

The Baton

The Travis County Sheriff's Officers Association
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Frasier appoints former sheriff to Chief Deputy post

Bailey reflects on lessons learned as he faces new challenges in TCSO administration



New leadership for TCSO in 2003. Sheriff Margo Frasier says Doayne Bailey brings new energy to the job of Chief Deputy. He was appointed to replace Dan Richards, who retired this month.

(Photo by Shelly Wilkison)

BY SHELLY WILKISON

Doyne Bailey says during his almost 12 years as Travis County Sheriff, he didn't earn a reputation for being the smartest guy who ever put on a badge, but he worked hard and cared about his troops.

It's that dedication and sense of commitment, in addition to his honesty and leadership experience that compelled Sheriff Margo Frasier to appoint him Chief Deputy this month.

"Doayne is one of the most honest people I know. In Doayne, I have a person I can bounce ideas off of and get straightforward, well thought out advice," Sheriff Frasier told *The Baton* recently. "He and I have similar beliefs concerning how we should go about serving the public."

Chief Bailey says he's just "tickled to be back home."

"I'm at the stage of my life where I'm especially grateful for the blessings in my life, and this is one of the neatest things to ever happen to me," he said. "People have been very gracious, and have made me feel welcome and at home."

Chief Bailey was four times elected Sheriff on the Democratic ticket, serving from 1981-1992. He left office just before his fourth term began, accepting an appointment from then-Gov. Ann Richards to head the Criminal Justice Division of the Governor's Office. As director, he was charged with managing and distributing grant money to the state's law enforcement agencies. While there, he was also instrumental in the creation of the Texas Most Wanted Program (now under the control of the Texas Department of Public Safety) that targeted parole violators.

(See **BAILEY**, Page 6)

Could the third time be the charm?

TCSOA asks Legislature for Meet & Confer, again

By Shelly Wilkison

State Rep. Terry Keel will introduce legislation this month that would give Meet and Confer rights to Travis County Sheriff's officers, and TCSOA leaders and their lobbyist are hopeful that this could be the year it becomes state law.

The Association has attempted to pass a Meet and Confer bill in the past two legislative sessions, but both times the measure never made it past a House committee

vote.

"It is our job to continue to fight for a voice in employment matters. The County continues to play favorites in the workplace, so Meet and Confer is our best bet as a shot at fair pay and improved working conditions," said TCSOA President Greg Martinez.

Association leaders have been told by CLEAT not to expect an easy time in the Capitol due to

(See **MEET**, Page 3)

TCSOA Celebrates the Season

See Photos Pages 4-5



PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

by Greg Martinez

Looking forward to challenges of 2003

A tumultuous year has passed in which many changes occurred within our Association. We look forward to the upcoming year in which your Board of Directors will be working hard to improve working conditions, employee benefits and continue to expand on the reputation our organization has garnered this past year.



There are many hurdles to overcome, much time is spent by a few for many, and we hope that more of you will step to the forefront and help with upcoming endeavors. We also need to increase our member-

ship.

As our country faces the likelihood of war, tight and lean budgets will be the words echoed by elected officials. However, we are ready to negotiate and reach equitable compromises that will bring long-term improvements instead of immediate ones. It is my sincere hope that our leaders will not neglect those who perform a vital and integral part in public safety. I am very optimistic that better times lie ahead. But no matter what comes at America, we will stand united for the common good of all.

We will soon be losing staff who will be called up for military duty. We promise you that we will keep you all in our thoughts. Your fami-

lies can count on us to lend assistance when needed. Remind them that we are but a phone call away. We hope that wherever you find yourself that some of the things learned at TCSO will help you in overcoming obstacles.

I hope that you all experienced some joyful holidays and are ready to tackle the new year with vigor and encouragement that things will change for the better in 2003.

Please keep in mind that you do make a difference in your workplace and that the Travis County Sheriff's Office and this Association are only as good as you want to make them.

CSC keeps 6-month rule for hearings

By Shelly Wilkison

After some discussion, the Travis County Civil Service Commission decided January 15 not to change a rule that requires it to conduct hearings on appeals within six months of their receipt.

Commission Coordinator Lori Pickering said the panel was considering the change because one of its three members was unable to attend Commission meetings during the fall because of his obligations as an attorney representing one of the defendants in the Yogurt Shop trials. As a result, some hearings were postponed past the six-month deadline.

Mrs. Pickering said she contacted the affected employees and gave each the option of proceeding with a hearing before only two members of the Commission, but each chose to wait for a quorum.

The Commission adopted the six-month rule about one and one-half years ago to demonstrate to Sheriff's Office employees that its intent was to hear grievances as soon as possible. Six months seemed at that time like a reasonable time period, she said.

The Commission chose to revisit the rule this month because Mrs. Pickering said it "doesn't want to have a policy in place that it can't always live up to."

She said there are times when an employee may also want to

delay a hearing past the six-month deadline, although she acknowledged that to date, such a request had not been made.

"I'm pleased that the Commission chose to maintain the six-month time frame," said Travis County Sheriff's Officers Association President Greg Martinez, who attended the meeting. "The rules establishing deadlines at each stage of the appeals process serve as additional protection for employees, who without them could likely be forced to wait even longer to obtain some kind of official closure on their cases.

"Under the current time elements, we believe lower-level management and the administration is allotted plenty of time to consider disciplinary appeals, and we are pleased that the Commission chose not to change a rule that would have allowed the process to drag on even longer," he said.

Under county civil service, an employee may appeal the discipline at each step up the chain of command, and each supervisor has 10 days to respond. The Chief Deputy is allotted 15 days. If the appeal reaches the Sheriff's desk, she has 20 days to respond if the discipline was less than a termination, and 30 days in a termination case.

Mrs. Pickering said if the Sheriff does not respond to the appeal

within the given time frame, the decision of the lower-level supervisor stands. At that point, the employee can appeal to the Civil Service Commission.

Sheriff Margo Frasier says she tries to respond to appeals within the given time frame, but sometimes it's not feasible.

She explained that she requires an employee appealing a disciplinary ruling to her to meet with her personally.

"The problem often is that people bring up something new at the meeting with me or claim that someone else in the chain has not looked at something fairly," she said. "Particularly when the decision will result in someone losing their job or their rank, I try to follow just about every rabbit trail they put out.

"Most of the time, given the other demands on my time, that can not occur within the 20 days of when they file their notice of appeal," she continued. "A lot of time, their schedules (not mine) do not allow for the face-to-face meeting until 7-10 days after they file the notice."

Mrs. Pickering said because of the delay created by the Yogurt Shop trials, the Commission has more appeals pending before it than ever before.

Prior to the January 15 meeting, (See **APPEALS**, Page 3)

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Meet & Confer for TCSOA possible in 2003

(Continued from Page 1)

redistricting, a huge turnover in the Legislature and the overall inexperience of the newly-elected lawmakers.

"While we agree with CLEAT that this will be a difficult issue at best, we understand that it's our job to keep the pressure on," said President Martinez.

While the dynamics of the Legislature may not present the perfect climate for passing the bill this session, President Martinez and CLEAT Legislative Director Charley Wilkison acknowledge that a lot of things have changed for the better since the Association's last attempt in 2001, improving the bill's chances this year.

Securing the support of Rep. Keel, R-Austin, was the group's major accomplishment.

"Rep. Keel is a well-respected leader of the House with a solid reputation as someone who fights hard for what he believes," said Mr. Wilkison. "He's a team player who has the ear of the state's top Republican elected officials, and I feel like his support will make the difference."

TCSOA bills filed in previous sessions were authored by former State Rep. Sherri Greenberg (1999) and former State Rep. Glen Maxey (2001). As in previous ses-

sions, Sen. Gonzalo Barrientos, D-Austin, will sponsor the bill in the Senate.

Mr. Wilkison said in previous sessions, the TCSOA bill was held up in the House County Affairs Committee by its chairman, former State Rep. Tom Ramsay, D-Mount Vernon. Mr. Ramsay lost his home district during redistricting and left the House in 2002 to run for Texas Agriculture Commissioner, but was unsuccessful.

At press time, it was not known who would be appointed to chair that committee, nor was it certain that the proposal would be directed there as it has in the past. The Keel legislation also had not received a bill number by press time.

"Compared to what we had before, anything would be better," said Mr. Wilkison. "Mr. Ramsay was not a friend of the working men and women of corrections and law enforcement."

CLEAT's Chief Lobbyist since 1998, Mr. Wilkison said CLEAT has been the only law enforcement group statewide to pass a Meet and Confer bill in each legislative session during the past decade. Last session, Gov. Perry signed into law meet and confer rights for Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County.

Mr. Wilkison said CLEAT and

TCSOA have a good relationship with the Governor, which also helps the bill's chances. The unions' strong support of Gov. Perry in his campaign for Governor last fall made a difference on Election Day, he said.

While traditionally, Republicans have not been the leaders on labor issues, Mr. Wilkison says he believes things are changing under the leadership and influence of Gov. Perry.

However, lobbyists representing non-police labor groups are predicting gloom and doom under the Republican-controlled Legislature.

"CLEAT's legislative successes in recent years can be directly attributed to our willingness to build relationships with elected officials on both sides of the aisle, whereas other labor groups have a history of supporting primarily Democratic Party candidates," Mr. Wilkison said. "As a result, we find ourselves in a better position today than most other labor organizations."

President Martinez said TCSOA will play an active role in the lobbying effort, but will rely heavily on Mr. Wilkison's expertise and experience to guide them through the process.

If the Meet and Confer bill is signed into law, an election would be held to determine which officers

association should serve as negotiating agent for all TCSO peace officers and corrections officers.

President Martinez explained that under Meet and Confer, the negotiating process is permissive in that both sides are not required by law to meet or to reach an agreement.

Sheriff Margo Frasier, who supported the bill in 2001, is reserving judgement for the time being. She said her primary concern is that the legislation be fair to both TCSOA and TCSLEA when it comes to the process whereby employees would elect a bargaining agent.

"In a police department, that is usually without complication since the officers simply vote as to Group A or Group B," she said. "It is not that simple in a Sheriff's Office, particularly when there is one group whose membership is almost exclusively corrections and another group whose membership is almost exclusively law enforcement. Our country is founded on the concepts of democracy, not majority rule."

President Martinez said he will keep members posted on the bill's progress on the TCSOA website and in *The Baton*. CLEAT members may monitor legislation at www.cleat.org.

Appeals process takes time

(Continued from Page 2)

she said there were two cases to be heard and one expected in the coming weeks.

The Commission also received appeals from TCSOA and five of its Board members who were issued a written reprimand by former Chief Dan Richards in October.

When asked about the status of those appeals, Sheriff Frasier said she would not discuss the "status of disciplinary action in specifics." However, she said some of the employees involved have met with her and some have not.

"Until they do so, the ball is in their court," she said.

Sheriff Frasier would not say how many appeals are pending her review.

www.tcsOA.org

Texas Special Olympics

Spring and Summer Schedule 2003

February 22. Basketball Competition

Delco Center, Austin ISD.

Opening Ceremony will be in the morning.

April 25-26. Spring Games (largest local competition)

Cycling, gymnastics, tennis, soccer and athletics.

Opening Ceremony is 7 p.m. April 25 at Connolly High School Stadium.

May 1. Lighting of the Torch Ceremony

Begins Torch Run for Summer Games. Four torches will be carried to four regions of the state. Officers are encouraged to attend.

May 23-26. Summer Games (largest state competition)

Southwest Texas State University.

Opening ceremony is the evening of May 24.

*** Purchase T-shirts for \$10 each to help support the Law Enforcement Torch Run by calling Alex Leo at 854-7854.**

T-shirts go on sale later this month.

TCSOA Celebrates the Holiday Season



Hundreds of TCSOA members and their guests attended this year's Christmas party at the Airport Hilton. Many guests commented to Board members that "the food was better than last year, and we didn't have to buy tickets." Can't beat that for a party...

(A) TCSOA Treasurer Tim Henry and his wife, Rosalinde. (B) Emily Trevino, Paula Cross and Maria Chandler. (C) Irene Reyes, Wendy Marroquin, Josefina Marroquin and Juan Marroquin. (D) Ken Ross and TCSOA President Greg Martinez. (E) Sheriff Margo Frasier didn't hesitate to "cut the rug" with employees. (Photo on Page 1) TCSOA Vice President Alex Leo and his wife, Jacqueline.

TCSOA Honors...

LAWRENCE SALAS was named TCSOA Law Enforcement Officer of the Year for his unselfish dedication to the department's employees in regards to weapons qualifications. He goes out of his way to help others meet state and local mandates, regardless of whether he is on or off duty. *(Photo A)*

MICHAEL TAYLOR was named Corrections Officer of the Year for demonstrating exemplary courage in an attempt to save the lives of several people involved in a head-on collision in May. Officer Taylor was on his way home from work when he was the first to come upon the crash scene. He attempted life-saving techniques on one victim who later died on the scene. Officer Taylor was treated for blood exposure. *(Photo B, second from left)*

BELINDA REDPATH was named TCSOA Supervisor of the Year for leading the transition in 2001 from the old Central Booking into the current facility. Lt. Redpath fought for better equipment and additional staff for the section to improve officer safety. She displayed an enormous amount of courage and leadership, and in doing so, earned the respect of her troops. *(Photo E, second from left)*

LUCY MARTINEZ was named TCSOA Civilian of the Year for her tireless efforts on behalf of all employees. Her tenure spans five sheriffs, and her knowledge of the department's inner-workings has benefitted TCSOA members. *(Photo C)*

DAN RICHARDS received an Award of Appreciation for his many years of service to the department and its employees. Chief Richards retired this month. *(Photo D)*



A

B

C

D

E

Bailey hopes for good rapport with troops

(Continued from Page 1)

He left the Governor's Office to become Executive Director of the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission; and two years ago, went to work for Seton Hospitals as Director of Security where he worked until October 2002.

"I guess I was looking for something else to do. My wife was getting tired of me hanging around the house," he laughed, "but, I never expected this. I appreciate being here, and am glad that they (the troops) didn't set up a petition to not let me come."

One of his first official acts as the new sheriff in 1981 was to hire Dan Richards as his chief deputy. The two men had worked together in the Austin Police Department during Bailey's 12 years of service there.

"I had a great deal of respect for Dan, and if he hadn't been working out at the airport at the time, I probably wouldn't have been able to talk him into joining me," he laughed.

Now his successor as second in command, Chief Bailey says it will be difficult following in Richards' footsteps.

"I think my biggest fear is not being able to live up to Dan's reputation," said Chief Bailey.

Chief Bailey, who spoke with *The Baton* after only one week on the job, said his main goal is to be "a good #2 man to the Sheriff."

"I gain my job satisfaction vicariously through the success of others," he said. "What makes me happiest is to see people grow and succeed, and get the recognition they deserve. I enjoy helping people reach their potential."

As sheriff, Chief Bailey said he regularly put aside his administrative duties to spend time on patrol and in the jails.

"Back when I was sheriff, we had two guys (on patrol) to work the entire county. So, I'd go out there to help and would end up getting lost," he laughed. "I'd have to call dispatch for help. I made a few arrests, but needless to say, I never made any serious contribu-

tion to law enforcement."

He said one of his fondest memories was an encounter he had with a rookie corrections officer as he attempted to enter the secure area of the jail. He laughs as he recalls the officer, who is still with TCSO, mistaking him for a lawyer.

What he learned from spending time with the troops on the street and in the jail was that it was easier to influence officers as their peer, he said. As Chief Deputy, he's looking forward to getting back out there again.

Chief Bailey, who served as president of the Austin Police Association from 1975-76, said over the years he's seen firsthand the value in maintaining a good working relationship between management and the union of the rank and file.

"The union is going to make the administration mad from time to time. That's just the nature of it. But I believe both sides ought to be able to handle their differences in a gentlemanly way, away from the

"The union is going to make the administration mad from time to time. That's just the nature of it. But I believe both sides ought to be able to handle their differences in a gentlemanly way, away from the public eye."

Chief Deputy Doyne Bailey

public eye," he said. "The public can't separate the association from the department. So, when Joe citizen reads about a flap between the association and the sheriff, he loses respect for people in those roles. It eats away at their (the public's) confidence in our ability to make good decisions and conduct ourselves in a dignified manner."

Chief Bailey said the most effective relationship between labor and management comes about when both sides develop a level of trust between them, and believe that both are committed to doing their best for the community and the department.

"I think the Chief Deputy has a role to play with employees and employee associations," said Sheriff Frasier. "That role is one of listening to the concerns and sug-



Armed with a pleasant personality and a quick wit, Chief Deputy Doyne Bailey appears at ease in his new administrative role.

(Photo by Shelly Wilkison)

gestions of employees and determining whether changes should be made in policy, procedure, and/or practice."

As Sheriff, Chief Bailey earned a reputation for looking out for his troops and is responsible for securing county civil service for sheriff's office employees during his administration.

He was a major proponent of the system because he said it added a layer of protection for workers. Over the years, he said he's heard positive things about the current Civil Service Commission and believes the system still works well.

Chief Bailey admits he has a lot to learn about being Chief. After all, a lot of things have changed in his absence and the department has seen incredible growth as the county grows. But one thing that doesn't seem to have changed much is the department's relationship with the commissioners court, although he admits it seems to have improved under Sheriff Frasier.

"During the early part of my term, I dealt with a pretty contentious commissioners court and it seemed to take a long time to gain the credibility of the court," he said. "Today, county government has improved in that it seems to be more efficient and having more resources has a lot to do with it."

Chief Bailey said he looks forward to working with commissioners on issues concerning the Sheriff's Office.

"I'm a lot more confident about

trying to work with them now because I have a greater understanding of their job," he said.

Once a popular elected official among Travis County Democrats, Chief Bailey says he considers himself now to be more of an Independent.

"I don't think I was ever really a hard-line Democrat, but I guess I was Democrat enough to pass the smell test with the Governor (Richards)," he said.

Today, he says he has no political aspirations and puts to rest speculation that he may be being groomed to take over as Sheriff if Sheriff Frasier leaves office.

Sheriff Frasier admits she had considered a run for another office, but reconsidered partly upon the advice of Chief Bailey.

"When I asked Chief Bailey to join me, I told him that I was not certain that I would run again and I wanted him to know that before making his decision," she said. "Chief Bailey encouraged me to take some time to think about my decision and encouraged me to run again. I agreed as I realized that part of the reason I was vacillating about running was that I couldn't imagine life without Chief Richards."

Regardless of Sheriff Frasier's political aspirations, Chief Bailey says he has no interest in being sheriff again.

"I did that and I did it as well as I could. Being sheriff is a job that really wears on a person," he said.

Looking ahead, Chief Bailey (See **CHIEF**, Page 8)

Nurse reinstated after being fired because polygraph returned inconclusive results

Only nine months shy of retirement after nearly 20 years of service, Bill Moore received a letter the day before Christmas Eve terminating his employment with the Sheriff's Office.

While he had been the subject of an investigation some 18 months earlier, he said he never imagined it would end like this. His family was devastated.

Mr. Moore, 51, a licensed vocational nurse, has spent his entire career working in the Travis County jails tending to inmates' medical needs.

In August 2001, he discovered narcotics missing from the medicine cabinet in the downtown jail facility. Immediately, he reported it to supervisors.

"The next thing I knew, Internal Affairs was investigating me," he said. "They suggested I took the drugs, then reported it to try to cover my tracks."

While the investigators' theory might sound reasonable at first glance, Mr. Moore explained that at that time, there was minimal supervision of drugs. In fact, if he hadn't reported the missing package of Vicodin, it's likely that no one would have ever noticed.

The weekend the drugs disappeared, there were 10 people working in the medical unit. Mr. Moore said the place where the drugs are stored was easily accessible to any members of the medical staff, or any other TCJ employee.

Mr. Moore was the only employee ordered to take a polygraph test. He said he hadn't slept for three days prior to the test, and recalls having trouble at the beginning, remembering to answer questions with only yes or no. It was his first time to take a polygraph test.

"They said I was being deceptive because the results of the test were inconclusive," he said. "They said I was jumping around and answering questions in full sentences and they couldn't read from

it, but I don't remember any of that. If that's true, seems like the (test) administrator would have warned me or even stopped the test."

Despite the results of the polygraph, Mr. Moore continued to work.

About a month later, members of the medical staff were ordered to take a urine test to determine possible drug use. No one tested positive for Vicodin, but Mr. Moore said the drug is undetectable 24 hours after its use.

The days continued to pass with no additional word from supervisors or Internal Affairs. He said he assumed that he had been cleared, that everything was okay and there would be no further action. Over time, he put the ordeal behind him.

Investigators never found the missing narcotics, he said.

"I had been working there all that time, and nothing about my duties changed. I still had access to the drugs. I just thought it all went away," he said.

In the fall of 2002, Mr. Moore was ordered to meet with Major David Balagia to talk about the incident. He said he was surprised by the discussion considering the time lapse.

But even after that meeting, Mr. Moore, who every year received good performance reviews and had never been disciplined before during his TCSO tenure, returned to his duties downtown.

"Then I get this letter right before Christmas from Chief Dan Richards telling me I was being dismissed," he said. "Getting this notice on the 23rd, there was no way to contact anyone."

When administrators returned on January 6, he appealed the dismissal to the new Chief Deputy, Doyne Bailey.

He said Chief Bailey reinstated him, but disciplined him for insubordination because he didn't cooperate on the polygraph. He was docked five days pay.

"I signed the papers and accepted the fine because after two

weeks of not knowing whether I would have a job or not, I just wanted to get it done," he said.

Mr. Moore says he doesn't believe he should be blamed because a polygraph test was inconclusive. He said his research showed polygraphs have up to a 20 percent failure rate. And in Texas, they are not admissible as evidence in a court of law.

"I'm angry because I feel like I did my job," he said. "This whole process was questionable."

Had his termination not been

reversed, Mr. Moore said he wouldn't have been eligible to collect full retirement benefits including health insurance benefits from the County. He has been contributing to the system for 19 and one-half years.

"At age 51, to start over again and get another retirement would be difficult," he said.

Mr. Moore is an associate member of the Travis County Sheriff's Officers Association, one of dozens of civilian employees with membership in the group.



TCSO LVN Bill Moore was fired two days before Christmas. He said former Chief Deputy Dan Richards charged him with insubordination because his 2001 polygraph test results were inconclusive. Mr. Moore, an associate member of TCSOA, was reinstated by Chief Doyne Bailey earlier this month, however, he was docked five days pay for insubordination. (Photo by Shelly Wilkison)

Join the TCSO family for
A Memorial Candlelight Service
Honoring Deputy Keith Ruiz.

Dusk, February 15, Wooldridge Park
Following the service, a memorial wreath will be placed at the Texas Peace Officers Memorial on the State Capitol Grounds.
We will Always Remember...

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The Travis County Sheriff's Officers Association adopted a local family during the holidays, donating new toys and clothes. From left are TCSOA members Eddie Walker, Rafael Ramos, David Carroll, Nate Gillespie, Maria Chandler, Sandi Carter and David Sellstrom.

Members elect Martinez as President in TCSOA Board elections

Members of the Travis County Sheriff's Officers Association elected Greg Martinez to serve as President during Board elections in December.

Martinez, a founding member of the Association who served as president in 2002, was elected Vice President in December 2001. When former President James Gonzales resigned in January 2002, Martinez became President.

Members re-elected Alex Leo as Vice President and Tim Henry, Treasurer.

Nathan Iacono was elected Secretary, replacing Jerry Kovar who did not seek re-election.

Members filled the two law enforcement positions on the board with Bruce Milligan and Mario Gonzalez. The two positions had been vacant since the resignations last year of two law enforcement deputies who left TCSOA to form another association.

In Corrections Place 2, members elected Tim Kinsley to replace Bucky Eacret who did not seek re-election. In Corrections Place 4, Raul Quiroga was re-elected.

In the Place 3, at-large position, Tracy Jones was elected, replacing Edward Walker who did not seek re-election.

**TCSOA Members meet 7 p.m.
fourth Tuesday of each month
at CLEAT Building, 400 W. 14th Street.**

Commissioners cut some TCSO take-home cars

In an attempt to save money, Travis County Commissioners voted last month to take away the take-home cars of 13 employees, most of whom work in the Corrections Division.

TCSOA President Greg Martinez said the Court was looking for ways to cut costs, and reducing the county fleet has become a priority for the Court. In the fall, the Court adopted a rule restricting the use of take-home vehicles, prohibiting them from being taken out of the county. Sheriff Margo Frasier countered that Sheriff's Office personnel should be exempt from the rule, which went into effect this month.

At their November meeting, commissioners voted 3-2 against the exemption. However, they requested more detailed information regarding what TCSO positions were authorized to have take-home vehicles.

Upon receiving that information in December, the Court voted to give the Sheriff's Office the exemption for law enforcement personnel who live out of county. But at the same time, they took away the vehicles from the corrections personnel.

Michael Hemby, director of Research and Planning for the Sheriff's Office, says 150 sheriff's vehicles are taken home to employees' residences out of Travis County. Some 261 Sheriff's Office employees are assigned take-home cars out of a total fleet of 374. He said Judge Sam Biscoe had indicated that he wants to reduce the county fleet by 200 vehicles during the fiscal year.

President Martinez said the consensus of the Court was that the corrections personnel didn't need a take-home vehicle. He said Commissioner Karen Sonleitner led the argument.

Mr. Hemby said eight of the 13 vehicles were assigned to the Corrections Major, Captains, Medical Director, the doctor and the CBF Liaison. Other take-home vehicles taken back were the following: 1 from TCSO ITS; two from Training--Lt. and Sgt.; 1 from Professional Services--Captain; and from Crime Lab Supervisor.

And, how much money will the county save by taking back the 13 vehicles?

"Unknown," says Mr. Hemby. "It depends on the value of vehicles if disposed of; if these employees charge mileage to the county; or if they become pool cars."

Mr. Hemby said he expects the Court will take up the issue again during budget time.

"It appears this has been an issue for some time with some members of the Court and county planning staff," he said.

Chief ready for challenges

(Continued from Page 6)

says he believes the biggest challenge facing the Sheriff's Office is finding its place in providing homeland security.

"At this point, we don't know what will really be required of us or exactly how to prepare ourselves. But, we'll have to rise to meet the challenge," he said.

In a slow economy, he said the Sheriff's Office will be faced with the additional challenge of finding

ways to do more with less.

"Our ability to meet that challenge and maintain respect for each other will be a good test of our respect," he said.

Chief Bailey, who adds he will do anything to avoid a controversy, asked officers to be patient as he learns the ropes and tolerant when he makes a mistake.

"Oh, I'm going to foul up," he smiled. "I just hope folks will be patient with me."