about \$150 million more to build a new jail and move the county's criminal courts to a location near Interstate 35W and North Loop 820 than it would to demolish a county-owned building in the 300 block of West Belknap Street and construct a 10-story building for jail cells, a medical infirmary and administrative offices for the Sheriff's Department.

Commissioner Glen Whitley said this month that the county should consider moving the criminal justice system out of downtown to put county-owned land on the tax rolls. He said that unnamed developers would like to build on those locations.

"I wanted to say that we've looked at all of the alternatives," Whitley

More on JAIL on 6B



WHITLEY

Jail: Leaving downtown too costly, county says

CONTINUED FROM 1B

said Tuesday. "In the last bond election, we made decisions without anyone being in the audience to say 'boo' about what we were considering."

Local attorneys Tuesday urged commissioners to keep the criminal courts downtown for economic reasons and historical considerations.

Attorney Tim Evans, representing the Tarrant County Bar Association, said that criminal courts have existed in downtown Fort Worth for more than 120 years.

"The idea that the public's business and criminal justice system should be at some out-of-the-way warehouse district

is wrong," he said. "It should be in an area where the criminal justice system is transparent to the public, where the public's business is done."

Commissioners have until February to complete the details for a proposed May bond election. The county is considering 120 transportation projects, submitted by Tarrant County cities, to share \$200 million of the bond package.

Commissioners were told this month that it would cost about \$122 million to build new facilities for the medical examiner, a civil courts building and to expand juvenile services.

The final piece is building additional jail space to accom-

modate the county's growing jail population.

Sheriff Dee Anderson urged commissioners to reconsider building a new jail in the 600 block of West Belknap, where the Mueller Building is used for court records storage and is linked underground to the Correction Center and Justice Center.

To build a new jail in the 300 block of West Belknap Street, the city of Fort Worth would have to give up about 15,000-square-feet of space behind the Wyndham Building, where the city's Police Department is headquartered on the bottom four floors.

"We are trying so very hard

to hammer a square peg into a round hole," Anderson said, regarding the plans to build next to the Wyndham Building.

Construction on the Mueller site would require a building with about half as many floors as the proposed site at 300 West Belknap Street, he said.

But Commissioner J.D. Johnson said that the land would be more valuable as private development.

"Our intent was to build the next high-rise jail on that block," he said. "But things have changed."

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City considers using county jail

■ City and county officials must decide by January whether detention facilities can be shared.

By ANNA M. TINSLEY
and ANTHONY SPANGLER
STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITERS

FORT WORTH — City and county leaders are negotiating a deal to send Fort Worth prisoners back to the Tarrant County Jail, possibly when the city's contract to send prisoners to

Mansfield expires next year.

Negotiations have been kept fairly quiet, but officials say a decision should be made in January to give the county time to adjust plans for a new jail.

"It made sense before and it makes sense now to have a joint operation," Fort Worth Mayor

Mike Moncrief said Wednesday.

Moncrief, Mayor Pro Tem Chuck Silcox, Tarrant County Commissioners J.D. Johnson and Glen Whitley, and various city and county staff members met Wednesday afternoon in the latest of several meetings to discuss the possibility of a joint venture.

Officials say they are exam-

ining costs of a contract between the city and county for housing city prisoners.

Moncrief said a key part of the discussions is where the county would build a new jail.

The issue has not yet gone before the City Council or Commissioners Court for consideration.

The county needs a decision from the city by Jan. 15 in order

to accommodate its plans for a new jail, which is expected to be included in a bond package that could go before voters in May, officials said.

If Fort Worth decides to house its inmates in the county jail, then the plans for a new jail would include a larger booking area.

"We are offering our friends and neighbors a chance to come back if the figures work out," Johnson said Wednesday after the latest negotiations.

Certain costs are higher at county jails because the facilities must adhere to Texas jail standards.

City jails are not subject to the guidelines and can cut some costs, such as guard-to-inmate ratios.

Fort Worth sent its prisoners to the Tarrant County Jail from 1985 to 2001, until officials signed a five-year, \$16 mil-

lion contract with Mansfield that ends in September.

City and county officials had been unable to agree on terms of a renewal contract with the county, and city officials at the time told the *Star-Telegram* that the switch to Mansfield should save money.

Those cost savings have not materialized, city officials said.

"We wanted to come up with a cheap plan for jail space," Silcox said. "Instead of saving us money, it looks like it's costing us money."

This year's city budget in-

cluded \$161,370 for rising jail contract costs with Mansfield, and last year's budget included an additional \$113,480, city budget documents showed.

City officials say shipping prisoners to Mansfield takes additional staff time and money, and can increase security risks.

"It's about 27 miles away," Silcox said.

"Look at the time it takes to drive. ... But it's not just about money.

"We need a better setup than what we've got."

City officials say they must decide whether to renew the Mansfield contract in the next two months.

"The city is genuinely interested in trying to see if we can get together with the county," Moncrief said.

"There's a different council, a different court and a different city manager. It's a different time now."

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Jail: Whitley's plan would not move civil courts

CONTINUED FROM 1B

County officials will develop cost estimates for the latest plan in about two weeks.

Commissioners have until early February to work out details for a proposed May bond election. The county is also considering 120 transportation projects, submitted by Tarrant County cities, to share \$200 million of the bond package.



WHITLEY

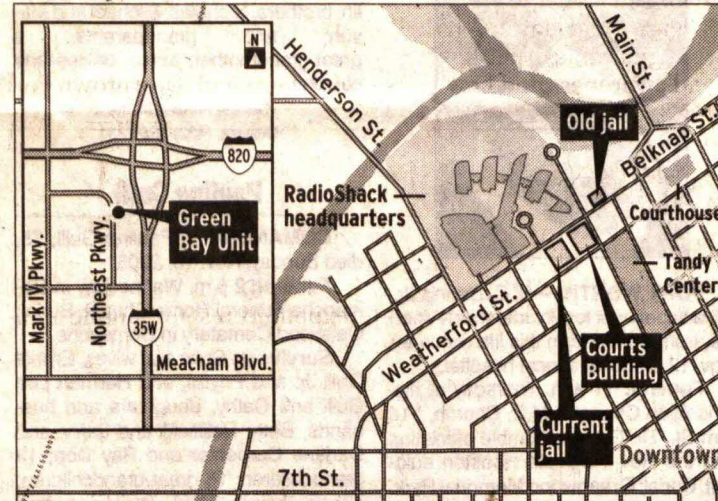
Earlier this month, commissioners were told it would cost about \$122

million to build new facilities for the medical examiner, a civil courts building and to expand juvenile services.

Whitley's plan would leave civil courts in the Justice Center in the 400 block of West Belknap Street — eliminating the need for a new civil courts building — and move 20 state and county criminal courts to the Green Bay site at Interstate 35W and North Loop 820. The Green Bay jail would be expanded to house maximum-security prisoners.

It would cost about \$40 million less to build maximum-security cells near the Green Bay site than to renovate the Corrections Center downtown in

Jail options



STAR-TELEGRAM/DEWUAN X. DAVIS

the 500 block of West Belknap or build a new jail in the 300 block of West Belknap.

Last week, Sheriff Dee Anderson said he would oppose construction of maximum-security cells anywhere other than downtown, citing the cost and security risks of transporting inmates to and from court appearances and to medical services. Whitley's proposal would eliminate the need to transport high-risk inmates.

"I don't know what all [Whitley] is proposing," Anderson said Tuesday. "But it seems like a very expensive solution, moving the entire court system, as opposed to building

432 maximum-security beds downtown."

District Judge Sharen Wilson said the county's state and county judges have not been involved in the discussions regarding moving the courts.

"The one person in all of this who has the most training for security issues is the sheriff," she said. "Maybe we ought to listen to the person with the training and where best to put a jail."

Downtown business leaders oppose building more jails in the heart of Fort Worth.

"We respectfully disagree with the sheriff," said Andy Taft, president of Downtown Fort Worth Inc. "Jails are not

the highest and best use of land in downtown. But it also would be quite a blow to the economic base of downtown business if we lost all of the attorneys, paralegals and jurors associated with the courts."

Whitley argued that new Tarrant County College facilities near the Trinity River could bring enough people to offset the loss of people associated with the criminal courts.

Criminal defense attorney Francisco Hernandez, who owns an office near the Tarrant County Corrections Center, said splitting the location of criminal and civil courts would be costly for lawyers who practice in both fields.

"It would make it difficult to schedule criminal and civil hearings when you have to drive that kind of distance," he said. "I think they are taking a few steps back to take one step forward."

Whitley contends the development along the Trinity River could make land owned by the county more valuable in the future.


"What if moving everything ate up the whole \$40 million in savings? We are still at a point where downtown is better off from the standpoint that we've put valuable land back on the tax rolls," Whitley said.

Anthony Spangler, (817) 390-7420
aspangler@star-telegram.com

Thursday, December 8, 2005 |

Harold Rogers



 **FORT WORTH** — Harold Rogers, 69, a constable for Tarrant County Precinct 8, quietly answered the Master's call Friday, Dec. 2, 2005, at his residence.

Funeral: 1 p.m. Saturday, Pilgrim Valley Missionary Baptist Church, 4800 S. Riverside Dr., the Rev. W.G. Daniels, host pastor, and the Rev. P.C. Ray officiating. Burial: Dallas-Fort Worth National Cemetery. Visitation: Noon to 6:30 p.m. Friday, with the family greeting friends 7 to 8 p.m., at the funeral home.

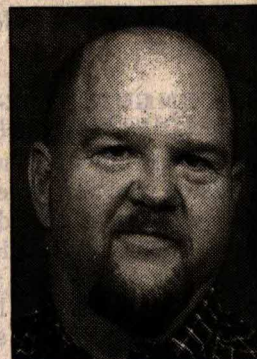
Harold was a former member of the Tarrant County Sheriff's office for 12 years and a member of New Dawn Ministries, Black Sheriff Auxiliary, Park Rangers (FWPD) and the Fort Worth Independent School District Safety Officers.

Survivors: Loving wife, Jamesie Rogers; children, Harold Rogers III (Charlotte) and Kathy Holmes; brother, George Rogers (Joan); five grandchildren; three great-grandchildren; godchildren, Travis Waggoner, John Thompson and numerous others; special nephew, Woodrow McGrew Sr.; special nieces, Nell Ray, Janice Nicholson and Pat Conley; a host of other relatives; and the Tarrant County Precinct 8 constables.

Gregory W. Spencer Funeral Directors
4000 Miller Ave., (817) 531-8666
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| Friday, January 6, 2006

Odís Gene Mantooth



SPRINGTOWN — Odís Gene Mantooth, 51, passed away Wednesday, Jan. 4, 2006, in Springtown.

Funeral: 10 a.m. Saturday at White's Funeral Home Chapel. Burial: Springtown Cemetery. Visitation: 7 to 9 p.m. Friday at White's Funeral Home.

Memorials: In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Agnes Baptist Church.

Odís Mantooth was born Oct. 5, 1954, in Paducah, to Troy and Mattie Ashley Mantooth. He retired from Tarrant County Sheriff's Dept. Odís enjoyed hunting and fishing. He was a member of Agnes Baptist Church and Parker County Sportsman's Club. He was preceded in death by his father.

Survivors: Wife, Rebecca Mantooth; mother, Mattie Ashley Mantooth of Springtown; children, Terry Mantooth and wife, Chastity, of Roanoke, Crystal Chancellor and husband, Michael, of Weatherford; grandchildren, Desirae, Kamrin, and Paysie Mantooth, and Jayden Chancellor; mother-in-law, Carrie Walls; sister-in-law, Sheila Espinoza and husband, Leo; brothers and sisters, Jana Hicks and husband, Keith; David Mantooth and wife, Tina, Mariena Dvorak and husband, Vic; aunts and uncles, Theo and Shirley Hairston and Drew and Naomi Singleton; and numerous nieces and nephews.

White's Funeral Home
Springtown, (817) 220-7111
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TARRANT COUNTY

Two options for new jail would cost the same

■ Commissioners are expected to get full details of the choices, each priced at \$113 million, next week.

By ANTHONY SPANGLER
STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

Cost may no longer be an issue for Tarrant County commissioners in their decision on where to put a new county jail, according to preliminary figures released Tuesday before the Tarrant County Commissioners Court.

For \$113 million, the county could build a seven-story jail a block west of the Corrections Center in downtown Fort Worth or a 10-story jail adjacent to the Thomas R. Windham Building.

County officials are expected to present to commissioners next week full details of the two options, both of which would add 432 maximum-security beds, infirmary space, administrative offices and a booking area. The county is also negotiating with Fort Worth to bring city inmates back into a combined

More on JAIL on 8B

Jail: Location will now be 'a political decision'

CONTINUED FROM 1B jail.

"We haven't included the cost of land needed from Fort Worth to build on the 300 West Belknap location, but otherwise the costs are relatively the same," David Phillips, Tarrant County's facilities manager, said Tuesday after the weekly meeting of the Commissioners Court.

Commissioners continue to debate where to put the new jail as part of the county's largest-ever bond package, which could go before voters in May. The county has discussed the bond package for about two years, with the costs growing to an estimated \$435 million.

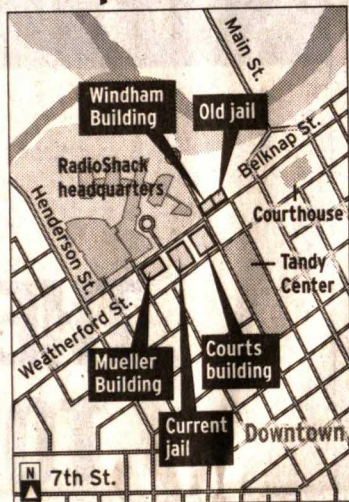
The bond money would also be used to construct a new civil-courts building, fund about 120 transportation projects and expand the Medical Examiner's Office and juvenile services.

The location of the jail has been hotly contested, with proposals ranging from building in the block just west of the Corrections Center to moving the county's entire criminal-justice system to north Fort Worth. Cost has been central to the debate.

"Now it's going to be a political decision," said Commissioner Roy C. Brooks, whose Precinct 1 encompasses downtown.

Commissioner J.D. Johnson

Jail options



STAR-TELEGRAM

has opposed building a jail on land occupied by the Mueller Building, which is used to store court records.

Sheriff Dee Anderson has favored building on the Mueller site. He has said he would oppose any proposal to construct maximum-security jail cells away from the downtown courts, which would require dangerous inmates to be transported through residential areas.

"My feelings haven't changed on that issue," he said Tuesday.

Precinct 2 Commissioner Marti VanRavenswaay said she favors a new jail in downtown

IN THE KNOW

Tarrant County's proposed bond package

- 120 transportation projects: \$200 million
- New maximum-security jail: \$113 million
- New civil-courts building: \$59.7 million
- Expanded juvenile services: \$36.3 million
- New medical-examiner facilities: \$26.5 million

SOURCE: Tarrant County

Fort Worth.

"We have to see which property, Mueller or Belknap, could be put up for sale and bring in the most money and generate the most money on the tax rolls," she said.

Commissioners have pledged to set aside \$200 million of the bond package for 120 transportation projects. They would also set aside a portion for mass transit.

Also Tuesday, the Fort Worth Transportation Authority asked commissioners for \$20 million to help build a new passenger rail line from southwest Fort Worth through the mid-cities to Dallas-Fort Worth Airport. The project would be contingent on future federal funding, state money and wide-ranging support

from cities countywide.

"Obviously something more needs to be done to alleviate traffic congestion than just road improvements," said Dick Ruddell, president of the agency. "It's going to take a good mix of solutions."

Commissioners also voted to extend a countywide burn ban through Feb. 8 but allowed limited exceptions for welding.

Representatives of Bridgeport-based Devon Gas Services, a gas-and-oil company, asked commissioners to grant exceptions for welding in enclosed spaces and repairing equipment and lines.

"There are minimal risks of sparks getting out," said Richard Luedecke, a regional manager for Devon.

Commissioners let Tarrant County Fire Marshal Randy Renoir approve emergency welding repairs on a case-by-case basis.

However, the court will consider next week whether to grant exceptions for outdoor welding.

"We have been fortunate that we haven't lost much property over the weekend," Renoir said. "But we really need the public's help. I think everyone is more and more aware each day of the dangers."

Anthony Spangler, (817) 390-7420
aspangler@star-telegram.com

County: Mueller Building may be sold

DOWNTOWN JAIL

Officials prefer Belknap for jail

■ Construction of a downtown jail near the criminal courts building appears to have the support of a majority of commissioners.

By **ANTHONY SPANGLER**
STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

A majority of Tarrant County commissioners is poised to build a maximum-security jail at 300 W. Belknap St., one of two sites that would keep high-risk prisoners near the downtown courts.

Three commissioners — Roy C. Brooks, J.D. Johnson and Marti VanRavenswaay — told the *Star-Telegram* that they prefer the Belknap site to the nearby Mueller Building in the 600 block of Weatherford Street.

Commissioner Glen Whitley said he favors the Mueller Building recommended by Sheriff Dee Anderson. County Judge Tom Vandergriff said he is undecided.

The five-member Commissioners Court has debated for months over where to put a new jail, which would be included in a \$435 million bond package expected to go before voters in May. Commissioners have indicated that the bond package also would include \$200 million for transportation projects, \$59.7 million for a new civil courts building,

More on COUNTY on 16B

CONTINUED FROM 1B

\$36.3 million to expand juvenile services and \$26.5 million to build medical examiner facilities.

Commissioners have not voted on the final projects or costs that will go before voters.

Anderson had vowed to oppose a plan to build the jail away from downtown, saying it would require transporting high-risk inmates to and from court appearances downtown.

He said he could support the Belknap site.

"It would be more convenient for us to use the Mueller site," he said. "Belknap was my second choice."

Commissioners have said they would like to sell whichever site they do not choose for commercial development. Preliminary figures show the Mueller Building, which is used for records storage, is worth about \$2 million. The land at 300 W. Belknap is worth \$1.3 million to \$1.5 million, facilities manager David Phillips said Tuesday.

The jail debate has centered on the cost of each option. The construction cost would be about \$113 million for either the Belknap or Mueller site. But that figure does not include \$10 million necessary to relocate the county's records storage

from the Mueller Building or the purchase of land from Fort Worth that would be needed to build on the Belknap site. The Belknap site would also require moving the sheriff's offices and other county staff to a temporary location during construction.

But commissioners say that if the Belknap site is chosen, they would want to sell the Mueller Building, meaning county records storage would have to be moved anyway.

The Belknap building, which is next to the Fort Worth Police Department headquarters in the Thomas R. Windham Building, formerly had jail space and now houses the sheriff's office, two auxiliary courtrooms and other county staff.

"I don't want to go any further west to construct new

Jail options



STAR-TELEGRAM

county buildings," said VanRavenswaay, Precinct 2 commissioner. "If we can stay within the boundaries of where we already are in downtown Fort Worth, it would be best for everyone."

Anthony Spangler, (817) 390-7420
aspangler@star-telegram.com

Wednesday, January 18, 2006

James E. Wright



ARLINGTON — James E. Wright, 85, a retired district judge, died Saturday, Jan. 21, 2006.

Funeral: 2 p.m. Wednesday at First United Methodist Church, Fort Worth. The Rev. Dr. Lamar Smith will officiate. Interment: Watson Cemetery, Arlington. Visitation: 6 to 8 p.m. Tuesday at Arlington Funeral Home.

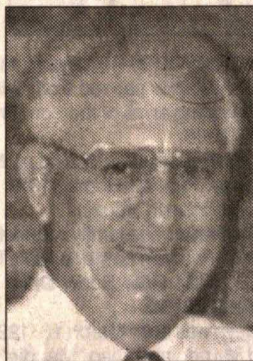
Pallbearers will be Jean De Bullet, Jeff Eaton, Walt Kerr, Bud Leddingham, Robert Lee, Lewis Marchbanks, Danny Page and David Stewart. Honorary pallbearers will be Bill Blackmon, Dennis Dellis, Tom Foster, Barry Hasten, C.M. "Hank" Hudspeth and Bill Northern, and all members of Shrine Patrol.

Memorials: The memory of James E. Wright may be honored with a donation to the Scottish Rite Children's Hospital, 2222 Wellborn, Dallas, Texas 75218, (214) 559-5000; American Heart Association, 2401 Scott, Fort Worth, Texas 76103, (817) 315-5000; or a charity of choice.

James E. Wright was born Jan. 15, 1921, in Arlington. He was the only child of James Robert Wright, former Tarrant County sheriff and U.S. marshal for the Northern District of Texas, and Clairette Smith Wright. He was also the nephew of C.H. "Punch" Wright, former Tarrant County commissioner. He graduated from Arlington High School in 1937 and attended North Texas Agricultural College 1937-1940, now UTA, where he was active in ROTC and band. He served with the Army Air Corps during World War II as a glider pilot. Upon his return, he entered the University of Texas Law School and graduated with a doctor of jurisprudence in January 1949. He was a member of Phi Alpha Delta legal fraternity. He served as Arlington city attorney from 1951 to 1961 and was a trial lawyer in Fort Worth from 1949 until 1969. In 1970, he was appointed district judge of the 141st District Court, where he served until 1989. He was a member of the Fort Worth-Tarrant County Bar Association and

Sunday, January 29, 2006.

Don Miller



 **WEATHERFORD** — Don Miller, 67, died Thursday, Jan. 26, 2006, at a local hospital.

Funeral: 10 a.m. Thursday at White's Chapel of Memories in Weatherford. Burial: 1 p.m. in the Dallas-Fort Worth National Cemetery. Visitation: 6 to 8 p.m. Wednesday at White's Funeral Home in Weatherford.

Donald Gene Miller was born Oct. 8, 1938, Picher, Okla., to George and Louise Cole Miller.

Proudly serving his country, Mr. Miller retired from the United States Air Force.

He worked for the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department and was a member of the C.L.E.A.T. Law Enforcement organization.

Mr. Miller was preceded in death by his parents.

Survivors: Mr. Miller is survived by his wife, Jerre Cox Miller of Weatherford; daughter, Wendy Catherine; stepson, Jason Jeffery and companion, Cale Lowry; grandsons, Jarrod and Preston Jeffery; brother, William David Norman and wife, Jamie; uncle, Robert Cole and wife, Elsie; and numerous nieces, nephews and friends.

White's Funeral Home
Weatherford, (817) 596-4811
View and sign guestbook at
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TARRANT COUNTY JAIL

Inmates' health care complaints decrease

■ Sheriff's officials say medical care in the jail has improved since a consultant found dozens of deficiencies in 2004.

By **ANTHONY SPANGLER**
STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

Health care complaints from Tarrant County Jail inmates have declined 65 percent in the last year as county officials have hired more medical staff, improved record-keeping and purchased new equip-

ment.

The jail's medical service, provided by the JPS Health Network, was under fire last year after county commissioners hired North Carolina-based Insight Enterprises to study inmate health care.

Its report cited dozens of critical deficiencies, including that inmates were not getting required medications, were rarely seen by doctors and sometimes did not get treatment for weeks because of poor record-keeping.

The Sheriff's Department says

Jail: JPS has spent \$4.3 million to improve inmate health care

CONTINUED FROM 1B

that inmate care has improved since JPS — the county's taxpayer-supported hospital district — has spent an additional \$4.3 million on jail medical services.

Commissioners this week voted to bring the consultant back to re-examine the issue. Insight Enterprises will begin its new study next week.

"The hospital district has made tremendous strides in correcting things that needed correcting," Commissioner J.D. Johnson said. "We need an outside source to let us know if there are any new weak spots and if we've taken care of the earlier problems."

In fall 2004, the consultant reported that inmates were not receiving routine care, that requests to see medical staff were stuffed into filing cabinets, unread for weeks, and that medical records were "in a state of chaos."

Sheriff's officials complained that JPS was not responsive to their concerns

"[JPS] has made tremendous strides in correcting things that needed correcting."

— County Commissioner J.D. Johnson

about staffing shortages, broken equipment and inadequate prescription service.

"They've come so far, and we have some very attentive management in place that wasn't here before," said Terry Grisham, a Sheriff's Department spokesman.

Since the report, JPS has hired a full-time dentist, a medical director, an administrator and additional doctors. JPS also more than doubled its records staff and hired additional pharmacists.

The result is a dramatic decline in inmate complaints, records show. In January 2005, there were 400 complaints relating to medical care, compared with



STAR-TELEGRAM/TOM PENNINGTON

JPS physician assistant Lee Celiz treats a Tarrant County Jail inmate Wednesday. Inmate health care complaints are down 65 percent in the last year, officials say.

140 last month.

The most significant change, says JPS Chief Operating Officer Ron Stutes, is that more of the staff assigned to the jail has corrections experience.

"We have people who are happy to be in a correctional environment, and they want to make a difference," Stutes said. "I think we will fare very well [in the new study] because we implemented the recommendations of the consultant. We would be open to any suggestions for improvement."

Anthony Spangler, (817) 390-7420
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STAR-TELEGRAM/TOM PENNINGTON

JPS Health Network nurse Janet Hicks reviews paperwork Wednesday while treating a Tarrant County Jail inmate

Friday, February 10, 2006

Ken Benge



 **FORT WORTH** — Ken Benge, 73, a retired Tarrant County constable and former deputy sheriff, passed away Wednesday, Feb. 8, 2006, at his home.

Funeral: 11 a.m. Monday in Winscott Road Funeral Chapel, 1001 Winscott Road, Benbrook. Burial: 1 p.m. in Dallas-Fort Worth National Cemetery, Lane B, 2000 Mountain Creek Parkway, Dallas. Visitation: 6 to 8 p.m. Saturday. Ken Benge was born April 14, 1932,

in Coleman, Okla. He served his country in the Army from January 1951 until January 1954 and in the Air Force from September 1954 until his retirement in 1971. He retired from the Tarrant County Constable's Office in January 1993 after many years. Ken was preceded in death by his parents, Bill and Mae Hickman Benge, and brothers, Harlan and Louie Benge.

Survivors: Wife, Judy Benge; children, Monte Lynn Benge and wife, Linda, of Amarillo, Valley Dawn Benge Ferrell and husband, Gary, of Denison and David Benge of Flower Mound; stepchildren, Jeff Fagan and wife, Jackie, of Mansfield, Candice Fagan of Irving and Richard Fagan and wife, Joscelyn, of Irving; grandchildren, Dodd Benge, Kade Benge, Kyle Ogilby, Jared Ogilby, Jonathon Mackay and James Benge; stepgrandson, Camden Fagan; step-great-granddaughter, BryAnna Ferrell; sister, Quinnia Yates; and many nieces and nephews.

Winscott Road Funeral Home
Benbrook, (817) 249-1177
View and sign guestbook at
www.star-telegram.com/obituaries

JAIL

Inmate dies a day after he was arrested

■ Angelo Allums, 27, of Mansfield injured himself inside a holding cell, according to Fort Worth police.

By **TRACI SHURLEY**
STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

A 27-year-old Mansfield man died Saturday after being transferred to a hospital from the Fort Worth jail Friday night, according to information from the Tarrant County Medical Examiner's Office and jail officials.

Angelo Allums was arrested Friday afternoon by Fort Worth police on suspicion of a drug offense and spent about six hours at the facility at 350 W. Belknap St., jail Lt. Arthur Barclay said Sunday. Records show that Allums was transferred to John Peter Smith Hospital at 8:50 p.m., Barclay said. He said the records do not show the nature of his medical problem.

Fort Worth police and Allums' family differed Sunday on what they believe caused his death, with police saying Allums harmed himself.

Allums' mother, Janet Allums, said her son called another family member Friday afternoon complaining that he had been choked by police, could not breathe and was being denied medical attention. Allums said she then received a call early Saturday from an intensive care nurse at John Peter Smith, informing her that her son had been admitted to the hospital with a head injury. Jail officials told the hospital he had banged his head against something and injured himself, Janet Allums said.

"I do not believe he banged his head," she said.

Inmate: Police investigating death

Police Department spokesman Lt. Dean Sullivan said records show that Allums injured himself inside a holding cell at the jail. Sullivan said he did not know the nature of the injury.

He said police are investigating and are waiting to hear from the medical examiner about the cause of Allums' death.

The medical examiner's

Web site said Allums died in the hospital's intensive care unit at 4:17 p.m. Saturday. An autopsy had not been completed Sunday evening, and no cause of death was listed on the Web site.

Allums had been arrested several times. He pleaded guilty to misdemeanor charges of cruelty to an animal in 1997 after police accused him and another teen-ager of setting a puppy on fire in December 1996, according to court records and *Star-Telegram* archives.

Traci Shurley, (817) 390-7757
tshurley@star-telegram.com

Head injury killed Fort Worth prisoner

FORT WORTH - A Fort Worth Jail prisoner who died Saturday was killed by blunt-force head injury, the Tarrant County Medical Examiner ruled Monday. Angelo Allums, 27, of Mansfield, who was arrested Friday on suspicion of a drug offense, died Saturday at John Peter Smith Hospital. Allums' family said that jail officials told hospital personnel that Allums hit his head against something. Jail records indicate that Allums injured himself inside a holding cell, said Lt. Dean Sullivan, a Fort Worth police spokesman. Allums' family said Allums called a relative on Friday, saying he had been choked by police and was having trouble breathing. On Monday, Sullivan said that the investigation into Allums' death was not complete. The medical examiner has not yet ruled on the manner of death.

- Alex Branch

■ Officials believe Christopher Chubasco Wilkins was going to try to escape during a meeting with a detective.

TARRANT COUNTY JAIL

Key-swallowing inmate to get new restraints

STAR-TELEGRAM

FORT WORTH — Christopher Chubasco Wilkins has been in the Tarrant County Jail since November, accused in the killings of three men.

Law enforcement officials say he was planning to escape.

Last week, sheriff's deputies discovered that Wilkins had swallowed a handcuff key and was concealing a handmade knife.

A letter in Wilkins' cell touted his white-supremacist background and suggested that he would kill again, Fort Worth police Sgt. J.D. Thornton said.

Because of the discovery, the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department purchased high-security restraints.

"We didn't want to push conventional handcuffs on him again," department spokesman Terry Grisham said.

Wilkins is awaiting trial on murder and capital murder charges in the deaths of Gilbert Vallejo, Mike Silva and Willie Freeman.

By DEANNA BOYD

STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

FORT WORTH — Special restraints have been purchased for a jail inmate accused of killing three men after sheriff's deputies discovered he had swallowed a handcuff key and was concealing a handmade knife in preparation for an apparent escape.

A search of Christopher Chubasco Wilkins' cell last week also uncovered a one-page handwritten letter that included white supremacy phrases and centered on Wilkins' belief that he would soon be out of jail, homicide Sgt. J.D. Thornton said.

"It doesn't specify by what means, but once out, according to the letter, he planned on killing more people," Thornton said. "The contents of the letter confirmed our original thinking that he is a violent individual who will kill at random and that race probably was a factor in the killings for which he's in jail."

Wilkins has been in the Tarrant County Jail since November, awaiting trial on murder and capital murder charges in the deaths of Gilbert Vallejo, Mike Silva and Willie Freeman.

Vallejo was fatally shot Oct. 26 as he walked out of the Lady Luck Lounge at 426 S. Jennings Ave. Two days later, police found the bodies of Silva and Freeman in a ditch near the 9500 block of Old Weatherford Road.

Vallejo and Silva were Hispanic. Freeman was black.

Assistant District Attorney Tiffany Burks said Tuesday that prosecutors intend to seek the death penalty.

She said the office is still gathering information to determine whether more charges will be sought.

Wilkins' attorney, Wes Ball, said he had heard of the latest accusation against his client from a detective but had not read any reports on the incident.

"I'm going to have to look at the official documentation of this to see whether these claims have merit," Ball said.

Since his incarceration,

Wilkins has told Fort Worth homicide investigators that he committed about a dozen other slayings in at least five states, including Texas. So far, checks with those jurisdictions and a two-day excavation last month of the backyard of a New Mexico home where one of Wilkins' victims was supposedly buried have not resulted in anything to corroborate his claims.

The knife and handcuff key were discovered by jailers Feb. 22, one day before Wilkins had planned to meet with homicide Detective Cheryl Johnson.

"Because of his classification as assaultive and high-risk, he is routinely searched and his property is routinely



WILKINS

COUNTY JAIL

Tarrant inmate swallowed key, concealed knife

searched ... at different times of the day and night," said Terry Grisham, spokesman with the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department.

During the search, deputies saw Wilkins place something in his mouth, which Wilkins said was a razor blade, Grisham said.

"We took him to medical and X-rayed him. It was very clearly a handcuff key, which is a tremendous security risk," Grisham said.

Grisham said it is not known how Wilkins got the key, which was recovered Monday.

Grisham said that deputies also recovered some type of plastic material that Wilkins appeared to have tried unsuccessfully to fashion into a key as well.

Officials believe Wilkins was going to try to escape during his meeting with Johnson. Johnson said that the letter recovered by deputies was addressed to her and was intended to have been found after his escape.

Johnson said the letter and other items did not surprise her because Wilkins' criminal history includes other escapes, including leaving a halfway house in Houston.

"We expected that every time we took him out because he has such a history of escape," she said.

Deanna Boyd, (817) 390-7655
dboyd@star-telegram.com



FORT WORTH — Joseph William Laskowski, 66, a retired deputy sheriff, passed away Thursday, March 23, 2006, in Fort Worth.

Funeral: 10 a.m. Friday, March 31, at St. Peter's Catholic Church in White Settlement. **Burial:** 11 a.m. Monday, April 3, in Dallas-Fort Worth National Cemetery. **Rosary:** 7 p.m. Thursday at the church.

Memorials: In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to the American Heart Association.

Mr. Laskowski retired from the U.S. Air Force and from the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department. He was also an active member of the Masons.

Survivors: Wife, Judy Laskowski of Fort Worth; sons, Richard Laskowski of Fort Worth and Brian Laskowski and wife, Leigh Ann, of Weatherford; daughter, Danielle Tanner and husband, Beau, of Keller; sister, Theresa Lynch and husband, Tom, of California; and four grandchildren.

Baumgardner Funeral Home
3704 Hwy. 377 S., (817) 731-8400
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JOE LASKOWSKI | 1939-2006

Man was dedicated to career in law enforcement

■ Mr. Laskowski was a Tarrant County sheriff's deputy and grew up wanting to be a cop.

By **BILL TEETER**
STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

Joe Laskowski's favorite job was picking up and driving wanted criminals from across the country back to Fort Worth after they had been captured in other states.

Mr. Laskowski was a Tarrant County sheriff's deputy, and the way he saw it, he was carrying on a Texas tradition, said his wife, Judy Laskowski.



LASKOWSKI

"Texas has a reputation that we go after the people that are wanted," she said.

Mr. Laskowski, 66, of White Settlement, died March 23 from heart complications following a six-week bout of the flu, his wife said.

Mr. Laskowski was born in Rochester, N.Y., where he completed high school and met and married Judy Laskowski. In 1962, he joined the U.S. Air Force hoping to become a mili-

tary police officer, but his high test score prompted the Air Force to send him into the medical field. He was trained in radiology and eventually became a radiology instructor.

In the Air Force, Mr. Laskowski was assigned to several posts in the United States and one in Thailand until he ended up at Carswell Air Force Base in March 1972, she said.

Mr. Laskowski started with the Sheriff's Department as a reserve deputy 32 years ago, working nights and weekends doing the same work as paid officers, Judy Laskowski said. In 1982, he retired from the Air Force as a master sergeant and worked for City Center Security until 1988, when he became a full-time paid deputy, said Danielle Tanner, Mr. Laskowski's daughter.

Services

Mr. Laskowski's funeral will be 10 a.m. today at St. Peter's Catholic Church in White Settlement. Burial will be 11 a.m. at Dallas/Fort Worth National Cemetery. The family asks that in lieu of flowers, memorials be sent to the American Heart Association.

Tanner said Mr. Laskowski was also a 33rd-degree Scottish Rite Mason and active in the Moslah Shrine Temple in Fort Worth. He was a member of St. Peter's Catholic Church in White Settlement and enjoyed fishing, polka music and spending time with his family, Tanner said.

Mr. Laskowski is also survived by sons Richard Laskowski of Fort Worth and Brian Laskowski of Weatherford; son-in-law Beau Tanner of Keller; sister Theresa Lynch of California; and four grandchildren.

Bill Teeter, (817) 695-3801
bteeter@star-telegram.com

Fort Worth Star-Telegram
Friday, March 30, 2006

**Darlene Sharon Kilough
Dominy South**



FORT WORTH — Darlene Sharon Kilough Dominy South, 62, a loving Nana, passed away Thursday, March 30, 2006, in Amarillo.

Memorial service: 2 p.m. Wednesday at Sanders Funeral Home, 8525 Mid-Cities Blvd. Visitation: The family will receive friends following the service.

Darlene was a native Texan who proudly served as a deputy sheriff for 21 years with the Tarrant County Sheriff's Office.

She loved to travel and to see new places.

Her parents, John and Dorcas Kilough, and her brothers, Jim and Tom Kilough, preceded her in death.

Survivors: Children, Sharon Donnell Ford and her husband, Russell, Debbie Hutsell and her husband, Bill and Jason Dominy and his wife, Karen; grandchildren, Spencer and Alex Ford, Michael and Kevin Hutsell and Sydney Dominy; sister, Dottie Cain and family; brothers, Bob and Johnny Kilough and family; sister-in-law, June Kilough and family; many loving friends.

Sanders Funeral Home
North Richland Hills, (817) 581-0777
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CIVIL RIGHTS

Former jailer, 58, indicted

■ A grand jury returns two indictments accusing a former Tarrant County jailer of having improper sexual activity with two female inmates.

By MELODY McDONALD
STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

FORT WORTH — A 58-year-old former Tarrant County jailer has been indicted on charges that he fondled two female inmates last year after cornering them in a storage room.

Donald Wayne Woodall — whom officials fired in November after five years with the Sheriff's Department — was indicted last week on two charges of civil rights violations by having improper sexual activity with a person in custody. Each charge is punishable by a maximum of two years in a state jail facility and a fine of up to \$10,000.



WOODALL

Terry Grisham, a spokesman for the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department, called the allegations "serious."

"We take a dim view of any officer who would misuse their position of authority to deprive an inmate of their civil rights," Grisham said.

Woodall is free on \$5,000 bail. His attorney, Paul Snell, said through a spokeswoman in his office Monday that he did not wish to comment at this time. Woodall did not return a message left at his home.

According to an arrest warrant affidavit, two female inmate trustees — one age 29, the other 40 — accused Woodall of inappropriately touching them in the first few days of September 2005 while they were assigned to work in the officers' dining room.

The 29-year-old woman said that on Sept. 5, Woodall followed her to a supply room as she went to get a hairnet and, as she was turning to leave, he stood in her way and touched her breasts, the affidavit stated. The woman said that she pushed around him and walked out.

Later that day, the woman reported the incident and told investigators that the week before, Woodall asked her whether they were having "a wet T-shirt contest." When she replied "no," the woman said Woodall told her "he wouldn't mind," the affidavit stated.

The woman said his comment shocked her and that she told the other trustees about it.

The 40-year-old inmate, who filed a

complaint against Woodall the same day as the other inmate, reported being in the storage room on Sept. 2, 2005, when he entered and asked whether anything was missing.

The woman said she told him "no" and got a broom and dustpan. As she tried to leave, the woman said, Woodall made a comment about her wet uniform and said it looked like they had a "wet T-shirt contest."

Later, when the woman returned the broom and dustpan to the storage room, Woodall followed her and blocked her path to leave. She reported that he touched her breasts through her uniform, then lifted her uniform and began touching her breasts, the affidavit said.

At one point, when the woman pulled her shirt down and tried to leave, Woodall grabbed her right hand and placed it on his groin area outside of his pants, the affidavit stated. Woodall then pushed his other hand inside her pants, the affidavit stated.

On Sept. 5, officials sent Woodall home after both inmates filed official complaints. During an interview with the investigating officer on Sept. 16, Woodall denied inappropriately touching either woman's breasts.

When officials showed him their photographs, Woodall said he recognized the women but did not remember their names and denied having conversations with them, other than to ask them questions about supplies.

Grisham said officials placed Woodall on paid administrative leave that day while they continued to investigate.

About a week later, Woodall changed his story.

He told a polygraph examiner that the 40-year-old woman lifted up her shirt and exposed her breasts to him, asking whether he wanted to see them, the affidavit stated. Woodall said he pulled her shirt down and gave her a stern warning not to ever do it again, the affidavit said.

Woodall stated that his hand might have brushed her breast as he pulled her shirt down, but no sexual touching occurred, the affidavit stated.

On Sept. 27, Woodall added to the story, saying the inmate pulled out the waistband of her pants, asking him whether he was interested in "this." He acknowledged putting his hand on her genitals, the affidavit said.

Woodall denied any contact with the 29-year-old inmate, the affidavit stated.

On Nov. 21, Sheriff's Department officials fired Woodall.

TARRANT COUNTY

Inmate care is much better

■ Grievances by jail inmates regarding medical care are half of what they were a year ago.

By ANTHONY SPANGLER
STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

Medical care at the Tarrant County Jail has improved dramatically in the past year, according to a study of jail healthcare released Tuesday.

Inmate requests for medical attention that formerly piled up for weeks now are screened within 24 hours, sometimes resulting in immediate attention.

The JPS Health Network, the county's taxpayer-supported hospital district, has assigned more medical staff to the jail, resulting in better record-keeping, and has reduced the amount of time inmates wait to see a doctor or dentist.

"We have a registered nurse reviewing [inmate medical requests] every day, making decisions that sometimes get inmates to a doctor within 24 hours," said Dr. Alan Byrd, JPS' jail medical director. "That's better than some people get in the free world."

As a result of increased staffing, better records management and improved pharmaceutical services, health-care complaints from Tarrant County inmates have declined more than 50 percent in the past year, according to the study by North Carolina-based Correctional Health Care Consulting.

The study is a follow-up to a 2004 evaluation that lambasted the jail's medical care, concluding that inmate medical records were "in a state of chaos" and that treatment was unreliable for the sickest inmates.

Sheriff Dee Anderson said JPS now seems committed to providing adequate medical care. The jail recently passed a state standards inspection, which includes inmate healthcare.

"I can sleep at night now knowing that they are getting the medical care they need," Anderson said. "The staffing and quality of people working in jail medical has made all the difference. The doctors, nurses and other medical staff really want to work there."

But the recent jail study states that male and female inmates should be separated in the infirmary, as required by state law.

As it is, male and female inmates are not separate in the waiting area.

"Although this arrangement has been in place since the facility opened, the county must take the need for more separation into consideration when designing any new jail facilities in the future," the report states.

County officials are hoping that voters approve a \$433 million bond package that includes about \$108 million for a new jail, which would include a new medical infirmary that would allow for the complete separation of male and female inmates. The present jail system also has inadequate space for medical records, the jail study states.

County commissioners said they are pleased with the progress in inmate medical care.

"It took a lot of additional money and a lot of management changes, but everyone is working together to make significant improvements," said Commissioner J.D. Johnson. "I'll keep my eye on the jail medical situation as long as I'm here."

Anthony Spangler, (817) 390-7420
aspangler@star-telegram.com

Helen Askew Lenear



FORT WORTH — Helen Askew Lenear, 63, a correctional officer for the Tarrant County Jail, passed away Sunday, May 7, 2006 at her home.

Funeral: 1 p.m. Saturday in the Pauline Minor Memorial Chapel at Gregory W. Spencer funeral home. Burial: Cedar Hill Memorial Park. You can visit Helen from noon to 8 p.m. Friday at the funeral home, with the family present from 7 to 8 p.m.

Survivors: husband, Willie Lenear; sons, Anthony Lenear (Alfretta) and Trevoyn Lenear (Eugenia); sister, Arwenda Oliver of Irvine, California; grandchildren, Trevoyn II, Terrence, D'Undria, Anthony and Andrea; and a host of family and friends.

Gregory W. Spencer Funeral Directors
4000 Miller Ave., (817) 531-8666

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Jail contract with Tarrant County unlikely

■ City officials will consider today whether to keep sending inmates to the Mansfield Jail.

By **ANTHONY SPANGLER**
STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

Tarrant County's negotiations to house Fort Worth prisoners in a combined jail have fallen apart, turning city officials' attention to extending their contract with Mansfield.

Fort Worth officials will discuss in a closed meeting of the City Council today whether to consider paying the higher costs of a city-county jail or continue sending their inmates to Mansfield. The city's five-year, \$16 million contract with Mansfield is set to expire in September.

County officials say that a deal could not be reached with Fort Worth and that a deal with Mansfield is imminent.

"I have to make sure that the council confirms that," said Joe Paniagua, Fort Worth assistant city manager, who has been involved in the jail negotiations with Tarrant County and Mansfield.

"I am going to outline the options to the council and see how they would like to move forward. The arrangement we have now is working the best that it can."

Fort Worth police have been pleased with the Mansfield jail contract, said Lee Jackson, Fort

Worth Police Association president.

"A couple years back when we first started, we had some trouble retrieving [booking] photographs, but that has all been worked out," he said.

Defense attorneys, however, say the distance to the Mansfield Jail creates difficulties in speaking with clients.

"It is definitely inconvenient," said Fort Worth lawyer Reagan Wynn, president of the Tarrant County Criminal Defense Lawyers Association. "I don't know the numbers, but the cost of court-appointed attorneys traveling back and forth to Mansfield is passed along to the taxpayers."

Mansfield has a 240-bed facility, just west of U.S. 287 near the Johnson County border, that houses Mansfield, Fort Worth and federal inmates. About 120 Fort Worth inmates are booked into the facility each day, Mansfield Police Chief Steve Noonkester said.

Fort Worth inmates who do not post bail are typically held less than 48 hours in Mansfield while police await prosecutors' decisions to file formal charges. Once the charges are accepted, those inmates are transferred to the Tarrant County Jail.

But Fort Worth officials began seeking a better deal after expected cost savings had not materialized in its deal with Mansfield. Fort Worth sent its

prisoners to the Tarrant County Jail from 1985 to 2001, until it contracted with Mansfield.

After months of negotiations, city and county officials have been unable to agree on terms to return inmates to a combined jail.

"It's unfortunate that we just could not make things work," said Tarrant County Commissioner J.D. Johnson, who has been involved in the jail talks.

"A combined jail would make more sense to the taxpayers in Tarrant County."

Anthony Spangler, (817) 390-7420
aspangler@star-telegram.com

Rekindled memories

As a history buff, I very much enjoyed David Casstevens' Tuesday story ("Fascination with Bonnie and Clyde keeps tiny Louisiana town on map").

But he should have given credit to the other five officers, along with Ted Hinton, who wrote *finis* to the story of these long-sought desperados. According to the May 24, 1934, issue of the *Bienville Democrat* (which I have), Sheriff Henderson Jordan headed this six-man posse, along with Deputy P.M. Oakley, also of Bienville Parish. They were supported by Frank Hamier of Austin, a former captain in the Texas Rangers; M.N. Gault of the Texas Highway Patrol; and Deputies Bob Alcorn and Ted Hinton of the Dallas County Sheriff's Department.

Casstevens wrote that Clyde Barrow was 25 and Bonnie Parker 23, contrary to the Louisiana paper published the day after the ambush. It said Barrow was 23 and Parker 26.

Nevertheless, the story rekindled memories of this saga that came to an end on the Ringgold Highway a few miles south of Gibsland, La.

Floyd F. Clark, Fort Worth

FORT WORTH

Tarrant deputy is shot at store

■ The off-duty officer was working security at the grocery on East Lancaster Avenue.

By **DEANNA BOYD**
and **MATT FRAZIER**
STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITERS

FORT WORTH — An off-duty Tarrant County sheriff's deputy was shot and injured Monday night outside an East Fort Worth grocery store, authorities said.

Fort Worth police officers called to the Carnival Food Store at 4620 E. Lancaster Ave. shortly after 10 p.m. arrived to find deputy Michael Beeson lying in the parking lot with two gunshot wounds, officials said.

Beeson had been shot in the hip and face by an unknown assailant who fled, said Sheriff Dee Anderson.

The deputy was taken to Harris Methodist Fort Worth hospital, where he was alert and was being questioned by Fort Worth police, said Tarrant County chief deputy Jay Six, who oversees the patrol division.

More on SHOOTING on 6A



STAR-TELEGRAM/JOYCE MARSHALL

Fort Worth police officers investigate the shooting of an off-duty sheriff's deputy at the Carnival Food Store on East Lancaster Avenue on Monday night.

Shooting: Deputy was wearing uniform when gunman approached

CONTINUED FROM 1A

Officials said they were "cautiously optimistic" about his survival.

A man who authorities believe is the suspect in the shooting arrived at Harris Methodist with a gunshot wound early today, said Sheriff's Department spokesman Terry Grisham.

Anderson said the deputy was sitting on a bench outside the store in full uniform talking to his wife on a cellphone about 10 p.m. A man walked up and pulled a gun on him.

"It seemed like maybe he was trying to rob him," Anderson said.

A struggle ensued and the man shot the deputy, authorities said. The deputy was able to return fire. The man fell, then got up and fled.

Fort Worth police launched an extensive manhunt for the shooter, described by witnesses as wearing a black shirt and green pants. Authorities established a search perimeter in the neighborhood south of the store, in the vicinity of Edgewood Terrace and Panola Avenue.

Upon hearing about the

Deputy shot



STAR-TELEGRAM

shooting, Anderson went directly to Harris Methodist, where the officer was being worked on in the trauma unit.

Beeson was described as a department veteran who works in courts and judicial services.

"Right now our only thoughts are with our deputy," Grisham said. "We will turn our attention to the perpetrator in due time."

"We pretty much know what happened," Anderson

said. "The huge question is why it happened, and we may never know the answer to that."

The incident marks the second shooting in three years of a Tarrant County sheriff's deputy.

In September 2003, deputy Mike Tatsch was shot while attempting to arrest a man on a drug warrant. Tatsch, a 10-year veteran of the department, was shot in the abdomen.

Other deputies returned fire on the shooter, who survived and was later sentenced to more than 80 years in prison.

In November 2005, Fort Worth police officer Henry "Hank" Nava was fatally shot searching for a wanted man in northwest Fort Worth.

At the store Monday night, several people were inside the store, apparently waiting to be interviewed by police officers. Yellow crime scene tape was strewn across the east entrance of the parking lot. Some officers were walking customers to their cars.

"I have no idea what precipitated this," he added. "We'll certainly find out."

The mark of what beast? This beast is just a pony

■ This Mustang is enjoying a long run, despite what some think is an unlucky number.

By **JOHN AUSTIN**
STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

PANTEGO - Some say 666 is an unlucky number.

For Sue Maddock and her car, it's been devilishly lucky.

Maddock was a 20-year-old Braniff International Airways stewardess taking home just \$400 a month when she scraped up the down payment for a new 1966 Signal Flare Red Ford Mustang convertible.

Forty years and 174,196 miles later, she's still driving the three-speed time machine, which rolled off the San Jose, Calif., assembly line on 6/6/66.

"It's been a wonderful number for me," said Maddock, who paid \$2,800 plus finance charges for the Mustang, now insured for \$25,000. "I look at the car and my heart just sings."

Her husband, Frank, is the only guy who's ever wrested the wheel from Maddock, a for-



SPECIAL TO THE STAR-TELEGRAM/WILLIS KNIGHT

Sue Maddock and her Ford Mustang, which rolled off the assembly line in California 40 years ago today: 6/6/66. It cost \$2,800 plus interest.

mer Tarrant County deputy sheriff who once ran for the department's top job.

He was a Braniff pilot on his first flight with the now-defunct carrier when the couple met and the Mustang was new.

"The things that have been the most stable in my life have been my husband and my Mustang," said Maddock, a longtime Pantego resident. "The mid-'60s were the best of a really good life. All those memo-

ries ..."

Of course, some memories are better than others.

"The Mustang was in an accident when my husband and I were engaged," Maddock said, adding that the other driver was at fault. "I was ready to kill her."

But Maddock got the car fixed and went on to drive it into the 21st century.

Along the way, she has accessorized her ride with little

touches like the 1967 wire wheel hubcaps and chrome valve covers.

"I think the next thing'll be a chrome oil pan," said Frank Maddock, who bought her a chrome Mustang luggage rack for Mother's Day.

But the engine is original, as are the plaid trunk, spare tire covers and the black-and-white Texas license plates.

Maddock regrets ditching the original AM radio, but not the original black top: too hot.

The car now sports a white top. The body is back to the original color, or as close to it as Maddock could get after having it repainted green at some time.

Maddock gave the Mustang one extended break, storing it on blocks in an airplane hangar for six years, but she dug it out in the 1980s, and the pony car is completely roadworthy these days.

"When we pulled it out I fell in love with it all over again," Maddock said.

She's not the only one. People ask what she'll take for it all the time.

Maddock isn't entertaining offers. Her 39-year-old son will eventually inherit the wheels.

But she isn't handing over the keys anytime soon.

"I'll never part with it," Maddock said. "It just takes me back to good times."

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WILLIAM DUKE LAMOND | 1938-2006

DA's investigator was 'one of the toughest guys to wear a badge'

■ The former bronc rider dreamed of becoming a police officer, and he became a "cop's cop," helping gather evidence for prosecutors.

By **MAX B. BAKER**
STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

FORT WORTH — When he was younger, it appeared that William Duke Lamond might end up on the wrong side of the badge.

As a youth, he got into a lot of trouble, his family said. And while working the professional rodeo circuit, specializing in bronc and bull riding, Mr. Lamond was as tough as the toughest cowboy.

So his brothers and sisters were happy when Mr. Lamond settled down and went into law enforcement, becoming a determined, resourceful and committed officer often described by his colleagues as a "cop's cop."

"He was one of the toughest guys to wear a badge," said brother John Lamond III. "His stories of apprehending bad guys, going on drug busts, they could dominate a full day of conversation."

Mr. Lamond, 67, died Saturday, shortly after being diagnosed with lung cancer.



LAMOND

Services

A funeral will be held at 10 a.m. today at Laurel Land Funeral Home, 7100 Crowley Road, in Fort Worth. Burial is at Laurel Land cemetery.

Mr. Lamond was born July 26, 1938, in Guthrie, Okla., but grew up in Haltom City.

After a stint in the Army, Mr. Lamond — described by his family as short, scrappy and hardheaded — tried to make a living as a rodeo cowboy for about 10 years. It wasn't an easy life.

"I watched him get bucked off a wide variety of horses and cows all across the Southwest," John Lamond III said. "One time he got bucked off a bull and it chased him, but he cleared the fence."

After he got married and had a child, Mr. Lamond entered the printing industry, eventually working with his father and brothers at their firm, Tarrant Printing. He also served one term as the mayor of Everman, from 1976 to 1978. But his dream was to become a police officer, his brother said.

He worked briefly for the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department before becoming an investigator for the Tarrant County district attorney's office. Investigators help prosecutors gather informa-

"He was one of the toughest guys to wear a badge. His stories of apprehending bad guys, going on drug busts, they could dominate a full day of conversation."

— John Lamond III, brother

tion to bolster their cases.

Mr. Lamond worked undercover, helping law enforcement agencies break cases involving stolen weapons and vehicles, said Bill Foster, a co-worker. He also went undercover for the narcotics intelligence unit, working "long, strange hours," he said.

"Duke was always there," Foster said. "He was a cop's cop and a hardworking guy."

Mr. Lamond left the district attorney's office in 1999.

Mr. Lamond developed an offbeat sense of humor that helped him endure life's ups and downs.

"He's been my father, brother and best friend," said his younger sister, Raye Lea Lamond.

Mr. Lamond is also survived by his son, William Duke Lamond II, and two grandchildren.

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CRIME

Deputy shot at store is doing well

■ Michael Beeson, who was moonlighting as a security guard, has extensive law enforcement training.

By **DEANNA BOYD**
and **MATT FRAZIER**
STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITERS

FORT WORTH — A Tarrant County sheriff's deputy was in good condition Tuesday, a day after he was shot twice while working an off-duty security job at an east Fort Worth grocery store, officials said.



BEESON

Michael Beeson, 43, was found lying in the parking lot of the Carnival Food Store on East Lancaster Avenue shortly after 10 p.m. Monday, with gunshot wounds to his hip and face.

"We're feeling fortunate," said Terry Grisham, a Sheriff's Department spokes-

Beeson: Wounded man surfaces

CONTINUED FROM 1B

man. On Tuesday, Beeson was awake, lucid and expected to recover at Harris Methodist Fort Worth hospital, officials said.

Before 1 a.m. Tuesday, a man authorities said was "a person of interest" in the shooting arrived at Harris Methodist with a gunshot wound to his back.

The man claimed he was shot near the store. Police spokesman Lt. Dean Sullivan said that the man, who he declined to identify, was in critical condition Tuesday.

"If anything, it's an interesting coincidence that three hours later we had a person, meeting the description of the suspect involved in our shooting, show up at the same hospital, having sustained a gunshot wound to the back," Sullivan said.

"This person is certainly someone of interest, but he doesn't rise to the level of being a suspect now," he said.

Fort Worth police are handling the case. No arrests had been made as of Tuesday evening, officials said.

During his 14-year career with the Sheriff's Department, Beeson received the department's certificate of merit three times for acting above and beyond the call of duty, Grisham said.

Beeson holds jailer and peace officer licenses and has at least 940 hours of training, including extensive instruction on use of force techniques and crime scene investigation, according to the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education, which maintains training and licensing standards for peace officers.

He ranks as an expert with a handgun, the highest degree of proficiency, Grisham said.

Beeson operated a metal detector at the

front door of the Tarrant County Justice Center, court officials said.

They said he worked at the position for about six months, after serving as a bailiff for Judge Deborah Nekhom Harris in County Criminal Court No. 4.

"We select people very carefully for that job because they have heavy public contact," department spokesman Grisham said. "He is even-handed, calm and personable — a very positive force to have around."

Sheriff Dee Anderson said Beeson was sitting on a bench outside the store in full uniform talking to his wife on a cellphone about 10 p.m. Monday when a man walked up and pulled a gun on him, apparently to rob him.

After a struggle, the man shot the deputy, authorities said. The deputy was able to return fire. The man fell, then got up and fled.

Fort Worth police launched a manhunt, focusing on the neighborhood south of the store.

The shooting was the second outside the Carnival Food Store, 4620 E. Lancaster Ave., in less than two months.

On April 9, Francisco Hernandez, 35, was walking across the parking lot shortly before 11 p.m. when he was shot by a man in a Chrysler PT Cruiser.

There also has been a recent series of robberies along Lancaster, Sullivan said.

Sullivan said the Police Department's homicide, robbery and major case units are sharing information about the incidents.

"We'll see if we can make those connections," he said. "Our first and foremost concern is with the subject responsible for shooting this deputy."

Staff writer Melody McDonald contributed to this report.

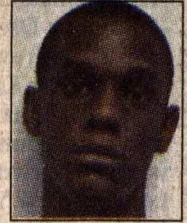
DEPUTY'S SHOOTING

Injured ex-con faces charge

■ The suspect has a criminal past, including a federal conviction for felony possession of a firearm.

By **BILL MILLER**
STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

FORT WORTH — A 26-year-old ex-convict, who is in critical condition at a Fort Worth hospital, was formally accused Wednesday of trying to rob and kill a Tarrant County sheriff's deputy outside an east Fort Worth grocery store Monday night.



TUTT

Dominick Tutt, who was released from federal prison in December after serving five years and three months on a weapons conviction, now faces an attempted capital murder charge in the shooting of Tarrant County Sheriff's Deputy Michael Beeson, 43.

Tutt's bail is \$500,000.

Both men are patients at Harris Methodist Fort Worth hospital. Beeson was wounded in the right cheek and in a hip. Tutt was shot in the back, authorities have said.

On Wednesday, Sheriff Dee Anderson said that Beeson was in guarded condition and faces a long, painful recovery. Howev-

Crime: Man suspected in shooting has record

CONTINUED FROM 1B

er, Beeson, a 14-year veteran of the department who is assigned to courthouse security, was in remarkably good spirits, Anderson said.

"Although he faces a difficult future, he does have a future," Anderson said at a news conference. "You're literally talking about the space of



BEESON

a few inches for the track of that bullet to have had a much, much more tragic outcome."

In an arrest-warrant affidavit, which was released Wednesday, investigators described what they believe happened about 10 p.m. Monday outside the Carnival grocery store at 4620 E. Lancaster Ave. where Beeson was a part-time security guard.

Beeson, 43, who was in full uniform, was talking to his

wife on a cellphone during a break when he heard a voice say, "Get off the phone."

Beeson saw the muzzle of a pistol pointed at his face. He reached for his gun, and the voice said, "Don't do that."

A shot rang out, and Beeson was struck in the right cheek.

Officers found the deputy lying in the parking lot a few minutes later.

He was taken by ambulance to the Harris emergency room, where Tutt showed up about two hours later in a car with two other people.

An investigator there to interview Beeson saw Tutt, and detectives decided to question him also. According to the affidavit, Tutt told them that he was in the grocery store parking lot when he heard gunshots, so he ran for safety.

"Tutt stated that he felt a pinch in his back and continued to run," the affidavit said. "Tutt stated that he had no idea who shot him because he



SPECIAL TO THE STAR-TELEGRAM/RICHARD W. RODRIGUEZ

Tarrant County Sheriff Dee Anderson, left, and Fort Worth police Lt. Gene Jones look on as police spokesman Lt. Dean Sullivan speaks to reporters Wednesday about the shooting of Deputy Michael Beeson.

was running away when he got hit."

Tutt told the officer that his brother drove him to the hospital.

Detectives were suspicious, so they checked into Tutt's record. U.S. District Court records show that he pleaded guilty in May 2000 to felony possession of a firearm. He was released in December after serving the 63-month sentence, according to Federal Bureau of Prisons records.

Police found a mug shot of

Tutt that was taken during a previous arrest, said Lt. Gene Jones, commander of the Fort Worth Police Department major crimes unit. Investigators added Tutt's photo to a photo lineup that was shown to Beeson on Tuesday. The deputy pointed to Tutt as the man who shot him, Jones said.

Tutt's criminal history in Tarrant County goes back to the 1990s, according to the affidavit.

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INTERNET

Tarrant sheriff prevails in getting inmate data online

■ Want to find out if a loved one is in jail? Pretty soon the information will be only a mouse click away.

By **MAX B. BAKER**
STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

Hundreds of times a day, Tarrant County sheriff's deputies talk to people on the phone about inmates, giving out basic information about what crime they are accused of committing and what it will cost to bail them out.

INSIDE

■ A suggestion of what the dossier might look like on the Internet. **10B**

"People want to know what Uncle Joe is charged with," Sheriff Dee Anderson said. "For some of them, it's Uncle Joe's 50th time in jail and they know the drill really well. But you have some

people who don't have any idea what the process is. The calls run the gamut."

Soon, getting this basic information will be just a mouse click away. Anderson's department will join other agencies across the state that post charges, bail amounts and mug shots on the Internet.

Anderson fought for more than two years to provide the information electronically, finally overcoming local judges' fears about identity

"You can't guarantee how someone will use the information once it's in their hands, and if they are devious enough they can do whatever they want with it," Smith said. "But as far as identity theft, I can't imagine too many people who want to be a criminal."

Anderson faced strong opposition from Wilder, who was concerned about providing unrestricted access to court records through the Internet.

Wilder argued that although there is a common-law right of access to court records, it is not "unlimited." He refers to dozens of laws, court cases and opinions by Texas attorneys generals that court records are exempt from the Public Information Act. He also points to several court orders signed by local criminal court judges, in particular a 1995 order giving limited computer access to that information.

"This is a very contentious issue," Wilder said. "ID theft is very much in play here. Access to court records that have a lot of information in them has to be done in a correct way."

Wilder was reassured by a court order signed by state District Judge Ken Curry, the local administrative judge, which allowed an exception to put the jail information on the Internet while recognizing the judges' rulings.

In Harris County, the public can see an inmate's criminal case number, so the case can be tracked through the courts, and see whether there is a balance due on a fine. Harris County, however, does not provide a mug shot.

Denton County Chief Deputy Steve Macsas said making information available online has been extremely helpful, not only in distributing information to the public but also in helping law officers in the field.

Some agencies can't afford expensive Internet tracking services with in-depth information about a suspect. This way, any officer with a wireless laptop computer can get information, he said.

"The mug shot is very helpful. Officers in their squad cars can pull it up on their laptop, like anyone else, and compare them to people they've stopped," Macsas said.

Steve Smith, Tarrant County's chief information technology officer, said safeguards will be built into the system. Someone won't be able to Google a name and pull up the jail information, and visitors to the county Web site won't be able to mine deeper into the county's database.

He also said a watermark will be put in the mug shot background to keep it from being copied and used by someone else.

Anderson said he is happy that he'll finally be able to give the public what he considers public information.

"We were guarding it like it was a nuclear launch code," Anderson said. "I feel like we've done the right thing. It was a huge ado about something that should have been nothing."

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Online: Jail data to be posted in summer

CONTINUED FROM 1B

theft and arguments from Tarrant County District Clerk Tom Wilder about making too many court records available online.

Their deliberations reflected the ongoing debate among court officials nationwide about documents that are readily available at the courthouse but have been difficult to obtain via a home computer.

The public link for jail information will be available sometime this summer, county officials said. Specific inquiries will yield an inmate's charge, bail amount, date of birth, race, gender, a mug shot and a county identification number.

When an inmate is released, the information about charges and bail amounts will be removed.

People searching the archives will only be able to determine that the person had spent time behind bars.

Other counties provide even more information.

In Denton County, the sheriff provides an inmate's aliases and driver's license number.

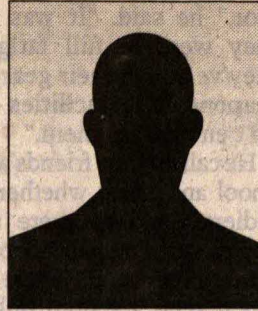
The county has been providing the information for at least five years.

Proposed Tarrant County jail inmate information

Tarrant County Sheriff Dee Anderson will soon provide information about jail inmates online. This is a suggestion of what it might look like.

Demographics for JOHN DOE

Last Name: Doe
 First Name: John
 Race: W
 Sex: M
 CID: xxxxxx
 DOB: 01/01/1985



[Return to Search Page](#)

This person is in custody at **Tarrant County Cold Springs Unit**

Charge	Arrest Date	Agency	Bail Amount
FORGERY-POSSESS	05/24/2006	TC SHERIFF OFFICE	\$2,500.00
FORGERY-POSSESS	06/06/2006	TC SHERIFF OFFICE 1	\$2,000.00

Wednesday, July 5, 2006

Anne Brooks Comstock



FORT WORTH — Anne Brooks Comstock, 78, died peacefully at her home Monday, July 3, 2006.

Graveside service: 1 p.m. Thursday in Ash Creek Cemetery, Azle. Visitation: 6 to 8 p.m. Wednesday at Winscott Road Funeral Home, 1001 Winscott Road.

Anne B. Comstock was born Nov. 26, 1927, in Bryan, Okla., had strong ties to Amarillo and spent her life in the Fort Worth area. She was employed many years as a Tarrant County deputy sheriff as the bond desk supervisor.

After leaving the sheriff's department, she worked as a bail bondsman until her retirement.

Anne spent her life helping many people, family and friends. Her presence will be missed by all who knew and loved her.

Her life and spirit will continue to be celebrated by the family she meant so much to.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Billy S. Comstock Sr.; and son, Billy S. Comstock Jr.

Survivors: Daughter, Mary Ann Crockett of Fort Worth; son, Jean Stanley Comstock of Fort Worth; grandchildren, Lindsey Crockett of Fort Worth, Rebecca Wilkins of Arlington, Carly Crockett of Fort Worth and Billy Comstock of Cleburne; and many great-grandchildren.

Winscott Road Funeral Home
 Benbrook, 817-249-1177

View and sign guestbook at
www.star-telegram.com/obituaries

TARRANT COUNTY

Raid nets 189 gaming machines

■ For the first time, investigators seize bank accounts during an eight-liner raid, a spokesman says.

By **TRACI SHURLEY**
STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

Seven people were arrested and 189 electronic gaming machines were seized Thursday in northwest Tarrant County in the largest such raid ever made by the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department, a spokesman announced.

Sheriff's officers seized an amount of money "well into five figures" from two bank accounts belonging to Yong Clark, 46, who is named in arrest warrants as the operator of three gambling parlors, said Terry Grisham, the sheriff's spokesman.

After weeks of undercover

investigation, sheriff's officers served arrest and search warrants on three gambling parlors and Clark's home about 5 a.m. Thursday, Grisham said.



CLARK

The four locations are on Jacksboro Highway between Lake Worth and Lakeside.

Among the seized machines were eight-liners, which are not illegal but must be operated within strict guidelines, including that they not pay out cash, Grisham said. Clark's machines paid cash, and "they were taking in a lot more than they were paying out," Grisham said.

Also arrested was Ronnie Gene Mackey, 53, police chief of Sansom Park for eight years. Mackey's contract was not renewed in 1998. In January 1999, he was charged with stealing a firearm from the Police Department's property room. He pleaded guilty in 2001 and was sentenced to two years' probation, according to *Star-Telegram* reports.

A 2005 Cadillac SUV and small amounts of methamphetamine and marijuana were also seized in Thursday's raid, according to a statement from the sheriff's department.

Grisham said investigators found that the establishments operated from 5 p.m. to 5 a.m. Gaming machines were found at Clark's home, but officials were not sure gambling took

place there.

This was the first time the sheriff's department has seized bank accounts in a gambling parlor investigation, officials said.

"We were able to obtain reliable information about this person being the person in charge of the businesses and the person benefiting from the businesses financially," Grisham said.

Others arrested were Jennifer Lynne Wilcox, 20; Raymond Lillard, 39; Edith Castellano, 50; Robin Hunter, 46; and Josiah Lippincott, 18. They and Mackey face charges of engaging in organized crime, a state jail felony, and misdemeanor gambling charges.

Clark faces a charge of engaging in organized crime, Grisham said.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

County lockup information is now online

■ If you want to know if someone is being held in a Tarrant County jail, you can find out via the Internet.

By **MAX B. BAKER**
STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

FORT WORTH — So you wonder if someone you know may be in the Tarrant County Jail.

As of Friday, finding out is only a mouse click away.

Tarrant County Sheriff Dee Anderson recently got approval from Tarrant County's criminal court judges to put the information online after working for more than two years to provide the information electronically.

Anderson had to convince judges and other county officials that the benefits to the public — as well as the money he would save by reassigning staff members who now answer hundreds of phone calls a day — outweighed concerns about identity theft or invasion of privacy.

"I'm grateful that the information that is rightfully the public's is in the public domain," Anderson said. "I think it's going to work out well by reducing the number of phone calls and the number of repetitive questions we answer."

Steve Smith, Tarrant County chief information technology officer, said the Web site posting will include the inmate's name, race, gender, bail amount, arrest data, and a mug shot, if it is available.

"I'm grateful that the information that is rightfully the public's is in the public domain."

— Tarrant County
Sheriff Dee Anderson

If someone is in custody, their name will appear in red and the posting will tell which of the county's four jails they are being held in.

When an inmate is released, the information about charges and bail amounts will be removed.

Someone wanting to check and see if a person they know is in jail, or has been in custody in the past, will have to have specific information

IN THE KNOW

How it works

- The jail inmate link is available through Tarrant County's Web site at www.tarrantcounty.com.
- On the home page it is available in three places: Under the "What's New" section on the lower right edge of the page; the eGovernment button on the left side of the page; or through the Online Services-eGovernment section in the middle. Click on "inmate data and mugshots."
- The same information will eventually be available on the Sheriff's Department's home page.

about that inmate to check the database.

But it will be possible to type in a partial name and check the department's database.

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COURTESY PATROL

On the road for motorists in need

■ The Courtesy Patrol may expand its presence on Tarrant County highways.

By **GORDON DICKSON**
STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

If you've endured a mechanical failure on a busy freeway, you may already know about the Courtesy Patrol, those fellows who cruise the highways in white pickups and fluorescent orange uniforms.

With the efficiency of *Pulp Fiction's* Winston Wolfe, they solve problems. (And unlike Wolfe, they keep it G-rated.)

They change tires, push stalled vehicles from the road and remove hazardous debris from roadways — mattresses, firewood and other lost loads.

It all began here in Tarrant County, where the first Courtesy Patrol was formed in 1973. Today, most major Texas cities have something like it.

But there are limits to how much

the Courtesy Patrol can help motorists. The Texas Department of Transportation typically restricts the service to a few two-person crews, working mostly during the busiest times of day.

The agency wants to turn over the Courtesy Patrol to the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department, possibly this fall, so that its services can be expanded, Transportation spokesman Michael Peters said. The county is expected to receive \$5.1 million in federal and state money to run the program for three years, Peters said.

Sheriff Dee Anderson says the Courtesy Patrol will still focus on keeping things moving on the county's main freeways, including Interstates 20, 30 and 35W, Loop 820, U.S. 287 and Texas 360.

"Their best use is on the freeways," the sheriff said. "The public will probably have to look pretty close to see the new patch on their sleeve and notice a



difference."

Although the Courtesy Patrol employees won't be peace officers — the program specifically prohibits them from performing law enforcement work — they will be in closer communication with authorities and may be used more often to control traffic and clear accident scenes, he said.

And, of course, they'll still help thousands of stranded motorists each year.

If your car breaks down, you may

IN THE KNOW

Courtesy Patrol

If your vehicle breaks down on a highway, call 911 and explain to the call taker that it's not an emergency but that you'd like help from the Courtesy Patrol. The state-funded service assists an average of 328 stranded motorists a month in Tarrant County at no charge. Here's a typical month:

- 10:** Stalled vehicles pushed from roadway.
- 10:** Cellphones loaned to motorists for a quick call.
- 19:** Batteries jump-started.
- 75:** Empty gas tanks filled (1.8 gallons per incident).
- 127:** Flat tires changed.

SOURCE: Texas Department of Transportation

rest assured that *the Wolfe should be comin' directly.*

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TARRANT COUNTY JAIL

Inmate data available online is scaled back

By **ANTHONY SPANGLER**
STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

FORT WORTH — Less than three weeks after information about Tarrant County Jail inmates became available online, county officials agreed Tuesday to cut back on the project because of complaints that photographs and old arrest information should not be so easily accessible to the public.

Starting today, the posted information is expected to be limited to inmates currently in the Tarrant County Jail, Tarrant County Administrator G.K. Maenius said.

When the information was put online July 14, it included previous and current inmates.

The information included an inmate's name, race, gender, bail amount, arrest data and mug shot, if available.

When an inmate was in custody, the name appeared in red



BROOKS



ANDERSON

and the posting told which of the county's four jails he or she was in.

When an inmate was released, the information about charges and bail amounts were removed, but other information, including the mug shot, remained.

County commissioners said they had received numerous complaints from the public that the information should not be available on the Internet.

"We talked about the legal ramifications of the informa-

tion on the Web site in closed session," Commissioner Roy C. Brooks said after Tuesday's weekly commissioners' meeting.

"We directed the administrator to pull it down until it shows only people currently in custody, which was the original intention of the site."

Tarrant County Sheriff Dee Anderson worked for about two years to convince Tarrant County's criminal court judges and other county officials that putting the information online would save the county money and respect the public's right to have access to government records.

"If I have to start my own Web site, I will," he said after hearing of the decision Tuesday.

The information available online is the same information that has been available by

phone or e-mail, said Terry Grisham, spokesman for the Sheriff's Department. Jail staff have answered hundreds of requests for information daily; with the information online, those employees could be reassigned.

"All we've done is change the way we give it out," Grisham said. "Our whole database is subject to" the state open records law.

Inmate information is removed from the database if a person gets a court order expunging, or erasing, an arrest or conviction, he said.

"This has never been about the finding of guilt or innocence," Grisham said. "We are just being transparent about the public records that we keep."

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INMATES

Cities to continue contract on jail

By **ROBERT
CADWALLADER**

SPECIAL TO THE STAR-TELEGRAM

MANSFIELD — A new \$50 million, 10-year agreement to house Fort Worth prisoners in Mansfield's city jail will provide better financial security for both cities, law enforcement officials said.

The deal, which kicks in after the existing five-year arrangement expires Sept. 30, gives Mansfield 40 percent more money, which will help the city pay the costs of operating its 240-bed jail. In exchange, Mansfield will hire additional staff to better sort out low-risk detainees and take over guard duty at hospitals where inmates are being treated.

The pact is a series of one-year contracts that automatically renew each year, unless one of the cities chooses to withdraw. Mansfield's first-year payment is \$4.2 million, a \$1.4 million increase over the present contract, and the payments increase 4 percent a year, Mansfield Deputy Police Chief Gary Fowler said.

The Mansfield City Council approved the contract June 12, and the Fort Worth City Council approved it Aug. 8.

SHOOTING

'I just decided I didn't want to die that night'

■ A Tarrant County sheriff's deputy recalls the night he was shot and how it has affected his life.

By ALEX BRANCH
STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

The moment before the bullet slammed into his face, Michael Beeson's mind was on his stepdaughter's report card.

Sitting on a bench June 5, wearing his Tarrant County sheriff's deputy uniform, he was taking a break from his off-duty security job and talking to his

wife on his cellphone about their 16-year-old's grades.

He didn't hear the gunman approach — the guy just appeared, pointing a gun so close to Beeson's face that he could see the bullets in the cylinder. Looking up, Beeson felt what he would later describe as a sinking sensation in his gut. At that instant, he was sure of one thing:

He was about to die.

The 43-year-old officer rose to his feet. He dropped the phone and reached for his holstered gun.

The gunman fired first.

It didn't feel like a bullet hitting his face, he remembered. It felt like a sledgehammer.

Three months have passed since that night in the grocery store parking lot.

More on RECOVERY on 16A



STAR-TELEGRAM/DARRELL BYERS

Three months

have passed since Tarrant County sheriff's Deputy Michael Beeson was shot in the face. The scars on his cheek are still visible, but it is the mental wounds that are more bothersome.

The scars on Beeson's face — the red Y shape where the bullet entered his right cheek, the circular mark where the surgeon cut and folded back the skin to collect bullet fragments — are healing.

The swelling is going down, though his lips, teeth and gums are still numb. And he can't yet open his mouth wide enough to eat a hamburger.

But the mental wounds are more bothersome.

"When I think about the ifs — if the bullet had hit me in a slightly different spot, if I had died — that's when I start to freak out," Beeson said. "I have to block it from my mind. The physical part really does heal faster than the other parts."

Beeson spends his days at his Arlington home doing laundry, cleaning the house, mowing the yard and tinkering with stepdaughter Brooke's Trans Am.

"Life changes quickly," said Beeson, a law officer for 21 years.

He often has a hot meal prepared when his wife, Donna, gets home from work.

"He keeps a great house," said Donna, with a laugh.

The night of June 5 still seems surreal, he said. A deputy assigned to security at the Tarrant County Courthouse during the day, Beeson went to his night job at the Carnival store on East Lancaster Avenue, as he had twice a week for five years.

It was a routine summer night. He stepped outside to call his wife, as he occasionally did on breaks.

"It's amazing how fast you can lose everything," he said. "I probably should have. I think I just decided I didn't want to die that night."

The bullet's impact knocked Beeson backward.

He staggered, then took a few steps into the parking lot to get some distance between him and the shooter.

He heard another gunshot and felt a bullet rip into the back of his upper left thigh.

"He's going to chase me into the street and shoot me like a dog," Beeson thought.

He turned and saw the shooter with what appeared to be a .38-caliber handgun. The look on the man's face

seemed to say, "I shot you twice. Why aren't you down?"

Beeson said he pulled his gun and fired just as the man turned away.

He saw the man fall, then get up and run.

The adrenaline left Beeson's body like air from a deflating balloon. He sank to a knee and saw that his stainless-steel handgun was completely red. Blood soaked the pavement.

Two young store workers — Jesse and Kevin — came to his aid. Jesse took off his Carnival shirt and pressed it to Beeson's face while the store manager called 911.

He felt a dull, throbbing pain in his face and wondered if half of it was gone.

He spotted his cellphone and thought of Donna, who had been on the line. He asked Kevin to bring it to him.

Donna answered right away. She had heard the gunshots before the line went dead.

"I knew he had been shot," Donna said later. "But I knew he would be OK. I don't know why."

"I hung up the phone and hoped that he would call back."

He'd been shot, Beeson confirmed matter-of-factly. He was going to the hospital.

Donna called Brooke at her friend's house. Brooke was hysterical.

"I told her we had to get to the hospital," Donna said. "We had things we had to do. It was not the time to fall apart."

Describing the care he got from fellow officers causes Beeson to choke up.

Lying on the ground, he heard the first Fort Worth police officers arrive.

The city, which had lost one of its own, Hank Nava, to a shooting only six months earlier, scrambled dozens of officers.



TUTT

Recovery:

Wounded deputy will receive Star of Texas

One officer grabbed Beeson and asked his name. Beeson heard someone remind the officer that he needed gloves for his hands, which were already covered in blood.

"F--- the gloves!" the officer barked. "This guy needs my help."

Patrol cars blocked every intersection on Lancaster Avenue to give the ambulance a clear drive to Harris Methodist Fort Worth hospital.

At the hospital, a doctor removed the bullet from his leg. The bullet that struck his face had shattered against his cheekbone, spraying bullet fragments into the muscle.

"They said my cheekbone saved me," he said. "An inch or two in another direction, though..."

He told investigators that he was an innocent victim caught in the crossfire, ac-

tion. Tutt had been dropped off at the hospital with a gunshot wound in the back.

He would undergo two surgeries. Part of his cheekbone and a small piece of his lower jaw were removed. Officers from Fort Worth and Tarrant County visited. So did judges, defense attorneys and prosecutors, he knew from the courthouse. He even got a get-well card from his eighth-grade girlfriend.

He spent eight days in the hospital, he said, and Sheriff Dee Anderson made sure his workers' compensation check was waiting.

Police arrested Dominick Tutt, a 26-year-old man released in December from federal prison, where he served time on a weapons conviction.

Tutt had been dropped off at the hospital with a gunshot wound in the back.

According to an affidavit for his arrest. But Beeson identified Tutt in a photo lineup as the man who shot him.

Tutt was indicted on a charge of attempted capital murder and remains in the Tarrant County Jail with bail set at \$500,000.

Sheriff's officials have speculated that the motive may have been robbery.

"I can't believe he would pick an armed officer in uniform," Beeson said. "That's just not smart."

Beeson hopes to return to work at the courthouse the first week of October. He wonders how it will feel to put on a uniform again.

He doubts he will return to the grocery store.

In the days after the shooting, he couldn't sleep. When he closed his eyes, he saw the gun in his face while he was caught momentarily unprepared on that bench.

"I still kick myself in the ass for that," Beeson said. "I'm not like that. I always stay aware at the grocery store because it's an area where there's crime and we've had some problems."

"I just stopped for a second to talk to my wife."

On Monday, he will travel to Austin to receive the Star of Texas award for wounded first responders.

The award is nice, he said. But he doesn't feel heroic.

"I feel fortunate," he said. "When you almost die, you search for a purpose to your life. I enjoy my family, watering my lawn and trees. . . . All that stuff you take for granted."

He'll work for the Sheriff's Department for at least eight years, he said. He is eligible to retire at 51.

He has lived in Texas most of his life, he said. He and Donna are thinking about someday moving somewhere cooler, a place with real seasons, where the leaves turn red and orange in the fall.

"Maybe New Hampshire," he suggested.

"New Hampshire?" Donna repeated.

They both laughed.

"Anywhere we want," Beeson said.

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STAR-TELEGRAM/JOYCE MARSHALL

Fort Worth police officers investigate the scene at the Carnival store on East Lancaster Avenue where Tarrant County sheriff's Deputy Michael Beeson was shot June 5.

ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION | POLICE AUTHORITY

Top officers wary of bill to localize enforcement

■ A bill making its way through Congress would give local law enforcement officers authority to enforce federal immigration laws.

By **ANNA M. TINSLEY**
STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

Tarrant County Sheriff Dee Anderson doesn't want to see the days return when illegal immigrants are randomly stopped by law enforcers and arrested.



ANDERSON

That practice, he said, essentially went away years ago.

But it could come back, since the U.S. House passed a bill this week that reaffirms the ability local and state law enforcement officers have to arrest, investigate and detain illegal immigrants.

"I don't have the jail space to start rounding up people innocently walking down the street who are in the country illegally but aren't otherwise

doing anything wrong," Anderson said. "This is a very sticky, controversial issue that law enforcement is going to have to step back and determine what our role is locally.

"I don't see us swinging back to the old ways in the near future of just seeing someone from another country and locking them up," he said. "We will have discussions on whether we should become more active in that world."

To become law, the measure must still be approved by the Senate, which could adjourn as soon as next week. The Senate is also considering a House-approved bill to construct more than 700 miles of fencing around the Southwest border

The immigration policing proposal sounds good in theory, but it may not truly pan out, said Alex del Carmen, interim chairman of criminology and criminal justice at the University of Texas in Arlington.

"It puts an added burden on police departments in addition to the tasks they are doing now . . . and this is going to completely overwhelm the

criminal justice system," he said. "Federal prisons, federal detention facilities will be overwhelmed with people being arrested left and right.

"I'm not saying that illegal immigrations should be allowed or overlooked, but widening the net is going to expand not only the number of people you process through the system but also will drain the resources you have in place."

Fort Worth Police Chief Ralph Mendoza said this plan won't work until the borders are secure.

"The pot has a hole in it, and it keeps leaking," he said. "Once they secure the border, then they can deal with the illegal immigrants already here."

Mendoza said he has heard of federal officials having trouble transferring illegal immigrants to their custody even without the enhanced apprehension effort.

And he said he worries that this measure could prevent illegal immigrants who need help, either as crime victims or for health needs, from turning to police.

"The pot has a hole in it, and it keeps leaking. Once they secure the border, then they can deal with the illegal immigrants already here."

— Fort Worth Police Chief
Ralph Mendoza

"They're not going to feel secure or safe enough to call for help," Mendoza said. "It was a problem years before, and it would be a problem again."

In Bedford, Police Chief David Flory said he believes that the proposal is not good because it creates yet another unfunded mandate.

And now, Flory said, local law enforcement agencies are already financially strapped because of 9-11, after which federal agencies turned their attention to terrorism.

"And they [the federal government] should have," Flory said. "But more and more local police have had to investigate white-collar crimes, which had fallen to federal agencies."

Grapevine Police Chief Eddie Salame also does not favor the measure.

"I'm concerned that enforcing the federal law would set us back in the minority communities," Salame said. "We would create a group of people who would not be calling police anymore."

And in Farmers Branch, where city leaders may themselves consider adopting controversial anti-immigration proposals, some believe that the potential law could be very costly.

"The overriding concern I hear from our staff . . . was that the federal government should not mandate a requirement on local law enforcement without federal funding," said Mayor Pro Tem Ben Robinson, who at one time proposed that Farmers Branch officials ask police to copy residency papers of immigrants and give those copies to immigration officials.

Staff writer Domingo Ramirez Jr. contributed to this report.

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Tuesday, September 26, 2006

Bobby O. Blevins



KELLER — Bobby O. Blevins, 74, a retired peace officer, passed away Sunday, Sept. 24, 2006.

Funeral: 1 p.m. Wednesday at Lucas Funeral Home of Keller. Burial: Bourland Cemetery, Keller. Visitation: The family will receive friends 6 to 8 p.m. Tuesday at Lucas Funeral Home of Keller, 137 E. Hill St., Keller.

Bobby was born Nov. 3, 1931, in Keller to Gains and Lorene Blevins. He served his country in the U.S. Air Force during the Korean War. After returning to Keller, he worked at the family service station while also serving as justice of the peace. Bobby then worked for the Tarrant County sheriff's office as a lieutenant commander until he retired. He was a member of First Baptist Church of

Keller for many years and also a proud Scottish Rite Mason and Shriner. Most of all, Bobby was a devoted loving husband and father who always put his family first.

He was preceded in death by his father, Gains Blevins; mother, Lorene Blevins; son, Bobby Blevins Jr.; and brother, Franklin Blevins.

The family would like to give a special thank-you to Baylor Hospital of Grapevine, M.D. Anderson of Houston, Samaritan Care Hospice and the entire staff of Mimosas Manor.

Survivors: Wife of 54 years, Betty Sue Blevins; daughter, Lillian Elkins; son, Scott Blevins and wife, Lisa; son, Matt Blevins; grandson, Michael Elkins and wife, Shelia; grandson, Nicholas Blevins; and granddaughter, Jacklyn Blevins.

Lucas Funeral Home
Keller, 817-753-6800
View and sign guestbook at
www.star-telegram.com/obituaries

Wednesday, October 4, 2006

County sheriff, tax office recognized

Two Tarrant County departments have won 2006 Best Practices Awards from the Texas Association of Counties. The Tarrant County Sheriff's Department was recognized Tuesday by association representatives for developing Web-based crime-mapping to aid officers in analyzing crime trends. The system also allows residents to search criminal activity in specific neigh-

borhoods. The county's tax office was also honored for creating a system to electronically record deposits, which helps the county process transfers quicker and gain more interest on money it collects in taxes.

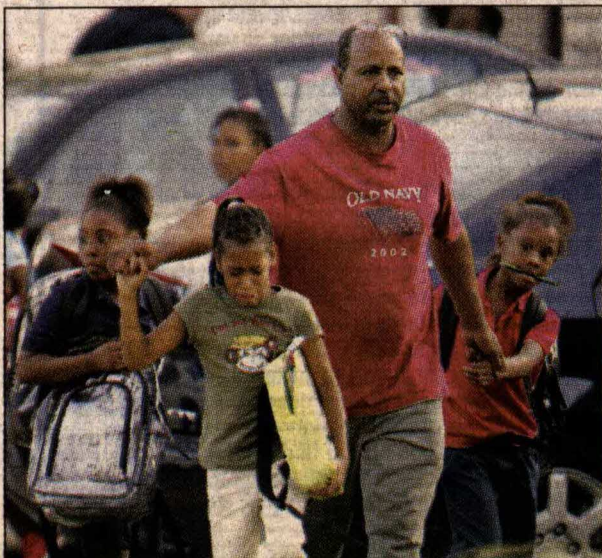
— Anthony Spangler

FOREST HILL | STANDOFF

'He grabbed the little one, and he just started shooting'



Tarrant County sheriff's deputies secure the shooting scene. A man was holding hostages in his estranged girlfriend's home.



STAR-TELEGRAM/KHAMPHA BOUAPHANH

Gilbert Tezeno leads children away from a day care near the Forest Hill home. About 30 houses were evacuated or the residents were not allowed to return.

Gunman wounds three, holes up in home with hostages, including child

By **DAN X. MCGRAW**
STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

FOREST HILL — A gunman shot at least three people Wednesday afternoon before he holed up in his estranged girlfriend's house with an unknown number of hostages, among them a 4-year-old boy, authorities said.

About 11:30 p.m., a heavily armed Mansfield tactical unit arrived in the 3200 block of Chalmette Court. A spotlight was set up as the officers pulled their gear on.

They appeared to be relieving Tarrant County tactical of-

ficers who had set up position around the single-story house late in the afternoon.

Police made contact with the gunman sometime during the evening. He is believed to be the estranged boyfriend of the woman who lives in the house, according to friends of the couple.

Four people were taken to hospitals late Wednesday afternoon, said Lt. Chris Hebert, the Forest Hill police spokesman. Three were shot, and the fourth was a pregnant woman who was injured when she

More on STANDOFF on 15A



STAR-TELEGRAM/KHAMPHA BOUAPHANH

Authorities secure the area around the home in Forest Hill where hostages were held. The episode began early Wednesday and continued today.

CONTINUED FROM 15A

fell, he said.

At least one of the shooting victims was in critical condition late Wednesday, Hebert said.

He would not discuss the condition of the others who were injured.

The episode apparently began about 11 a.m. when a 57-year-old man entered the home of his estranged girlfriend, according to two friends of the couple, who were interviewed as they waited at the scene Wednesday evening.

Using zip ties, the man tied up his 61-year-old girlfriend, sexually assaulted her in a bathroom, put two shells in his shotgun and threatened to "blow her brains out" if she told anyone, said the friends, who declined to give their names.

At some point, the woman got out of her house, went to her sister's house next door and told the sister what had happened, the friends said.

Brenda Jackson, who said she was the woman's sister, said that when the man arrived at her house, the argument resumed and he grabbed a 4-year-old in the house.

"He grabbed the little one, and he just started shooting," Jackson said.

She called 911 about 4 p.m. and fled through her back yard, she said.

Chalmette Court backs up to a field, and emergency workers were able to move the shooting victims through gates in back fences. Shots from TV helicopters showed children being rushed to safety in the field. Officers used bolt cutters to get through fences to help people get away.

About 20 children from All God's Children child-care center four houses away were led from the house and behind the police lines. All homes within several blocks, about 30 houses, were evacuated or the residents were not allowed to return once crime-scene tape went up, leading to frustration as the night went on.

Onlookers had been told that the Red Cross would provide some food and beverages, but relief agency workers did not set up a post.

Anita Foster, a spokeswoman for the area agency, said that when Red Cross workers arrived, police told them that no one had been evacuated, so there was no need for their service. Police suggested that onlookers find a place to stay overnight. A police officer handed out bottles of water.

At 10 p.m., police had spoken to the gunman within the last hour, Hebert said.

The friends described the couple's relationship as volatile. One friend said the man told him, "Before I leave [the girlfriend], someone is going to have to do a drive-by and kill me."

The boyfriend had quit his job so he could keep an eye on the woman, the friends said.

"They were bleeding pretty

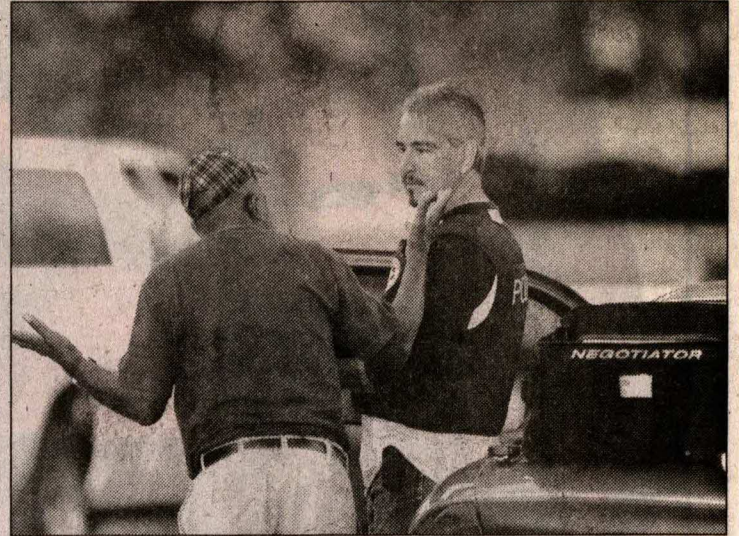
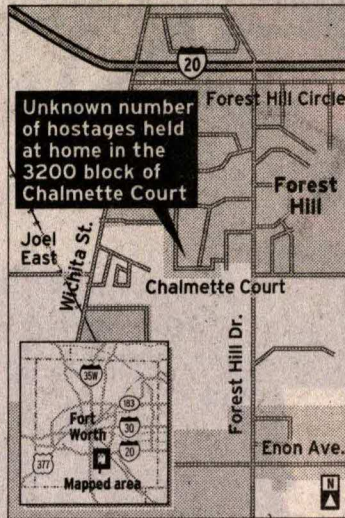
bad, but they were all alive," one of the friends said after the shootings.

A woman was seen throwing her purse to the ground and screaming: "Oh my God, he shot my sister in the head." The woman said, "Oh, Lordy, he shot my sister in the head."

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Standoff: Gunman holds hostages in his estranged girlfriend's home

3 people shot



STAR-TELEGRAM/KHAMPHA BOUAPHANH

A police negotiator speaks with an unidentified man near the home. Police made contact with the gunman sometime during the evening.



STAR-TELEGRAM/RON JENKINS

A gunman shot three people and was surrounded by police. The man is believed to be the estranged boyfriend of a woman who lives at the home. A pregnant woman was injured when she fell.

Innovative programs draw prestigious awards

The Texas Association of Counties (TAC) Leadership Foundation has presented Tarrant County with awards for two innovative programs that save taxpayers' money and provide more efficient public service.

Tarrant County's prestigious awards were among 17 presented to 14 counties through the Leadership Foundation's 7th Annual Best Practices Awards for extraordinary innovations, achievements and effective management in county government. The TAC is a statewide organization whose members are county government officials in all 254 counties of Texas. Its Leadership Foundation serves as an educational resource for county officials.

The Sheriff's Office received an award for Exceptional Delivery of Service technology for its Web-based crime mapping program.

Educating residents about public safety issues is an important task for all sheriffs' departments. Communities that are aware of what crimes are happening – and where – are better able to protect themselves and can be more vigilant in reporting crimes. But getting the information out to residents in an understandable way is often challenging for sheriff's departments.

In April 2006, the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department took a new approach to disseminating crime-related information-Web-based mapping. Using a Geographical Information System application, their Website now allows citizens to do a search of criminal activity in their own neighborhood using town and county maps to display the information. Users can zoom in and out of areas of interest and focus on crimes happening around their home or school or work address. Residents can click on the easy-to-interpret icons if they want more information about a crime that occurred at a specific location.

The new tool has proven beneficial for the County and its residents in more ways than one. Not only are residents newly-informed about the criminal activity in their neighborhoods, they can determine the location of the homes of sexual offenders. The Sheriff's Department has been able to use the tool for crime analysis. Citizen phone calls to the department have decreased. Additionally, other law enforcement agencies have been able to use the information to compare notes on crime trends, similarities and possible common suspects.

The Tax Assessor-Collector's Office received an award for Superior Innovation in technology for its program of electronic deposits in the Tax Office.

In a county of 1.7 million people, the number of payments for vehicle titling/registration and property taxes can reach as many as 5,000 checks a day. Specifically, the Tax Office accepted \$400 million in auto fees in 2005, as well as \$2.5 billion in property taxes. A large number of those payments are made the old-fashioned way – handwritten checks that must be attached to a deposit ticket, delivered by armored car to the bank depository, and then processed through the Automated Clearing House (ACH), a one-to-three day process.

But the economic disruption that resulted from the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks prompted a new approach to processing check deposits nationwide. Until then, more than 90 percent of the nation's checks traveled from one bank to another on commercial airlines. But after 9/11, the nation's banking system began the conversion toward a new, electronic approach to recording deposits called Account Receivable Conversion (ARC). In 2003, 160 million checks were processed via the optional ARC payment system; the following year, the number had jumped to 940 million. By 2004, Tarrant County was processing almost 20 percent of the entire ARC volume for all government agencies in the country.

By putting the new system in place within the Tax Office, the Tax Assessor-Collector saw an opportunity to cut costs, process funds more quickly and earn greater interest revenues for the County and the entities for which it collects taxes. Instead of afternoon checks arriving at the bank the following day, they are processed immediately and courier deliveries have been reduced to a minimum. More importantly, the County receives same day credit for all checks, eliminating the one-to-three day wait for funds to be collected through the Federal Reserve System. The electronic deposits have increased the County's bank balances, interest income and ability to distribute money sooner to other entities. Not only have bank charges been lowered by \$750 per month, the County is the beneficiary of more than \$5,000 per month in additional interest and funds availability.

Saturday, November 4, 2006

What they do Sheriff

The Sheriff is the chief law enforcement officer for the county, and the Sheriff's Department is the single largest component of the County's budget.

The Sheriff is elected to a four-year term and is responsible for operating the jail and providing support and specialized technical expertise to area municipal police agencies. About two-thirds of the Sheriff's budget goes toward operating the County's four jail facilities, which house about 4,000 inmates.

Other responsibilities include investigating crimes, serving criminal warrants, providing court security and maintaining communication with federal, municipal and state law enforcement agencies.

Although the Sheriff has county-wide jurisdiction, in practice the department concentrates its investigative and patrol efforts in unincorporated areas within the County.

Also, in the near future the Sheriff's Office expects to assume the countywide freeway courtesy patrol responsibilities now handled by the Texas Department of Transportation.

Sunday, November 5, 2006

Ruby Joan Blakemore



CROWLEY — Ruby Joan Blakemore, 83, died Friday, Nov. 3, 2006.

Funeral: 3 p.m. Monday in Dallas-Fort Worth National Cemetery. **Visitation:** noon to 2 p.m. Monday at Crosier-Pearson-Mayfield Funeral Home in Burleson.

Joan worked for 10 years with Homart, a Sears subsidiary, during the construction and management of Seminary South Shopping Center.

She retired after 15 years in Tarrant County government, serving as secretary to the late Sheriff Lon Evans. She was the first secretary in Texas to be certified as a law enforcement officer.

She also received instructor's certification for teaching in the academy. During her tenure with Tarrant County, she also worked in the mental health department for the late County Clerk Madrin Huffman.

She was preceded in death by her son, John Blakemore Jr.

Survivors: Husband, John; daughter, Judi Davis; grandson, Kyle Davis; great-grandchildren, Kyle Jr. and Austin Davis.

Crosier-Pearson-Mayfield
12301 S. Freeway, 817-568-8836
View and sign guestbook at
www.star-telegram.com/obituaries

AMERICAN INDIANS

More code talkers may get medals

STAR-TELEGRAM

They never talked about it. A group of American Indian men worked behind the scenes during

World War II to relay U.S. military messages in their native language to and from the front lines of battle.



GRANGER

They were the code talkers, and they never discussed their influence on history.

Now others are doing it for them.

"I'm extremely proud to have known them and know they had done something like that," said Ben Tahmahkera, a retired captain with the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department and great-great-grandson of Quanah Parker, the last Comanche war chief.

U.S. Rep. Kay Granger, R-Fort Worth, is leading a push to award congressional gold medals to American Indian code talkers from tribes other than the Navajo, who were honored in 2001.

"They are American heroes, and I think it's important that we honor their service," Granger said.

STAFF WRITER ANNA M. TINSLEY REPORTS | 6A

American Indians want recognition for code talkers, who helped win wars.

By ANNA M. TINSLEY
STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

They were the men behind the scenes of war.

Speaking in a code based on their native language, one that the enemy couldn't crack, they kept key U.S. military messages secret when transmitting radio instructions from command posts to the front lines as early as World War I.



GRANGER

They were the code talkers.

Now American Indians want their ancestors — who have been depicted in movies such as *Windtalkers* and have been called a crucial part of the military effort — to get the credit and congressional gold medals they say they are due.

"I pray that these men are recognized for what they've done for our country," said Ben Tahmahkera, great-great-grandson of Quanah Parker, the last Comanche war chief. "The honorable thing this country can do is recognize those gentlemen who put their lives on the line for the people of this country."

American Indian groups are lobbying lawmakers for recognition for their ancestors, hoping that legislation can be passed in November, American Indian Heritage Month, and urging Congress to act before the session ends in December.

U.S. Rep. Kay Granger, R-Fort Worth, has a bill pending in the House Financial Services Committee to give Comanche, Choctaw and Sioux code talkers the congressional gold medal. It would also give the president the ability to award congressional gold medals to any other code talkers identified by the secretary of defense.

The Senate has passed a similar measure. The House version, which has 159 sponsors, is on hold until it has 290 sponsors.

"The code talkers provided an incredible service during the first two world wars, which saved a number of lives," Granger said. "They are American heroes, and I think it's important that we honor their service."

Granger said that if the bill doesn't pass this year, she will continue introducing it until it does.

Versions of the measure — some honoring Comanche code talkers, others honoring Sioux code talkers — have passed one chamber of Congress or another since 2001.

In 1982, President Reagan designated Aug. 14 National Code Talkers Day. In 2001, President Bush honored the Navajo code talkers for their contribution to the military as radio operators in World War II. Other tribes have yet to be honored.

Some military commanders credit the code talkers with saving soldiers' lives and helping the U.S. military win many battles. Some say the U.S. might never have won the battle of Iwo Jima if not for code talkers. And teams of code talkers have been cited as helping the military in World War I, World War II, Korea and Vietnam.

But even if Congress authorizes the medals, no code talkers may be alive to receive them.

"We want to make plain that this is not a matter of philosophy or politics — it is a matter of heart and soul, a matter of pride, not just for Native Americans, but of all Americans, especially those who have served in uniform," said an article in the *Native American Times*.

"We do know that the failure

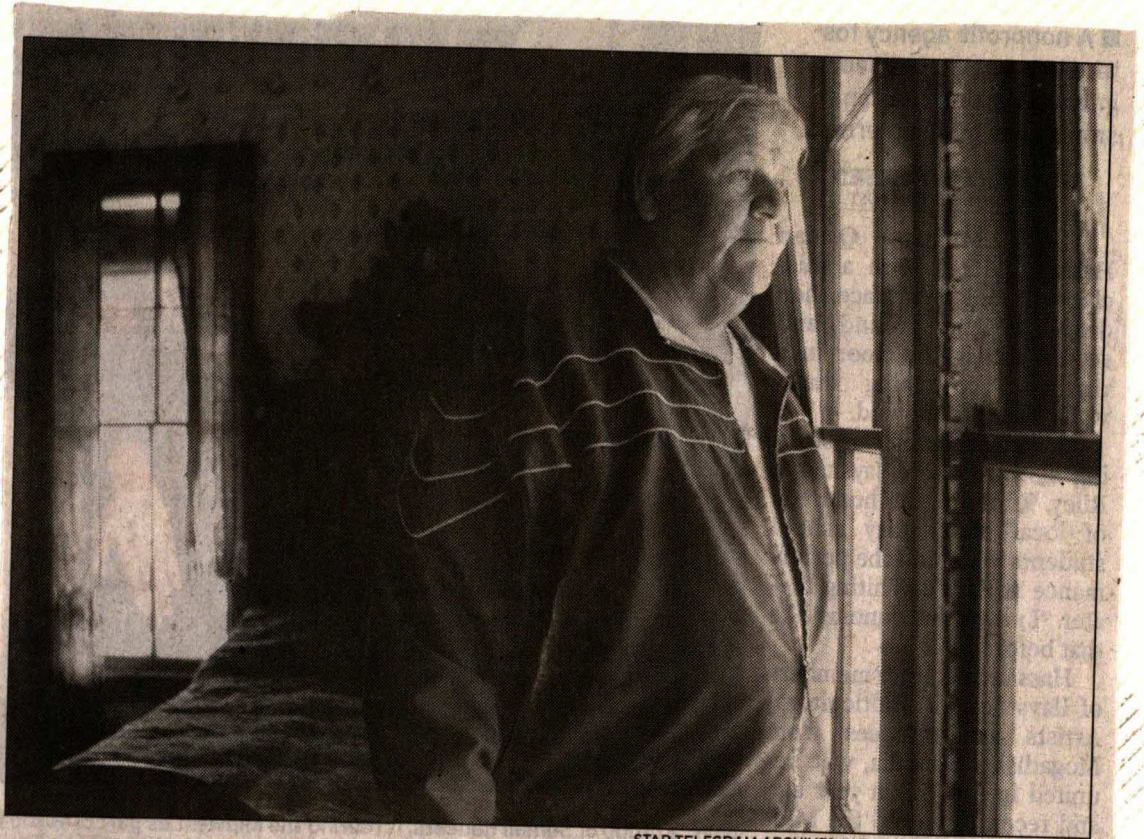
to act has had, and will have, a real impact on those associated with these brave deeds," the article said. "Sadly, none of the Code Talkers of the Choctaw Nation survived to hear their deeds celebrated publicly."

Tahmahkera grew up around men who never spoke of their work but who he later learned were code talkers. He said it was inspirational to learn that they played a key role in history.

AMERICAN INDIAN HERITAGE MONTH

Honoring forgotten

'American heroes'



STAR-TELEGRAM ARCHIVES (NOVEMBER 2004)/JILL JOHNSON
Ben Tahmahkera, a descendant of the last Comanche war chief, grew up around code talkers but didn't realize it. "I'm extremely proud to have known them and know they had done something like that," he said.

"It was quite heartwarming, inspirational, to actually know these guys and learn what they had done," said Tahmahkera, a retired captain with the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department. "It makes your heart happy and sad at the same time — to be able to talk with them and know them but not know what they had done."

"I'm extremely proud to have known them and know they had done something like that."

Anna M. Tinsley, 817-390-7610
atinsley@star-telegram.com

IN THE KNOW

National American Indian Heritage Month

President George H.W. Bush made November 1990 the first National American Indian Heritage Month. The purpose was to celebrate the accomplishments of American Indians, their ancestry and their traditions.

Earl Nathan Mathews



FORT WORTH — Earl Nathan Mathews, 67, died Wednesday, Nov. 22, 2006, at a Fort Worth hospital.

Funeral: 7 to 9 p.m. Friday, Dec. 1, at Greater Antioch Baptist Church, 5420 Cottey St., Fort Worth. A second service will be at noon Saturday at First Baptist Church, 306 Baker St., Atlanta, Texas. Burial: St. Paul Baptist Church Cemetery in Bivens. Visitation: You may visit Earl Mathews noon to 4 p.m. Friday at Rev's Funeral Parlor in Fort Worth and 5 to 7 p.m. Friday at Greater Antioch Baptist Church in Fort Worth.

Mr. Mathews was born Aug. 28, 1939, in Bivens. He worked for Rev's Funeral Parlor for 22 years as a hearse driver and had also worked for the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department and the Fort Worth ISD transportation department, as a Fort Worth school crossing guard and as a driver for Ms. White's Daycare for years.

Survivors: Wife of 43 years, Fannie Thomas Mathews; son, Kerry Thomas; daughters, Terry Thomas and Nell and Cherry Mathews; brothers, Dolan Mathews (Ruby), Kaydlios Mathews Sr., the Rev. Arzander Mathews Jr. (Dorothy), the Rev. Eddie Mathews (Ruthetta), Micheal Mathews (Marion), Levi Mathews, Devi Mathews and Leonard Wayne Mathews; sisters, Vernell Johnson and Verna Mathews; 12 grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren; a host of other relatives; numerous friends; and the Rev's Funeral Parlor staff.

Rev's Funeral Parlor

3615 Vaughn Blvd., 817-536-0200

View and sign guestbook at

www.star-telegram.com/obituaries

Patrol: Popular service costs \$1 million a year

Saturday, December 9, 2006

TARRANT COUNTY

Courtesy Patrol transfer on hold

■ The sheriff and county administrators are at odds over plans to use jailers as temporary patrol workers.

By **ANTHONY SPANGLER**
STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

Call it a mechanical breakdown. A plan for the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department to take over the state's Courtesy Patrol has stalled. The taxpayer-supported program sends workers out to change flat tires, jump-start dead batteries and put out cones and flares near accidents on roadways.

County administrators are at odds with how Sheriff Dee Anderson wants to absorb the popular roadside assistance program, and county commissioners likely will be asked to resolve the dispute.

"I think the sheriff is trying to find a way to get those jailers out of the jail, just for a little while," Tarrant County Administrator G.K. Maenius said. "It is a really good idea, but we're just trying to work out the details."

Courtesy patrol pros and cons

The sheriff wants:

- About six state employees now assigned locally to the Courtesy Patrol to be hired by Tarrant County.
- Jailers to serve on temporary assignment to the patrol periodically to give them a variety of work opportunities; they now are assigned to laundry services and to supervise inmates at a hospital, for example.

■ To use the assignment as a recruiting tool to attract applicants to the vacant jailer positions, which the county is always challenged to keep filled.

Opponents say:

- The county's liability would increase with the added dangers on the highway.
- Law enforcement personnel are entitled to full pay and have fewer limitations on the amount of time they are covered by workers' compensation; if Courtesy Patrol employees were injured while assisting motorists, they would be covered as law enforcement personnel.
- Courtesy Patrol employees' need different skills and have different duties than a jailer.

Anderson wants to allow jailers to be temporarily assigned to the patrol, but Tarrant County human resources officials say that would create workers' compensation problems and confuse civil service job classifications.



ANDERSON

"It is frustrating for this last-minute objection to be brought up," Anderson said. "I'm personally at stake in this with [state] employees who will be out of work."

The Texas Department of Transportation, which now operates the program, has indicated it wants to transfer responsibility to local entities. Original plans called for the program to be transferred to Tarrant County on Jan. 1, with the state picking up 20 percent of the costs and the remaining 80 percent funded through a federal grant, state officials said.

It now costs about \$1 million a year to run the Courtesy Patrol in Tarrant County, where about a dozen employees assist about 300 motorists a month. Under the planned arrangement, funding to Tarrant County would increase to \$5.1 million for the first three years.

State officials said they will continue to run the program

until it can be handed over.

"The general feeling is that the transfer is going to happen soon," said Val Lopez, a Department of Transportation spokesman.

Anthony Spangler, 817-390-7420
aspangler@star-telegram.com

By the numbers

The Texas Department of Transportation helped 234 motorists in Tarrant County in October. A look at some of the things that workers did:

- 4 stalled vehicles pushed from the roadway
- 12 overheated radiators filled
- 14 batteries jumped
- 18 cellphones loaned for quick calls
- 26 assisted with information
- 65 added gas to empty tanks (less than 2 gallons)
- 92 changed flat tires

SOURCE: Texas Department of Transportation

TARRANT COUNTY

Jailers can work on Courtesy Patrol

■ The Sheriff's Department plans to take over the state highway department's Courtesy Patrol and let jailers do a different type of work.

By **ANTHONY SPANGLER**
STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

Jailers' morale in Tarrant County got a jump-start.

A plan had stalled last week that would allow jailers to rotate out of

confinement duty to work on temporary assignment in the popular Courtesy Patrol, which is run by the state.

But Tarrant County commissioners repaired the breakdown Tues-

day by allowing Sheriff Dee Anderson to absorb the Texas Department of Transportation program beginning Jan. 1.

"It is a great opportunity for people who deserve every break they can get," Anderson said. Being a jailer "is one of the toughest jobs anyone could

More on COUNTY on 9B

County: Patrol offers help to drivers

CONTINUED FROM 1B

ever take on. The opportunity for a temporary assignment to the great outdoors will be a welcome relief for them."

The Courtesy Patrol assists Tarrant County motorists with flats, empty gas tanks and minor mechanical breakdowns. The Texas Department of Transportation operates the program but has indicated it wants to turn it over to counties.

Under the plan, the state will pay 20 percent of the program's cost with a federal grant supporting the remaining 80 percent. It now costs about \$1 million a year to operate the Courtesy Patrol in Tarrant County, which helps about 300 motorists a month.

The federal grant will boost program funding to \$5.1 million for the first three years, state Transportation Department officials said.

Negotiations with state offi-

cials overheated, however, when the county's human resources department objected that Anderson's plan to temporarily use jailers to run the program violated civil-service guidelines.

Some county administrators also objected to Anderson's plan because employees designated as "law enforcement" would fill the Courtesy Patrol positions.

Workers' compensation provides more pay for a longer period of time for law enforcement than for other employees.

Maribel Chavez, district engineer for the Transportation Department's Fort Worth district, said that the roughly dozen Courtesy Patrol employees who do not apply for the Tarrant County positions will be able to apply elsewhere in the state agency.

After the Tarrant County Commissioners Court approved Anderson's request to

use jailers in the Courtesy Patrol program, Commissioner Roy C. Brooks made one statement: "Sheriff . . . Merry Christmas."

Anthony Spangler, 817-390-7420
aspangler@star-telegram.com




Sheriff Dee Anderson's department will take over the Courtesy Patrol.

Thursday, December 28, 2006

Bill W. Allen



 **FORT WORTH** — Bill W. Allen, 86, passed away Wednesday, Dec. 27, 2006. **Funeral:** 11:30 a.m. Saturday in Greenwood Chapel. Burial: Greenwood Memorial Park. Visitation: 6 to 8 p.m. Friday at Greenwood Funeral Home.

Bill was born Feb. 8, 1920, in Van Alstyne. He served proudly and honorably in the U.S. Marine Corps during World War II and was a Japanese POW from 1941 to 1945. He returned home, where he received a teaching degree and began teaching for the Fort Worth ISD. After retirement, he sought a second career with the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department as a bailiff. After full retirement, he enjoyed gardening, fishing and the Dallas Cowboys. Bill was a member of Rosemont Church of Christ in Fort Worth.

He was preceded in death by his wives, Lucy Mae Allen and Elsie Atherton Allen.

Survivors: Daughter, Debra Allen Tellier and husband, Mark, of Weatherford; stepson, Dennis Atherton and wife, Debra, of Eunice, N.M.; stepdaughter, Susan Sunderman and husband, Donnie, of Fort Worth; and sister, Marcelline Evans of Guthrie, Okla.

Greenwood Funeral Home
3100 White Settlement Rd., 817-336-0584
View and sign guestbook at
www.star-telegram.com/obituaries

Thursday, January 4, 2007

Melvin H. Diebler



FORT WORTH — Melvin H. Diebler, 70, passed away Tuesday, Jan. 2, 2007.

Funeral: 1:30 p.m. Saturday in Greenwood Chapel. Burial: Greenwood Memorial Park. Visitation: 6 to 8 p.m. Friday at Greenwood Funeral Home.

Mr. Diebler was born June 10, 1936, in Uby, Mich. He served in the U.S. Army during the Korean War and Vietnam War, retiring in June 1975, having served 21 years. He then went on to become a deputy with the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department.

Survivors: Children, Catherine Cerda and Steven Diebler; grandchildren, Melanie, Madison, Nicole and Brandyn; and brothers, Jim and Dale Diebler.

Greenwood Funeral Home
3100 White Settlement Rd., 817-336-0584
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mc

WALTER MATHIS JR. | 1966-2007

Marshal was quiet, generous

■ Walter Mathis Jr. is remembered as "a good man who believed in taking care of his children."

By **PAUL BOURGEOIS**
STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

Walter Mathis Jr., the Mansfield city marshal who died late Monday, had a history of heart trouble.



MATHIS

Minnie Mathis said her 40-year-old son had suffered a mini-stroke and a heart attack in 2005. His father died of heart problems

in his 40s. Other family members also died young, she said.

Mr. Mathis was found unconscious in his personal car in south Fort Worth. He was taken to John Peter Smith Hospital, where he died about 40 minutes later.

Walter Mathis Jr. was born Oct. 20, 1966, in the South Texas town of Gonzales.

Mr. Mathis graduated from Fort Worth's Dunbar High School in 1985. He later attended the University of Texas at Austin, Tarrant County College and the University of Tex-

Funeral

Visitation is tentatively planned for 6-8 p.m. Sunday at Cornerstone Baptist Church, 5415 Matlock Road in Arlington. Funeral will be 11 a.m. Monday at the church. Burial will be at Cedar Hill Cemetery in Mansfield. For more information, contact Major Funeral Home, 2811 Galleria Drive in Arlington.

as at Arlington.

Minnie Mathis said her son was a Tarrant County sheriff's deputy for six or seven years before becoming a city marshal in Mansfield. He had worked in Mansfield for about eight years, said his wife, Rosemary Mathis.

She said that despite his medical history, his death was unexpected.

"He was a pillar of society," she said. "He was a generous man, very easygoing. He was quiet, but when he spoke you knew it."

Mr. Mathis is also survived by daughters Aleri, 15, and Zoie, 3; sisters Shalynn Mathis of Fort Worth and Lavern Murphy of Houston; and brother Walt Mathis of Fort Worth.

JAIL-BOOKING INFORMATION



The issue had recently pitted Sheriff Dee Anderson, top, against District Clerk Tom Wilder.

Wider access to records is backed

■ District Clerk Tom Wilder has previously denied access to electronic records.

By ANTHONY SPANGLER
STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

FORT WORTH — More jail-booking information could soon be available online and the public's access to court records should increase under an order signed this week by a group of local criminal court judges. In an issue that had recently pitted

Sheriff Dee Anderson against District Clerk Tom Wilder, the judges' ruling appears to strip Wilder of the sole authority he had exercised over release of documents from the courts, jail, sheriff's office and district attorney's office.

Wilder indicated that he doesn't plan to change the way he runs his office.

"This thing is just some sort of political document," Wilder said Friday. More on RECORDS on 10B

Records: Wilder says latest order isn't binding

CONTINUED FROM 1B

a day after the judges met with him and other county officials to discuss the order. "I think we need to maintain the status quo."

But Anderson said the order allows him to put comprehensive jail-booking information on the county's Web site, which he had been posting before the dispute.

Anderson said that if commissioners are reluctant to post the information on the county's site, he could create his own Web site to make the information available to the public.

"I think the new court order means we are free now to release information as we see fit," Anderson said. "I firmly believe that jail-booking information should be free and in multiple formats. Putting it online frees up a lot of our people who were manning the phones dealing with bondsmen and inmates' families."

Anderson says that some information in dispute is collected and recorded by his department during the booking process, including an inmate's identity, pending criminal charges, amount of bail and mug shots.

Wilder has previously denied access to electronic records. Among those denied were Texas Christian University students studying local judicial issues and the *Star-Telegram*.

The order — signed Thursday by eight of the nine criminal district court judges in Tarrant County — supplants orders in 1995, 2000 and 2003 that had given Wilder "sole authority" to decide whether to release judicial and related records in electronic format and on the Internet.

In the most recent order, the judges say that those rulings "failed to recognize that criminal district judicial records are shared throughout the Tarrant County criminal justice system."

tem."

Last year, Anderson challenged Wilder's authority by providing jail-booking information on the county's Web site.

Initially, Anderson posted booking information and jail mug shots for anyone who had been processed through the Tarrant County Jail. But Tarrant County commissioners stipulated that the postings should include only those defendants who are currently in jail.

Wilder said that the latest order is not binding because it was not voted on by the county's entire judiciary, which also includes civil and family court judges.

But several district court judges who signed the order said Friday that the previous orders were not voted on by the entire judiciary.

"The 2000 order and the rest of these orders weren't even signed by a majority of the judges," state District Judge Sharen Wilson said. "Some of the orders were signed by the administrative law judge and others weren't."

Tarrant County Judge Glen Whitley, who presides over the Commissioners Court, said the district attorney's office will have to interpret the criminal judges' latest order.

"There is still some disagreement about when information becomes a judicial record," he said. "The concern of commissioners has been over the release of electronic information and what, if any, charges will be associated with it."

Whitley said the district clerk's Web-based access to court records generates about \$20,000 a month.

"I don't want that to stop, especially in the face of possible property tax caps by the state," Whitley said. "We don't want to do anything that jeopardizes what Tom Wilder is doing over at the district clerk's office."

Tarrant County Administrator G.K. Maenius said commissioners will have the final say on what is made available on the county's Web site.

"I think the judiciary has determined that the vast bulk of those records fall under the district clerk and county clerk," Maenius said. "So those individuals are going to have a say on whether they are available on the Internet."

Judge Bob Gill, who presides over the 213th District Court, said that he hopes the order will put an end to the debate.

"The criminal district judges who signed the order are simply complying with the laws in the state of Texas today," he said.


Several officials who attended the Thursday's meeting with the judges said that Wilder threatened "legal action" against the judges.

"People threaten to sue me all the time, but I don't get my back up over that," Gill said. "If I get sued, then I will have a reaction to that. But I don't think I'll be sued."

Anthony Spangler, 817-390-7420
aspangler@star-telegram.com

Manuel Martinez Valdez



 **FORT WORTH** — Manuel Martinez Valdez, 87, a kind and gentle man devoted to his wife and family, passed away Friday, Jan. 19, 2007, at home surrounded by his family and friends.

Funeral: 10 a.m. Tuesday at Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church. Burial: Mount Olivet Cemetery. Rosary: 6 p.m. Monday in Mount Olivet Chapel.

Pallbearers: Paul Valdez Gonzalez, Michael Valdez Gonzalez, Gregory Musquez, Manuel Musquiz, Jose Garcia, Sacramento Garcia.

Honorary Pallbearers: Arturo Garcia, James Henson, Jose Rodriguez, Mikey Valdez and Mark Williams.

Manuel was born May 16, 1919, in Floresville to Ambrosio and Faustina Valdez. He was a farmer until age 16.

In 1936, he joined the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). He served in the U.S. Army 1st Cavalry Division all through World War II with his highest rank as 4th Grade Sergeant.

In 1946, he married Feliz Tejeda of Floresville. In 1946, he joined the federal government as a civilian correctional officer with 35 years of federal service.

In 1976, he joined the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department, retiring in 1992 as a deputy sheriff court bailiff.

Manuel was a lifelong church member of Immaculate Heart of Mary. He was a member and past president of the Holy Name Society for many years.

He was continuously involved with community and church in the Worth Heights area. He was also a member of the American Legion and the Knights of Columbus.

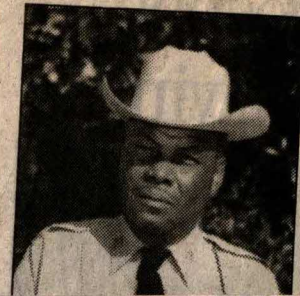
The family would like to express their sincere appreciation to his caretakers and hospice staff.

Manuel was preceded in death by his son, David; and his sisters, Trinidad, Julia, Victoria and Tules.

Survivors: Wife of 60 years, Feliz Valdez; son, Manuel T. Valdez and wife, Dolores; daughters, Tina Valdez, Patricia Henson and husband, James; grandchildren, Andrea Valdez, Raquel Valdez, Delicia Rodriguez and husband, Jose of San Antonio, Paul Gonzalez and wife, Andrea of Australia, Michael Gonzalez and wife, Monica of San Antonio, Jessica, Brianna and Christina Henson; great-grandchildren, Mikey Valdez, Maximus X. Gonzalez and Calista Feliz Gonzalez.

Mount Olivet Funeral Home
2301 N. Sylvania Ave., 817-831-0511

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First black deputy recognized

■ Wesley Hardeman was threatened by people who didn't want him to carry a badge and gun.

By **ADRIENNE NETTLES**
STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

FORT WORTH — Wesley Hardeman became a role model for blacks in 1955 when he was appointed as the first African-American



HARDEMAN

Tarrant County deputy sheriff, officials said Friday.

As a sign of the times, his job was limited to serving arrest warrants and investigating crimes of blacks.

But he didn't let segregation or even pressure from some blacks for "crossing over" get in the way of his law enforcement dream, his daughter Georgia Hardeman said.

"He loved people, period," she said. "He wanted to make a change for his people, but he was concerned about the injustices, mainly."

Hardeman's role in Tarrant County's history went unnoticed for decades.

On Friday, that changed. Tarrant County Sheriff Dee Anderson committed to displaying a photo of Hardeman that was donated by his family.

Surrounded by Hardeman's four children, relatives, and local politicians, Anderson made another promise. When the department moves to its new building in 2008, Hardeman's photograph and a plaque describing his role in Tarrant County's history will be placed in the department's museum.

"He truly broke the color barrier," Anderson said. "He also risked his relationships in the black community among those who felt he

turned his back on them by going to the other side. He left a legacy for all people to follow because many still fight against prejudice. Wesley Hardeman was truly a trailblazer."

Hardeman was born in Lockhart, south of Austin, on June 10, 1906, to Will and Beulah Hardeman. He graduated from Cleburne High School before moving to Fort Worth with his parents. He later attended Samuel Huston College in Austin, said Georgia Hardeman, who now lives in Las Vegas, Nev.

She said that her father was active in sports, such as football and baseball, during his early years, but he yearned most to be in law enforcement.

Before his law enforcement career took off, he met Georgia Mae Wallace of Fort Worth while attending church. The couple married in 1938 and had three daughters: Georgia, Beulah, and Wesley Bernice. He also had a son, Isaac Cameron, from a previous relationship, his daughter said.

In February 1945, Hardeman graduated from the American Detective Training School of New York. He was also a member of the New York Detective and Guard Registry.

After completing his schooling and training, Hardeman opened the Hardeman Detective Agency in Fort Worth. He eventually expanded the agency to include a night patrol service, his daughter said.

Hardeman experienced highs and lows in his personal life. His wife died in early 1955, leaving him a single father.

"It hurt him," Georgia Hardeman said of her mother's death. "But he raised his daughters right."

On Sept. 26, 1955, Tarrant County Sheriff Harlon Wright appointed 49-year-old Hardeman a deputy sheriff. Hardeman had to ignore injustices, such as the \$750 in burial insurance that was offered only to

white deputies killed in the line of duty.

"People called and threatened his family," Georgia Hardeman said. "Some threats were from whites that didn't want to see him in there, and others were from people he had arrested."

Wesley Hardeman's appointment was not without controversy. Members of the local chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People wanted Wright to appoint a different black deputy, relatives said.

Former state District Judge Clifford Davis, 82, remembers the excitement and turmoil that followed Hardeman's appointment.

"There were some who were understanding and others who weren't," Davis said. "But we were all proud that the sheriff added a black to his staff."

"If there ever was a gentleman to carry a gun, he was the perfect example of one," he said.

Mike Johnston, executive chief deputy of the Sheriff's Department and the department's historian, said Wright made a bold move by appointing Hardeman.

"It took a lot of courage to appoint an African-American law enforcement officer in the South and in the 1950s," Johnston said. "There probably was a large segment of society in the 1950s that didn't want to see an African-American with a gun and badge."

Hardeman's tenure with the Sheriff's Department ended with Wright's administration on Dec. 31, 1960, Georgia Hardeman said.

Hardeman went on to open a restaurant and pool hall in Fort Worth's Stop Six neighborhood.

He died in a Fort Worth hospital in April 1966 at age 59.

This report includes material from the Star-Telegram archives.

Adrienne Nettles, 817-685-3820
anettles@star-telegram.com

Wednesday, March 7, 2007

N. Wayne "Cowboy" Livingston Jr.



KELLER — N. Wayne "Cowboy" Livingston Jr., 34, a deputy sheriff, died Friday, March 2, 2007, at home.

Funeral: 11 a.m. Friday at North Hills Funeral Home, 8525 Mid-Cities Blvd. Burial: Bluebonnet Hills Memorial Park in Colleyville. Visitation: 6 to 9 p.m. Thursday at North Hills Funeral Home.

Wayne was a deputy sheriff for the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department.


Survivors: Wife, Andrea Mariscal; stepson, Louis Diaz; son, Danny W. Livingston; mother, Linda J. Livingston; father, N.W. Livingston and wife, Carolyn; grandmother, Elizabeth Livingston; and many aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces and nephews.

North Hills Funeral Home
North Richland Hills, 817-581-0777
View and sign guestbook at
www.star-telegram.com/obituaries

Sunday, March 11, 2007

James "Jim" E. Willett



 **RICE** — James "Jim" E. Willett, 60, passed away Thursday, March 8, 2007, at his home in Rice surrounded by his family.

Funeral: 10 a.m. Wednesday in the chapel of Boze-Mitchell-McKibbin Funeral Home in Ennis, with David Barrett and Harold Elliott officiating. Interment: Myrtle Cemetery. Visitation: The family will receive friends 6 to 8 p.m. Tuesday at the funeral home.

He was born Nov. 5, 1946, in Brownwood to James Edwin and Marion Willett. He graduated from Arlington Heights High School in 1965. He was a charter member and past president of the Rice High School Booster Club and was known as the voice of the Rice Bulldogs. He was an avid athletic supporter of the Rice Bulldogs. Jim loved to laugh and he loved a good joke. He served in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War.

He married Mary Stephens on June 10, 1978, in Arlington. Jim was an Arlington police officer for 10 years and acted as the first public information officer for the Arlington Police Department for three years before being recruited by the Southland Corp. for its public relations department. Over the next eight years he worked first for WFAA-Channel 8 and then at KDFW-Channel 4 as news editor. He returned to law enforcement in 2001 to the Tarrant County Sheriffs Department and served as a chief deputy of personnel, training, recruitment and community relations. Jim retired due to his illness in 2003.

Jim was preceded in death by his parents, James and Marion Willett.

Survivors: His loving wife, Mary Willett; daughter, Maurissa Willett; son, James R. Willett, all of Rice; brother, Ron Willett of Arlington, Va.; sister, Caroline Carson of Fort Worth; numerous nieces and nephews; and countless friends and loved ones.

Boze-Mitchell-McKibbin Funeral Home
Ennis, 972-878-2211
View and sign guestbook at
www.star-telegram.com/obituaries

Wednesday, March 14, 2007

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

City center to get new jail

■ Tarrant County Commissioners vote to build a new maximum security jail downtown.

By **MAX B. BAKER**
STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

FORT WORTH — After at least two years of studying sites in and out of the central business district, Tarrant County Commissioners voted Tuesday to build a new \$91.4 million maximum-security jail in downtown Fort Worth despite concerns that it may not be a good fit with the high-rise residential properties and corporate headquarters nearby.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?
Post a comment on this report at www.star-telegram.com

Commissioners voted 4-1 to build the new 336-cell jail on the site of the county's Muller Building on West Weatherford Street, across from the Tarrant County Corrections Center. A short tunnel under the street will connect the new jail to the existing jail and courts.

The added costs of building a new facility to house county court records, moving Tarrant County Sheriff Dee An-

More on JAIL on 8B

Jail: Sheriff says the downtown site is best one

CONTINUED FROM 1B

Anderson's offices to the Tarrant County Plaza — the old Tandy Technology Center — and purchasing such items as equipment and furniture boosts the project's total price to about \$108 million. The county now stores some court records in the Muller Building.

Voters approved a new jail as part of a \$433 million bond package last year. The only other downtown site considered by the county was the site of the old county jail at 300 W. Belknap St., but that alternative was ultimately rejected by commissioners as too costly.

Construction of the jail — which will hold what Anderson describes as the "baddest of the bad" county prisoners — is set to begin in 2009 and be completed by 2012.

Sheriff pleads for vote

Anderson pleaded with commissioners to take action Tuesday, saying that each day they delay a decision on where to build the facility makes his job more difficult and potentially adds to the project's costs.

"We have studied this to death," Anderson said. "It is the site that makes all of the sense in the world from a taxpayer dollar standpoint and that fits in with our needs. There is no comparison to the other sites."

Tarrant County Judge Glen Whitley at one time supported building the 40,000-square-foot jail outside of downtown at a site near the county-owned Green Bay facility, a partially-renovated warehouse northeast of downtown. But the cost of moving out of downtown, which essentially would be creating a new criminal courts complex, persuaded Whitley to go with the Muller site.

"I'm pleased that we went through the process and the selection we made represents the best use of Tarrant County tax dollars," he said.

Dressing up a jail

Anderson and other county officials are well aware the downtown business community is squeamish about having another jail nearby, and they said they are committed to building a jail that will not be a blight on Fort Worth's downtown skyline.

During Tuesday's discussion, Commissioner Roy Brooks, whose district includes downtown, recommended putting retail space on the street level to help the jail blend in with the surrounding landscape, which includes the \$200 million RadioShack corporate headquarters.

"My challenge is that we get as creative as we can and build a jail that is as unobtrusive as we can possibly make it," Brooks said.

He also said downtown business leaders understand that the commissioners were faced with a difficult decision. "The downtown business leaders are interested in what goes on downtown, but they are also interested in using their tax dollars in the most efficient way," he said.

Commissioner J.D. Johnson cast the only vote against the Muller site, saying more should have been done to investigate using the old Belknap jail site. He also said the court should have delayed making a decision to give downtown stakeholders a chance to respond.

Selection of the new jail site was under the briefing section of the commissioners' agenda. It was not listed as an action item, meaning it was not clear that a vote was going to be taken.

"We did need to make a decision and get things rolling, but I wish it had waited a couple of weeks," Johnson said.

He also had doubts that anything can be done to make a jail fit in with the swanky surroundings a few blocks away.

"You can put lipstick on a hog but you can't make it look good," Johnson said.

Not everyone's choice

Andy Taft, president of Downtown Fort Worth Inc., the nonprofit advocacy agency for property owners, businesses and other stakeholders in the central business district, said they suggested that if the jail had to be built downtown, it should be built where the old county jail is located on Belknap Street.

"It's not the best site for downtown, that is what we've said all along," Taft said. "It's unfortunate that that's the decision they made."

But if the county follows through with plans to put other county offices or other related functions on the lower floors, it would go a long way in alleviating the negative effects of putting the jail at that location, he said.

Fort Worth Mayor Mike Moncrief said that while a new jail downtown may make it easier to transfer prisoners to and from the courts safely and securely, he's not necessarily happy about it. He plans to meet with City Council members soon about the new jail site.

"We already have one jail downtown," Moncrief said. "I don't think this would have been my choice."

New county jail

■ The jail will include 288 single cells for men, 48 single cells for women, and 96 medical beds for male prisoners.

■ The total cost of the new jail rises to \$108 million when including \$6.6 million to move the sheriff's offices from 300 W. Belknap St. to the Tarrant County Plaza across the street from the Tarrant County Justice Center, and \$8.3 million to build a new records management center to replace the Muller building.

Why this site?

■ The Sheriff's Department said the Muller site is best for safety, security and efficiency.

■ The Muller property is a square piece of property that is accessible from all four sides, and is 30 percent larger than an alternative site at the L-shaped, former county jail at 300 W. Belknap St., which offers full access on only one side and limited access on two sides.

■ Commissioners were also concerned that the Belknap site's cost would be higher.

What's next?

■ Move Tarrant County Sheriff Dee Anderson's offices from 300 W. Belknap St. to the Tarrant County Plaza in the first part of 2008.

■ Move the records center to its new building in 2009.

■ Start construction of the new jail in the latter part of 2009 with projected completion in 2012.

Source: Tarrant County

Mayor Pro Tem Kathleen Hicks said that whatever happens, city officials must work with the county on the jail's construction.

"We look forward to making it work with the citizens of Fort Worth," she said.

Building the new jail will have no effect on the city of Fort Worth's contract to jail its prisoners at the Mansfield Jail.

After wrangling with commissioners for years about putting the jail at the Muller site, Anderson said he was "ecstatic" that a decision had been made.

"This decision will outlive all of us. It will be here long after we have retired and moved on," he said. "I don't think there will be a bigger decision made during my time in office. I am so grateful the court believes in this."

Staff writers Anna M. Tinsley and Sandra Baker contributed to this report.

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COURTS

Ex-jailer gets probation in fondling of inmate

■ Another charge against him is dismissed because a second woman wouldn't cooperate with prosecutors.

By **MELODY McDONALD**
STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

FORT WORTH — A 59-year-old former Tarrant County jailer has been sentenced to five years' deferred-adjudication probation for fondling a female inmate in a storage room in 2005.

Donald Wayne Woodall accepted a plea bargain Monday, pleading guilty to one charge of violation of civil rights for

having improper sexual contact with a person in custody.

As a condition of his probation, Woodall was ordered to write a letter of apology to the former inmate.

If Woodall violates any condition of his probation, he could be sentenced to up to two years in a state jail. If he successfully completes his probation, the case will be dismissed and a conviction will not appear on his record, although the arrest will remain.

Officials have said that two female trusties — one age 29, the other 40 — accused Woo-



WOODALL

dall of inappropriately touching them in early September 2005 while they were assigned to work in the officers dining room.

The 29-year-old said that on Sept. 5, Woodall followed her to a supply room as she went to get a hairnet and, as she turned to leave, he stood in her way and touched her breasts, according to an arrest warrant af-

fidavit.

The 40-year-old reported being in the storage room on Sept. 2, 2005, when Woodall entered and asked whether anything was missing. The woman said she told him "no" and got a broom and dustpan. As she tried to leave, the woman said, Woodall commented about her wet uniform and said it looked as if there had been a "wet T-shirt contest."

When the woman returned the broom and dustpan to the storage room, Woodall followed her and blocked her way out. She reported that he

touched her breasts through her uniform, then lifted her uniform and began touching her breasts, the affidavit said.

At one point, when the woman pulled her shirt down and tried to leave, Woodall grabbed her right hand and placed it on the outside of his pants, on his groin area, the affidavit stated. Woodall then pushed his other hand inside her pants, the affidavit said.

Woodall was indicted on two charges of civil rights violations, but the case involving the 29-year old woman was dismissed Monday because the

woman was uncooperative, said Michele Hartmann, an assistant district attorney.

"She never called me back," Hartmann said. "I had conversations with her mother, and I was told she was too busy with her job."

Hartmann said the other woman was very cooperative.

Woodall's attorney Paul Snell did not return a call seeking comment Tuesday. Woodall was fired from the Sheriff's Department in November 2005.

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TEXAS COMMISSION ON JAIL STANDARDS

Tarrant County Jail passes inspection with high marks

■ Inspectors "really struggled to find anything they could recommend," County Judge Glen Whitley says.

By AMAN BATHEJA
STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

The Tarrant County Jail passed its annual state inspection with flying colors, county officials said Tuesday.

The county's jail system is the largest in the state to be certified by the Texas Commission on Jail Standards. About 40 Texas jails, including some larger than Tarrant County's, do not meet the state's minimum standards,



ANDERSON

weekly meeting. The inspectors "really struggled to find anything they could recommend."

This month, inspector George Johnson visited the four facilities that make up the county's jail system: the Tarrant County Correctional Cen-

ter and the Belknap jail facility, both in downtown Fort Worth, the Cold Springs facility north of downtown and the Green Bay facility in north Fort Worth.

Johnson also interviewed staff and inmates and reviewed a random sample of inmate files, records from disciplinary hearings and staff responses to inmate grievances.

Sheriff Dee Anderson told commissioners that the jail staff's efforts to keep the jail in good shape have helped maintain high morale.

"No matter what day the jail inspector came in, we could

At a glance

The Tarrant County Jail is four facilities:

Tarrant County Correctional Center

Capacity: 2,119

Average daily population: 2,022

Belknap facility

Capacity: 463

Average daily population: 265

Green Bay facility

Capacity: 1,596

Average daily population: 843

Cold Springs facility

Capacity: 384

Average daily population: 231

Total capacity of all four facilities: 4,562

Average total daily population: 3,361

SOURCE: Tarrant Commission on Jail Standards Inspection Report

pass the inspection," Anderson said.

Aman Batheja, 817-390-7695
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Gene Enos Eggleston



ZEPHYR — Gene Enos Eggleston, 86, died Monday, April 16, 2007, at a Brownwood hospital.

Funeral: 2 p.m. Wednesday in Heartland Funeral Home Chapel. Burial: Eastlawn Memorial Park, with full military rites.

He was born Feb. 7, 1921, in Doyle, Ala. He had lived in Zephyr since 2002, moving from Bowie. He retired from the U.S. Air Force and served during World War II. He was a former employee of General Dynamics and a former deputy sheriff in Tarrant County.

Survivors: Daughter, Bonnie Humphries of Zephyr; brother, Lee Eggleston of Hurst; three grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren.

Heartland Funeral Home
Early, 325-646-9424

View and sign guestbook at
www.star-telegram.com/obituaries

TARRANT COUNTY | CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Good job, sheriff

■ Tarrant County's jail is the largest in the state to receive certification from the Texas Commission on Jail Standards.

County jails are vital institutions, designed to house those accused and waiting for trial as well as those already convicted and sentenced.

In a democracy, for both the accused and those found guilty, the citizenry expects — indeed, demands — that prisoners be treated humanely and held in facilities that are clean, adequately staffed and not overcrowded. Sadly, about 40 jails in Texas don't meet the state's minimum standards.

But Tarrant County residents can

take pride that they have one of the best-run county jails in Texas. After the annual state inspection this month of the four facilities that make up the county system, Tarrant's jail became the largest in the state to receive certification from the Texas Commission on Jail Standards.

Sheriff Dee Anderson is to be commended for not just meeting minimum standards but far exceeding what the commission recommends.

State inspector George Johnson declared that "the jails are clean and well run," which is exactly the way it should be, especially as the county prepares to build a huge new correctional facility in downtown Fort Worth.

Deacon Raul Garcia Sr.
1934 - 2007



Deacon Raul Garcia Sr., 73, passed away Monday, May 14, 2007.

Funeral: 11 a.m. Wednesday at St. Michael Catholic Church in Bedford.

Interment: will follow in Dallas-Fort Worth National Cemetery, Dallas.

Visitation and rosary: were Tuesday evening at Forest Ridge Funeral Home.

Raul was a Korean War veteran, serving in the U.S. Army. He also was an

ordained deacon of the Catholic church, a chaplain with Tarrant County

Sheriff's Department and a founding member of St. Michael Catholic Church. He was an

international agriculture businessman and a political and civil activist.

Above all, he loved his family and loved serving God.

Survivors: Children, Rosalinda (Jaime), Sandra (Curtis), Raul (Lupina), Sara (Ray),

Javier (Aracely) and Luis (Tim); brothers, Delfino, Oscar, Rolando and Gilberto; sisters,

Teresa and Minerva; grandchildren, Juan, Jozef, Alessandra, Carlos, Krystal, Christopher,

Ray John, Nicholas, Gabriell, Joshua, Viridiana and Ashley; great-grandchildren,

Giovanni, Jade, Anthony, Izaia, Anthony Y. Dezirae and MarBella.

Published in the Star-Telegram on 5/16/2007.

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SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

Error led to inmate's release

A slaying suspect is back in jail after clerk mistakenly released the wrong man.

By **DEANNA BOYD**
dboyd@star-telegram.com

FORT WORTH — A man accused of killing an Arlington teenager in 2003 was back behind bars Thursday morning



ARMENDARIZ

after an unexpected night of freedom that came when he was mistakenly released from the Tarrant County Jail.

David Alberto Armendariz, 18, was arrested about 9 a.m. after sheriff's deputies found him at his mother's Arlington residence, sheriff's officials said.

Armendariz is charged with

engaging in organized crime/murder in the fatal shooting of 17-year-old Ceasar Leon-Ronces in February 2003.

Armendariz, who was booked into the county jail in February, was a juvenile at the time of the shooting but has been certified to stand trial as an adult, officials said.

Terry Grisham, a Sheriff's Department spokesman, said Armendariz was released at 10:40 p.m. Wednesday after a bail bondsman arrived at the jail to bail out an inmate named David Armenta. The bondsman thought Armenta was in the county jail, but he was at the Mansfield jail.

Using a partial name, the jail clerk searched the county's inmate list, and Armendariz's name popped up, Grisham said. Adding to the clerk's confusion, Grisham said, was that both inmates are charged with

engaging in organized crime. The screen did not show that Armendariz's case is in connection with a homicide, he said.

"The clerk, making a mistake, pulled this fellow up and said, 'OK. This is the guy you must be here to bond out' and applied the \$25,000 bond to him," Grisham said. "It was one person's human error that caused the problem."

The bondsman did not immediately realize the mistake either, officials said.

Officials are conducting an internal investigation. "Obviously, we're trying to figure out how to prevent it and not let it happen again," Sheriff Dee Anderson said. "I think we've narrowed down how it happened. We're going to put some safeguards in place."

DEANNA BOYD, 817-390-7655

COURTS

DA: No labor detail for DWI

The office says it will no longer agree to pleas letting defendants serve by picking up trash or mowing grass.

By MELODY McDONALD
mjmcdonald@star-telegram.com

FORT WORTH — For more than two decades, Tarrant County defendants convicted of driving while intoxicated have routinely managed to avoid a jail cell by working "labor detail."

Labor detail allows defendants to serve their jail sentence by picking up trash, mowing or painting once a week for the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department.

Now there is a debate brewing about whether the practice is legal.

The Tarrant County district attorney's office recently told judges and defense attorneys it would no longer agree to allow defendants convicted of alcohol-related offenses to work labor detail.

Once the district attorney's office concluded it was illegal, what happened?

Alpert said his office consulted judges, lawyers and other experts to see if they were reading the statute correctly and whether there was "any authority to allow the judges to use labor detail in Tarrant County. Once we exhausted those options, this office came to the conclusion that the practice was not authorized by code. We immediately notified the judges and the defense bar and told them that we would not be able to be part of any future plea agreements that allowed jail service to be done by labor detail. We had no choice but to make it known immediately that we would oppose it if it was used in the future."

What do judges think about it?

Judge Billy Mills, County Criminal Court 3, showed what he thought Monday by sentencing a defendant to labor detail. "I think we disagree on what the law is," Mills said. "I think they are interpreting that statute correctly, but I think it is governed by other statutes and they don't think it is." Mills said he has been told the district attorney's office plans to appeal his sentence. He said he is not "anxious to be the guinea pig" but believes the issue should go to an appellate court. He said he will continue to give labor detail until an "appellate court tells me I'm wrong."

DWI: Judges, lawyers say ruling is incorrect

CONTINUED FROM 1B

No one was more surprised than Sheriff Dee Anderson, who said the program keeps the population down at the jail, which is at capacity; saves taxpayer money; and benefits the community.

"It came out and blindsided us," Anderson said.

Anderson said that without labor detail, DWI defendants would be required to serve their sentence behind bars. Last week, for example, 1,182 defendants were in the labor detail program. Of that number, 721 had a DWI conviction, which is about average at any given time.

"It certainly would impact us negatively, if you add 700 people to our jail population," Anderson said. "Did we think this through?"

Prosecutor Richard Alpert, chief of the misdemeanor division of the district attorney's office, said that he understands Anderson's concerns but that after researching the issue, his office has no choice.

"We cannot continue to support a practice that our research has shown is not authorized by law," Alpert said. "We can't turn a blind eye and say we're not going to enforce it because people like it."

Judge Daryl Coffey, County Criminal Court 8, said this is not the first time this issue has arisen. When the law was changed in 1993, he said, everyone looked at it and decided it was legal. "All this is, is somebody's different interpretation than they had 12 or 13 years ago," he said. Coffey said he will not go against the district attorney on plea bargains but will continue to "do whatever I want" on open pleas and sentencing.

The issue

The Code of Criminal Procedure says that people convicted of DWI cannot be given community service instead of jail time. The district attorney's office concluded that labor detail constitutes community service. Defense attorneys and some judges say labor detail is a program in which a defendant reports to jail and then the sheriff puts him or her to work, often in the hot sun, instead of housing him. They maintain that is it not traditional community service.

What started the debate?

Recently, a defendant convicted of intoxication assault was sentenced to eight years' probation in a plea agreement. As a condition of his probation, he was also ordered to serve 30 days in jail. Ball, his defense attorney, asked prosecutor Robert Foran if he would oppose allowing his client to serve the jail time on labor detail. Foran said he opposed it, in part because he knew the law "didn't allow for it." Ball said that after Foran told him it was illegal, he spoke with Alpert, who researched the law and agreed.

What do the defense attorneys plan to do?

Wes Ball said he and several lawyers are researching the law and plan to meet with the sheriff and judges to discuss the issue. "We are asking the courts not to act with haste," Ball said. "We've been doing something for 20 years, and in two days of research by the DA, and it's all changed? The DA's office has a right to have their policy, but they certainly can't dictate that it is illegal all on their own. That is a question for all sides to weigh in on."

Do any other big cities have labor detail?

Alpert said his investigation hasn't turned up any other large metropolitan cities that use labor detail for DWI offenders.

Will those already serving labor detail be affected?

Officials say they will not.

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Bass Hall architect picked to design jail

The design team promises to fit the new jail into the context of its downtown surroundings.

By AMAN BATHEJA
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Architect David Schwarz — who designed much of Sundance Square, including Bass Hall — is part of a team that has been tapped to design a new maximum security jail in downtown Fort Worth.

Amid concerns from the business community that the jail could detract from downtown development, Tarrant County commissioners Tuesday gave the county staff the authority to negotiate a design contract, including cost, with a team led by Gideon Toal, a Fort Worth architectural and

More on JAIL on 10B

What's the plan?

The new jail will be built on the site of the county's Muller Building on West Weatherford Street, across from the Tarrant County Corrections Center. A short tunnel under the street will connect the new jail to the existing jail and courts. **Map, 9B**

Voters approved a new jail as part of a \$433 million bond package last year. County officials spent several months debating where to place the new jail, with several downtown businesses lobbying for the county-owned Green Bay facility in north Fort Worth.

When will it be done?

Construction is set to begin in 2009 and finish by 2012.

DOWNTOWN

High-profile architect to help design new jail

There likely won't be angels on the outside, and there certainly won't be angels on the inside.

But if all goes as planned, at least it won't look like a jail.

Architect David Schwarz — whose designs include the angel-adorned Bass Hall — has been tapped as part of a team led by Gideon Toal to design a new maximum security jail for Tarrant County.

Staff writer Aman Batheja reports, 1B

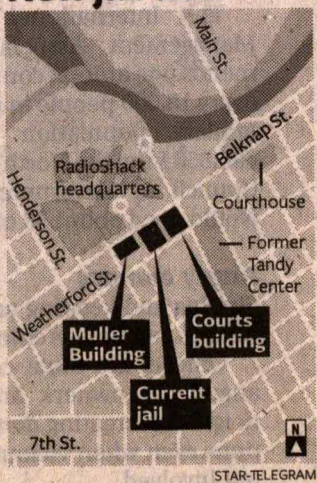
Jail: Team to make it fit downtown surroundings

CONTINUED FROM 1B engineering firm.

Commissioners voted unanimously to approve the selection, with Commissioner J.D. Johnson abstaining. Johnson said he didn't want to vote for Schwarz, who he said had been disrespectful to commissioners in the past.

"He talked down to us [and] came to court with a pair of slippers on without any socks like we were a bunch of country bumpkins," Johnson said. "I just didn't appreciate his attitude and I wasn't going to vote for

New jail site



him on that team."

County officials have said they do not want the new facility to look like a jail. One option they are considering is carving out retail space on the street level to help the jail fit in with downtown surroundings.

In its pitch to commis-

sioners, Gideon Toal promised to be mindful of the building's location.

"We will strive to make it fit into the context of the buildings downtown," said Randy Gideon, co-chairman and chief executive officer.

Schwarz has designed various high-profile projects in North Texas, including Bass Hall, Rangers Ballpark in Arlington and Southlake Town Square. He will serve as a design consultant.

The design team will also include Wiginton Hooker Jeffrey Architects, a firm that has worked on jails throughout the state.

Five other firms submitted proposals, and the search was eventually narrowed to three. Sheriff Dee Anderson had voiced support for Gideon Toal.

AMAN BATHEJA, 817-390-7695

COURTS

Man's second trial ends in second guilty verdict

Korey Demaine Walker is again convicted of attempted capital murder for shooting a sheriff's deputy after the verdict in his first trial was overturned.

By **MELODY McDONALD**
mjmcDonald@star-telegram.com

FORT WORTH — Three years ago, jurors convicted Korey Demaine Walker of shooting and wounding a Tarrant County sheriff's deputy and sentenced him to 77 years in prison.



Walker

The conviction and sentence were overturned on appeal this year, and Walker got a new trial. But the outcome wasn't much different.

Last week, a different jury found Walker guilty of the same thing, attempted capital murder, and sentenced him to 60 years in prison. Walker must serve at least 30 years before he is eligible for parole — the same amount of time he would have had to serve on the 77-year sentence.

"It is the exact same verdict," said prosecutor Phelesa Guy, who tried the case with Ashley Johnson. "The only difference is 17 years. Once again, they found him guilty of attempted capital murder. They didn't believe it was done in self-defense."

Walker's defense attorneys, Reagan Wynn and Leon Reed Jr., have already filed notice of appeal.

"Obviously, we were disappointed with the verdict, but jurors have to make the call and they did," Wynn said.

Authorities said Tarrant County sheriff's Deputy Mike Tatsch and four other deputies forcibly entered Walker's apartment at the Enclave at City View on Sept. 12, 2003, to arrest Walker on a felony warrant for drug possession — a warrant state District Judge Sharen Wilson issued after Walker failed to appear in her court to receive a six-year prison term.

After deputies opened the front door of the apartment with a battering ram, Tatsch kicked in a bedroom door and was met by gunfire, taking a shot in the abdomen. He and other deputies returned fire. Walker was shot at least seven times.

In October 2004, a jury found Walker guilty of attempted capital murder and sentenced him to 77 years. Wilson stacked the six-year prison sentence on top of it for the drug possession case, bringing his total sentence to 83 years.

This year, the 2nd Court of Appeals in Fort Worth overturned the conviction after deciding that the trial court erred when it denied Walker's request that the jury be instructed to consider whether he fired in self-defense.

According to court documents and Walker's attorneys, Walker was asleep that day when he heard a noise. He went back to sleep, but when another noise awoke him again, he called his girlfriend to see if she was at the door; she wasn't. Walker got up, showered and was brushing his teeth when he heard what sounded like a gunshot.

According to court documents and his attorneys, Walker said he was afraid for his life and believed that he was under attack and needed to defend himself. He grabbed a handgun from a chest of drawers and fired two or three times. Walker denied that he intentionally or knowingly shot Tatsch.

During Walker's retrial, jurors were allowed to consider the defense's argument and whether Walker fired in self-defense. Prosecutors, meanwhile, maintained that Walker was on the run, didn't want to be caught and didn't want to go back to prison so he decided to shoot it out with the officers.

After about 2 ½ hours of deliberation Thursday and Friday, jurors convicted him of attempted capital murder. On Friday, the panel deliberated about an hour before assessing the 60-year term.

Since the shooting, Tatsch has been promoted. He is a sergeant assigned to the patrol division.

Thursday, July 26, 2007

Deputy constable accused of assault

FORT WORTH — A Tarrant County deputy constable who called police to report that he and his live-in girlfriend had fought in their Fort Worth home was arrested Tuesday, accused of assaulting the woman. Kengee Ford, who works for Precinct 8, was released from the Mansfield Jail on Tuesday after posting \$2,500 bail. According to a police report, Ford called police at 12:27 a.m. Officers were told that Ford awoke the 32-year-old woman — the mother of his child — and asked her about phone numbers he had found on her cellphone. Ford accused her of cheating on him, according to the report. When she tried to leave the bedroom, Ford punched her in the face and dragged her by her hair, the report states. On Wednesday afternoon, Precinct 8 Constable Chester Luckett said Ford, a part-time employee, had been suspended pending an investigation.

— Deanna Boyd

Departments get room to grow

The county tax office and Sheriff's Department will move into new digs next year.

By AMAN BATHEJA
abatheja@star-telegram.com

A new addition to Tarrant County's collection of buildings in downtown Fort Worth is starting to take shape.

By late next year, the Tarrant County Plaza building on Taylor Street between Weatherford and West Second streets will be the new home of the county's tax office and the Sheriff's Department.

The moves are part of a major shuffling and renovation of most of the county's downtown offices that will make it better equipped to handle a growing population, said David Phillips, the county facilities manager.

The whole transformation, called the Tarrant County Facility Space Master Plan, will be completed by 2011, Phillips said.

More than a dozen county departments will be transformed in the process. Most will see their space increase. The county law library will become smaller as computers replace some of its books, Phillips said.

The Sheriff's Department will move most of its facilities from 300 Belknap St. to the Plaza building's sixth and seventh floor in the spring, Phillip said. The tax office, where many go to renew license plates and pay property taxes, is



The Tarrant County Plaza building, 200 Taylor St., will be the home of the Sheriff's Department and the county tax office.

S-T/TOM PENNINGTON

expected to move to the building's second and third floors in the summer.

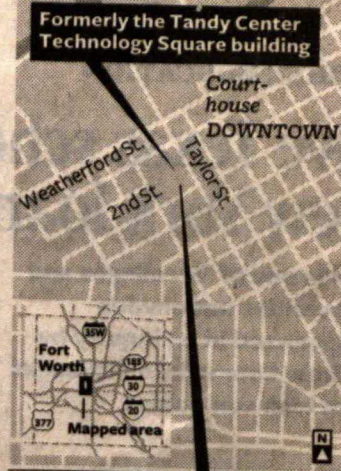
Terry Grisham, a Sheriff's Department spokesman, said officials are still working out the details.

"We're going to have to coexist with a lot of other county departments," Grisham said. "Some of those may not be accustomed to seeing people walking around with handcuffs."

Until 2001, the Plaza building was the Tandy Center Technology Square building, where RadioShack housed its databases, mainframe computers and records before the company moved to its new headquarters. The county bought the seven-story, 300,000-square-foot building and an adjacent parking garage from RadioShack for \$34 million in 2001.

Most of the other changes will be in the County Administration

Tarrant County Plaza



The Sheriff's Department and the County Tax Office will be moving to the building next year.

STAR-TELEGRAM

Building and the old courthouse, both on Weatherford Street. Offices including the county clerk's and the courtroom where County Commissioners meet each week will be renovated and expanded.

County officials are bracing for residents to be disoriented for a while.

Although a new Family Law Center opened in 2005, the occasional visitor still goes to one of the older courthouses for an appointment with a family law judge.

AMAN BATHEJA, 817-390-7695

(A Reprint from an article in The Fort Worth Star-Telegram, dtd 8-2-07)

JAIL FEATURED ON TV SHOW

From the makers of *Cops* comes a show about what happens after the bare-chested drunk with dense tattoos gets arrested,

Inside American Jail has its debut on Court TV tonight starring the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department.

As the name suggests, the show is documentary-style footage of jails around the country.

Producers brought their cameras to the county's Green Bay Jail in the spring, department spokesman Terry Grisham said.

In tonight's segment, Capt. John Pilkington leads an investigation into the source of an inmate's new tattoo.

"They go in unannounced and turn the tank upside down until they find the needles," Grisham said.

Court TV is likely to air two more Tarrant County segments during the show's 13-week run, said Doug Waterman of Langley Productions, the show's creator.

The show is not a completely unbiased documentary: Sheriff's officials got to prove the footage shown.

Tune in at 7 P.M.

--Aman Batheja

CHEERS AND JEERS

Saturday, August 11, 2007

Cheers: To Ernest Domon Sr. and Phillip Fevang of the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department Courtesy Patrol. We had a blowout on busy Texas 360 in Arlington. Before we could finish calling a service company, these men saw the problem and offered to fix it. They had the tire off and the spare on within minutes. Both men refused to accept a tip. Within a mile, we passed these same men helping another motorist.

— Roland and Ann Kelley, Colleyville

Commissioners add \$790,000 to budget plan

Officials remain optimistic that they can cut the property tax rate.

By **AMAN BATHEJA**
abatheja@star-telegram.com

FORT WORTH — Tarrant County commissioners were presented with a balanced budget Monday morning and added about \$790,000 to it by the end of the day.

Despite the extra spending, commis-

sioners said they are committed to cutting the property tax rate by half a cent.

The proposed \$452 million budget called for adding 50 positions, but commissioners approved several more hires. The county has about 4,000 employees.

The Sheriff's Department got an extra \$109,357 to pay for another drug-sniffing dog and a handler.

Sheriff Dee Anderson told commis-

ers that the department needs a dog devoted to searching for drugs in the county's jails, where problems with smuggling have grown in recent years.

Commissioners also approved \$80,009 to hire a health disparities manager, who would examine health-related trends, Public Health Director Lou Brewer said. An example might be tracking infant mortality.

More on COUNTY on 6B

County: Budget proposal calls for 50 new hires

CONTINUED FROM 1B

Commissioners delayed a decision on a \$1.5 million request from the district attorney's office for a drug task force that recently lost its state funding. Commissioners said they hope that either the federal government or area cities will help keep the task force running.

County Judge Glen Whitley said state legislators are "more and more and more shirking their responsibility" by not paying for the task force and other services.

Commissioner Marti VanRavenswaay was absent for the daylong meeting.

County Administrator

G.K. Maenius is proposing a budget with a half-cent cut in the property tax rate, from 27.15 to 26.65 cents per \$100 of assessed value. For the owner of a \$100,000 home, that would mean \$5 off the current yearly tax bill of \$271.50.

Commissioners are also considering a half-cent cut for the hospital district.

Commissioners will hold public hearings on the proposed tax rate Aug. 21 and 28. The final budget is scheduled to be adopted Sept. 11.

AMAN BATHEJA, 817-390-7695

911 CALLS Wednesday, August 15, 2007 | 13B

Cities, sheriff decide to halt jurisdiction debate

Officials say they will answer emergency calls first, ask questions later.

By **MELISSA VARGAS** msanchez@star-telegram.com

Keller, Fort Worth and the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department are making some changes in how they handle accidents on the borders of their jurisdictions.

They will no longer be transferring callers and debating over square inches of land. When in doubt, they'll go out.

The changes come after two well-publicized accidents in less than a year along Wall-Price Road in Northeast Tarrant County. Huge delays resulted while dispatchers and police officers squabbled over jurisdiction and exactly where the borders are.

Sheriff's Department

In a 911 emergency call recording from Thursday's accident, a Fort Worth dispatcher can be heard accepting the call. But, Sheriff's spokesman Terry Grisham said, the dispatcher had an incorrect map and the 5700 block of Wall-Price Road is actually in unincorporated Tarrant County.

The accident, however, was about 2.5 feet from the street in the grass — an area that no department acknowledges is theirs.

Sheriff's Department representatives met with Fort Worth officials Tuesday to make sure everyone's computer maps are updated. They also decided that for all major accidents and injury-related calls, they will respond first and hash out jurisdiction later.

Sheriff's officials said they have been working on the jurisdiction issue since before Thursday's accident.

Fort Worth

Police and city officials are joining forces to create a detailed map for dispatchers that incorporates every bend and twist in the city's boundary. After reading a report in the *Star-Telegram* about the border disputes, city officials and police decided to take immediate action, police spokesman Lt. Dean Sullivan said.

Wednesday, August 29, 2007

Tarrant County advances on jail project

FORT WORTH — Tarrant County commissioners on Tuesday authorized county staff to negotiate a construction-management services contract with Gilbane Building Co. for a new maximum-security jail in downtown Fort Worth. The Rhode Island-based company built the county's Family Law Center, which opened in 2005. The jail will be built on the site of the county's Muller Building on West Weatherford Street, next door to the Tarrant County Corrections Center. In July, commissioners selected a team led by Gideon Toal, a Fort Worth architectural and engineering firm, to design the jail. Construction is set to begin in 2009 and be finished by 2012.

— Aman Batheja



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