

Texas Ranger often mistaken for baseball player

By KARI FLUEGEL
Reporter

Bob Connell is a Texas Ranger of the old-fashioned type. He never has been mistaken for the Lone Ranger, but he has been asked if he's a baseball player.

He wears a gray, felt Stetson pushed back on his forehead and behind his gray jacket he has a small, silver badge on his shirt pocket. The badge, about the size of a silver dollar, has a star and says "Texas Ranger."

For almost half of his 28-year career in law enforcement, Connell has been one of the 94 Texas Rangers who are the criminal investigators for the state of Texas.

The Texas Rangers are the oldest state investigative unit in the United States. Every state has criminal investigators, but only Texas has the Rangers.

"Anyone who is much of a student of Texas history would know that there are all kinds of stories about old-time Texas Rangers," Connell says. "Probably some of them are very colorful. Most of them are based on truth, but I think there have been some things that have been blown out of proportion over the years."

"None of us are super men. We all put our pants on like everybody else does — one leg at a time. That's about the only way to do it."

The 94 Rangers are divided

into six regions with 12 to 14 Rangers stationed throughout each region. Each Ranger has several counties in his territory. Connell covers Brazos, Burleson, Leon, Madison and Robertson counties.

Connell spends little time in his office. Usually he is out traveling around his territory.

"I'm out a whole lot," he says. "I don't like office duty. I meet a lot of good people and work with a lot of good people."

With the exception of Brazos County, the law enforcement agencies in the area are small departments. The Ranger Service exists to be an assistant organization to the smaller departments, Connell says.

Rangers attend school each

year to learn new investigative techniques and innovations in order to aid the smaller departments with investigations.

"Besides being an extra body on the scene, I'm one more man to help," Connell says. "Hopefully I've got some expertise to lend to the situation and try to help out."

To become a Texas Ranger, one must first be 35 years old and have at least eight years of law enforcement experience.

The majority of the Rangers come from the Department of Public Safety troopers, but they aren't required to be troopers before entering the Rangers.

Connell was a state trooper before he entered the Ranger Service.

"It is as different as daylight and dark, because all the trooper's work is directed toward traffic enforcement," he says. "All my work is directed toward criminal enforcement."

The most publicized case in Connell's career was a triple murder in Hearne during early 1970.

A banker, his wife and daughter were killed when three men forced their way into the banker's home with the intention of forcing the banker to open the vault at the bank. The vault had a time-lock, so the banker could not have opened the safe anyway.

The men then killed the banker and his family with a souvenir Bowie knife which the

banker had purchased in Mexico.

"We got lucky on that one," Connell says.

Within two to three days, Connell and the Robertson County sheriff knew who the murderers were, and within a week the three men were in custody.

"You know, sometimes with a little luck, anything will do for brains," he says.

The knife used in the murder hangs on Connell's office wall. The sheriff gave the knife to Connell after the trial as a keepsake because he had spent so much time on the case.

Though Connell deals with murders, burglaries, thefts, assaults and rapes, he says he

doesn't feel his job is dangerous.

"It's probably not as dangerous as walking across Texas Avenue at certain times of the day," he says.

Connell also says that it takes no different qualities to become a Ranger than to become any other type of investigator, but it does take a lot of patience.

"Every time you receive some information, you've got to run that information down, and a lot of times it's no good," he says. "Then you've just got to back off and go another direction, and try to keep at it till you do get the right answer. Sometimes you never do."

Architecture job market looks good

By ADA FAY WOOD
Reporter

The College of Architecture and Environmental Design has a simple measure for the strength of the market for its graduates: when firms in both Dallas and Houston are hiring it means happy days are here again.

Last year activity in Dallas was slow, and even in Houston, where there are nearly always jobs, opportunity was off a bit. But this year the excitement is back, with both big cities in full swing.

Larry Priesmeyer, associate professor, says salaries for bachelor's degrees this year are ranging from \$15,000 to

\$18,000. If students stay another year and get a master's degree in Architecture or participate in the new Pre-Professional Experience Program they can expect to start at about \$20,000.

The most lucrative offers that come to the college right now are those for interior designers, Priesmeyer said. That specialization requires a graduate degree.

Graduates with a Bachelor of Environmental Design usually start as draftsmen under a project architect, working on models and designs.

The Pre-Professional Experience Program gives the students the chance to co-op with a firm for six months and be

treated as a normal employee — receiving a regular salary. Students must have completed all of their sophomore design classes to participate.

The experience that students get from working in this program goes toward the eight years of school and work that is

required to qualify for the test to become a professional architect.

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'Insight' provides new opportunity for bull sessions

By PATRICIA FLINT
Reporter

The conversation is casual and spontaneous as students and faculty sit in a circle exchanging opinions and asking questions of each other — learning and communicating.

Such is the setting for each of the talks in the discussion series of Memorial Student Center Insight.

Insight is the brainchild of Jill Thrash, the coordinator of the series. She developed it a year ago, and it is now supported by four MSC committees.

Thrash says the primary goal of Insight is to provide a "grass-roots" type of discussion to faculty and students about subjects other than academics. The second goal is to provide understanding and to promote member interaction among the committees that are sponsoring the program.

The committees involved in Insight are: MSC Great Issues, MSC Political Forum, the Endowed Lecture Series and the Student Conference on National Affairs.

The adviser for Great Issues said, "I personally think that's one of the neatest things about the program because we're drawing the four committees that may not do a program on whatever the Insight topic is."

"It adds an extra dimension to all the programs," Sue Liebert said.

Insight has been averaging 10-20 people a session. Therefore, in terms of numbers she says that it has not been a success, but she believes it has been successful because many students are now able to form educated opinions on subjects they formerly knew little about.

Thrash says that students often don't know enough to start arguing, so basically the discussions are learning sessions.

"SCONA has been criticized for this," she says. "People gather around a speaker and say, 'where did you get your degree?'"

Thrash says students must work to learn because without knowledge a person isn't able to form an educated opinion. They invite people who don't know about the subject and want to learn, and those who do know about it and either want to participate in the conversation or just listen.

There will be an Insight discussion Thursday entitled "Student Input: Is There Any?" It will be held in the 146B MSC at 12:30 p.m.

As for plans for the future, Thrash says, "I'm interested in making it an every other week or once a week thing. I'm interested in it staying informal — an informal atmosphere with moderate attendance."

If it becomes too large she says it will become a lecture and people will not want to participate.

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