

Once wanted to be firefighter

Sheriff works to meet needs

MCKINNEY (AP) — As a round-faced, 10-year-old boy, he was the McKinney Fire Department's mascot. Now, at age 36, Terry Box is the sheriff of Collin County.

Although he wears a suit to work and looks more like a businessman than a sheriff, the soft-spoken Box is indisputably a law enforcement officer. Originally, however, he had his sights set on becoming a firefighter like his father, who was a member of the McKinney Fire Department until his retirement three years ago.

Box's parents, C.G. and Dovie Box Jr., now live in Quitman.

Even though years have passed since he was the mascot of the fire department, Box can vividly recall the flurry of activity whenever a fire alarm sounded.

"My father dropped whatever he was doing and we dashed off to the station and jumped into this fire truck that looked like an old Model T. . . . I was really somebody, I thought," he said, chuckling. "But I think being around adults at that time did help form my character, my principles."

Box did not begin to think about law enforcement as a career until he landed a job as a po-

lice dispatcher in McKinney during his senior year in high school. Three years later, in 1971, he joined the Plano Police Department as a patrolman.

After attending the police academy in Arlington, Box hit the streets of Plano. With about eight

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*Terry Box,
Collin County sheriff*

or nine officers on the force, Box called it "a thriving department."

In 1981, Box returned to McKinney where he served under Sheriff Joe Steenbergen, first as a lieutenant and then as chief deputy.

Through the years he has watched many changes take place in law enforcement. Because of the large number of people who are moving to McKinney and the surrounding countryside, Box said the department has been challenged to keep pace with the phenomenal growth.

"The people who are moving here from Richardson, Plano and

Carrollton are demanding the same quality of law enforcement that they had in their cities," Box said. "When they call for help, they want a professional law officer at their door."

With growth comes headaches. Box pointed out that providing

good law enforcement can often be frustrated by the sheer number of people who might be working outdoors at any given time.

Box said it's difficult for officers to distinguish people who may be legitimately working on a street or in a neighborhood from someone who may be unlawfully loitering.

Many people, especially newcomers to the area, are not familiar with what a sheriff actually does. As sheriff, Box's role is that of administrator, overseeing the budget and operation of the sheriff's office.

Box is sensitive to the fact that

everyone wants to talk to "the sheriff" when a problem arises. He makes every attempt to return all his phone calls.

"I may not be very smart, but I know how to return phone calls," he said, laughing. "I think people appreciate that."

The road to Collin County sheriff is paved with bittersweet memories for Box. Shortly after he joined the department as a lieutenant, George Brakefield, the chief deputy and a very close friend of Box's, was killed in a car accident on East Parker Road.

"I made chief deputy that way," he said.

A little over one year later, in the summer of 1984, Sheriff Steenbergen was involved in a car accident — on East Parker Road.

"He was sick for almost nine months before he passed away. And I got the appointment. I'm sitting here in office because two people are dead. It's a really weird feeling, if you know what I mean," he said, looking down at his hands, folded on his desk.

Because of the circumstances, Box refused to move into the sheriff's office, preferring instead to keep his office situated in the chief deputy's office.

'Fresno' to parody soaps, miniseries

FRESNO, Calif. (AP) — Putting the focus on power, passion and prodigality, "Fresno" is taking the miniseries format to outrageous extremes.

CBS' six-hour, five-part saga of lust and greed in the world's raisin capital is a satire of the prime-time serial, not of this dusty, sweltering and much-maligned city in California's heartland 200 miles southeast of San Francisco.

"If people hope to see a city savaged, they will be disappointed," said Barry Kemp, producer of the MTM Enterprises production that is scheduled to air in November.

"Fresno" will parody prime-time soaps and epic-oriented miniseries

with a saga of the raisin-rich Kensington family dynasty in this city famous for lacking everything else that California is noted for.

If it's a hit, "Fresno" could usher in a new wave of comedy, break miniseries out of the self-imposed rut of dramatic or historical TV novels, and make the town Johnny Carson loves to mock a place of at least passing interest.

This town is tired of the jokes.

No wonder. When Rand-McNally published its ranking of 277 metropolitan cities in the United States two years ago, Fresno came in last for quality of living. The sneers by image-conscious Californians

haven't stopped.

"This is our chance," boasted Mayor Dale Doig, who gets to play a bit part in a costume ball dressed as Yul Brynner playing the King of Siam.

His big line is to ask series' star Carol Burnett to dance. She turns him down.

"Fresno people are bound to feel better about themselves. This series makes the point that Fresno is a place of glamour, greed and revenge, all the things that make life worthwhile," deadpanned actor Anthony Heald in a break during two recent days of shooting here in 102-degree weather.

What's different about "Fresno" is this: For the first time, a television miniseries will be a comedy and a major-length parody.

CBS is betting on a ratings winner with a cast that includes Miss Burnett, Charles Grodin, Teri Garr, Gregory Harrison, Dabney Coleman and Jerry Van Dyke.

The story of the Kensington family's battle for control of the raisin industry and thus control of this city will be played out as a commentary on the fascination with wealth, power and shallowness evidenced by the popularity of shows like "Dynasty" and "Dallas," the producer said.

Study links traffic jams to stress

TUCSON, Ariz. (AP) — "A traffic jam is like a haunted house — it changes a normal citizen into a monster," says Raymond W. Novaco, associate professor at the University of California at Irvine.

Novaco, an authority on transportation and the behavior of drivers, told an audience at his speech on "Traffic Congestion and Commuter Stress" that congestion has been a worldwide problem since the Romans first used horse-drawn carts.

He said his studies have verified a relationship between exposure to rush-hour traffic and adverse physiological reactions.

To make matters worse, Novaco said, increased temperature and a high noise level in traffic produce higher levels of stress, as well as discomfort and general fatigue. The heat and humidity of traffic also result in decreased driving performance and errors, Novaco said.

He said his research also indicates that people who drive their cars to work alone have higher absenteeism rates than people who carpool or use other kinds of transportation.

Tax bill won't hurt oil industry too badly, state experts say

DALLAS (AP) — Texas oil industry officials say the nation's new tax bill is likely to siphon off investment capital because of scaled-down deductions, but most said the tax overhaul didn't put as big a squeeze on the industry as had been feared.

The tax bill could have been worse, said Jim Hunt, chairman of Dallas-based Cenergy Corp. But he said it still will add to the problems of the industry, which was hit by a sharp decrease in oil prices at the beginning of this year.

"It's certainly not going to help (exploration)," he said. "The shame of it is they've done it all in the name of reducing taxes."

The tax changes come at a time when the Texas economy is reeling from collapsing oil prices and the accompanying high unemployment rates and low sales tax revenues. Legislators are meeting in a special session this month to make up for a predicted \$3.5 billion shortfall.

"We're just in what's known as a plain old classic recession," said Tony Proffitt, spokesman for Comptroller Bob Bullock.

Proffitt said the fact that much of the oil and gas industry's tax deductions were left intact will help stabilize the industry, thereby helping the state.

"In the short run, it (the tax overhaul) will kind of pinch us a little bit, like the sales tax deduction. In the long run it should be beneficial because it will mean more people will retain more of their income and can spend that income on things that will generate economic activity," he said.

The tax overhaul eliminates the deduction for sales taxes and retains the one for state income taxes — doubly painful for Texas, which has no state income tax and depends on sales taxes for much of its revenue. The bill leaves intact property tax deductions.

Proffitt said 27 percent of taxpayers itemized in 1984, taking an average \$449 each in sales tax deductions. Under the new bill, taxpayers will pay a greater share of the burden because there is no state income tax here, he said. Texans traditionally have been strongly opposed to such a tax.

The final tax overhaul plan approved by a House-Senate conference committee preserved a one-year writeoff for intangible drilling costs and depletion allowances.

However, the lower tax rates and loss of investment tax credits probably will dampen the enthusiasm of investors, said Richard Adkerson of Arthur Andersen & Co. in Houston.

Lower tax rates mean a deduction will be worth less to investors.

Tom Haywood of the North Texas Oil and Gas Association said investment-related portions of the tax bill make it a "nail in the coffin instead of a hammer trying to pry the lid off the coffin."

But Haywood conceded the industry had braced for a less favorable tax bill. "There is no doubt the fear cast into the oil and gas industry over what might happen makes this look good," he said.

Wichita Falls oilman Ed Spragins said the tax bill is a risky experiment because of the investment-related provisions.

McCarter Middlebrook, vice president of taxes for Dallas-based Diamond Shamrock Corp., also said changes in energy-related taxes, such as the loss of investment tax credits and lower tax rates, would hurt in the short run.

However, the lower drilling costs and the fact that exploration may be a less attractive investment may mean that only serious investors will get involved in drilling ventures, Middlebrook said.

"There is merit in getting the tax shelter aspect out of the oil business," he said. "In the long run, the industry could rebound."

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