

Friends Care

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Bob Brandon, an Emmy Award-winning television photojournalist and a two-time winner of NPPA's Ernie Crisp Television News Photographer of the Year title, died last night in New York. Brandon was on the NPPA NewsVideo Workshop faculty at the annual event in Norman, OK, for more than 30 years. Photograph by Donald R. Winslow

The Civic-Minded Sheriff

By Ron Bailey

The second Sheriff of Motley County, Texas, was John L. Moore. Moore was born December 24, 1852, in Fannin County in northeast Texas. He came west by 1885, where he married Lou Gibson in Graham on November 25, 1885.

According to the payroll records of the Matador Land and Cattle Company, Moore went to work for the Matador Ranch on January 3, 1890. Lou, his wife, operated a millinery shop in downtown Matador during the 1890's.

The first Motley County Sheriff, Joe Beckham, was accused of embezzling county tax funds. The Motley County Commissioner's Court declared the office of sheriff vacant. They proceeded to appoint Moore as the county's second sheriff on June 14, 1893.

The feisty Moore immediately arrested Beckham and placed him in the new Motley County jail. (Note: This is the same jail that the "Friends of the Historic Motley County Jail" are currently restoring). Friends of Beckham sprung him from jail and Beckham arrested Sheriff Moore and others for unlawfully carrying firearms.

District Judge W. R. McGill contacted the Texas Rangers to restore order in Motley County. The Rangers set up their headquarters in the Motley County jail.

Beckham still had his followers who wanted him to remain as sheriff. Moore had his followers also.

When District Court convened in Matador, armed men were everywhere. District Judge McGill, sensing trouble ahead, pulled out his trump card. Instead of deciding between Beckham and Moore as sheriff, the Judge appointed William "Billy" Moses as Sheriff. The judge said that the County Commissioners had no authority to appoint J. L. Moore as sheriff. Of course, District Judge McGill didn't have the authority to appoint Billy Moses either, but he made it stick.

Continued on Page 2

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

2	Bob Brandon (continued) (reprinted)
2	Ron Bailey on the Civic Minded Sheriff (continued)
3	Updated Membership List
3	List of Board Members
4	Editor's Note

Continued from Page 1:

NEW YORK, NY (December 10, 2009) – Bob Brandon, a two-time national Emmy Award-winning television photographer who also twice won the National Press Photographers Association's Ernie Crisp Television News Photographer of the Year title, died last night in New York.

"The word legend is sometimes overused, but in Bob's case it was the real thing," retired TIME magazine photojournalist Dirck Halstead said today.

Brandon's close friend, television photojournalist Dave Wertheimer, said Brandon – who has been seriously ill and waiting for a kidney transplant – had traveled from Denver to New York this week to visit his daughter Ellie Brandon to celebrate her 18th birthday.

Wertheimer had been assisting Brandon as he shot video on a first-person story documenting Brandon's arduous every-other-day kidney dialysis. It's a story Brandon, 63, had been working on for two years. Along with producer Marianne Leviton, Brandon had been shooting for the documentary "[Connected For Life](#)," a broadcast-length documentary about people who – like the photographer – are on waiting lists for life-saving kidney transplants.

Brandon first won the Ernie Crisp Television News Photographer of the Year title while working as a chief photographer at KPRC-TV in Houston in 1975. He won the second time as a network freelancer in 1980. While freelancing, he worked for every major television network. He was one of the pioneer photojournalists at "48 Hours" for CBS News and set the style for modern documentaries.

Brandon was the author of [The Complete Digital Video Guide](#), published by Readers Digest in 2005, and he also produced a series of video programs called "Shoot Like A Pro" to teach beginning photographers how to tell stories with video.

Brandon was a cameraman for four decades, shooting his first images in 1966 while still in college for KGNC-TV in Amarillo, TX. In 1970 he joined KPRC-TV in Houston, winning more than 30 awards there in 9 years and leading the station through the switch from film to videotape. He left KPRC-TV in 1979 to freelance and has done so ever since.

Over the years in addition to CBS News, he's shot for 60 Minutes, NBC News, Today, Dateline, ABC Evening News, Prime Time Live, and 20/20. Brandon was on the team that won two national Emmys for groundbreaking 48 Hours broadcasts, and he spearheaded the style-setting documentary "Emergency Vets" on Animal Planet TV.

In 2004, Brandon was critically ill and taken to a trauma hospital after friends found him on the floor of his home in August. Apparently he had been there for several days after collapsing, and was unable to reach the phone to call for help. Seriously ill, he rebounded from that incident and his health improved to the point that he went back to work editing and producing video projects and teaching yearly at the Norman workshop.

Born on July 29, 1946, Brandon survived by three children. His daughter Kristi Ortiz is a physician's assistant in Houston, TX. A son, Ron Brandon, lives in

Continued from Page 1

William Moses was a former drover from Burnet County who trailed cattle to Montana and South Dakota. He was a businessman in Matador and he was also serving as Deputy Motley County Clerk at the time. As a businessman, he sold a safe to Motley County about 1892. This safe is still in the Motley County Commissioner's Courtroom in the present Motley County Courthouse.

With the appointment of Moses as sheriff, J. L. Moore was not to be outdone. Moore ran for Motley County Commissioner the next year in 1894, and was successful. He served three terms.

Moore was also a merchant, mail carrier, Justice of the Peace, and served as a Deputy Sheriff under two sheriffs, and was the Mayor of Matador in 1913 – 1914. He joined the Methodist Church in Matador in the 1890's and was a member until his death.

John L. Moore died April 5, 1938. His wife, Lou, died July 21, 1944. They share a headstone in Matador's East Mound Cemetery. The Moores had no children.



Sheriff J. L. Moore and wife, Lou.

Moore was a Matador Ranch cowboy, mail carrier, merchant, Motley County Sheriff, Deputy Sheriff, Motley County Commissioner, Justice of the Peace, and was the Mayor of Matador in 1913 – 1914.

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Editor's Note:

I was very saddened to learn of Bob Brandon's death December 10, 2009. I have been in touch with Bob's producer Marianne Leviton in Denver, and she is interested in completing the video documentary that Bob started on the jail. I still have to work out details with her, but Bob had already filmed the inside of the jail with local resident Geneva Wilson. Geneva and her family lived in the jail from 1947-1957. When he was here for Homecoming in September, he filmed the whole weekend, including a beautiful Matador sunset from Antelope Hill.

The project may take a different form, but I am still hopeful we can produce a documentary in his honor to help promote the historical significance of the jail. I have been looking at a Texas Humanities grant which would include a collaboration with the Motley County ISD. Preserving the past for future generations is a noble and worthwhile goal. On another note . . .

Following telephone conversations with the Texas Historical Commission, they expect to release information on the Texas Preservation Trust Fund grant submission sometime in mid-January. Judge Ed D. Smith, Vice Chair, and I will be meeting with the architect January 15 to outline the next phase of the project. I will keep you posted. At the very least, Phase II will include the repair of the windows and doors at the jail.

This is your December Quarterly newsletter, but here it is January 2010! I wish for you all the best for the New Year. With much gratitude for past support,
Carol Campbell, Chair
Friends of the Historic Motley County Jail

Friends of the Historic MC Jail
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