

Excuses for late taxes abound

# Auditor has heard everything

Associated Press

HOUSTON — An Internal Revenue Service auditor says she's heard just about every excuse imaginable when it comes to tax records and this tax season won't be any different.

Tanaya Huschka, 39, has audited thousands of people in the seven years she has worked for the IRS in Houston. She has heard creative excuses for misplaced financial records, has seen people cry and probably has heard every swear word invented.

"If it rains an inch in this town, 90 percent of the records were on

the floor and ruined," Huschka says.

Most people aren't out to cheat the government, but they just know too little about the legality of some deductions, she says.

The IRS audits about 1 percent of the individual returns filed each year, so the chances are good that a wage earner will be audited sometime, Huschka says.

The suspect returns are sent to IRS offices and taxpayers receive letters notifying them they must bring their records for a certain tax year to the IRS, she says.

A common violation made is

claiming street clothing as uniforms, she says.

A maitre d' tried unsuccessfully to claim the cost of his taxed as a business expense, swearing to Huschka that it had become so stained with spaghetti sauce that he couldn't wear it anywhere outside of work.

Then there was the exotic dancer who tried to show that her G-strings and tassels were legitimate business expenses.

An audit usually lasts two hours and doesn't necessarily end in a penalty for the taxpayer. Often Huschka finds the tax paid

was too much and a happy taxpayer walks out of the office with a refund.

It takes a certain mettle to be an auditor, she said. After years of hearing excuses, she has a "jaundiced eye" and it takes a good story to convince her to reconstruct missing records.

It also takes more than manure to get her to not look at records. One man brought his records in empty manure bags, she says.

"I bet he never thought we'd look at them," Huschka says. "But we did."

# Investigation leads to more drug charges

Associated Press

MEXICO CITY — Ernesto Fonseca, reputed leader of La Familia drug trafficking empire, and 24 others arrested in the investigation of the kidnap-murder of an American narcotics agent, were ordered Monday to stand trial on a variety of drug and weapons charges, the judge hearing the case said.

The action by Federal Judge Jesus Arzate Hidalgo brings to at least 40 the number of people ordered to stand trial in the case.

They include reputed drug baron Rafael Caro Quintero, thought to be another La Familia leader, and men-

tioned by Mexican and U.S. officials as a key figure in the slaying of Drug Enforcement Administration agent Enrique Camarena Salazar, and a Mexican pilot who worked with him in Guadalajara.

The two dozen, arrested with Fonseca in Puerto Vallarta last Tuesday, include current and former agents of the Jalisco state judicial police and two agents of the Federal Security Police.

Under Mexican law, there is no jury trial and the defendants, if not eligible for bail, remain imprisoned while the judge takes up to a year to decide if they are guilty or innocent.



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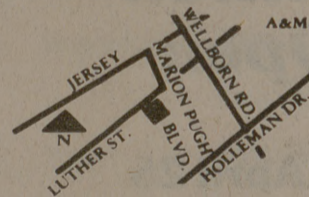
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