

County judge to begin his retirement

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Cooke County Judge John Roane

Cooke County Judge John Roane sits at his desk in the courthouse. He will soon retire. County judge-elect Jason Brinkley is Roane's successor.

Retiring County Judge John Roane's office in the Cooke County courthouse is neat and clean. His furniture and other items including Air Force and cattle memorabilia are gone.

Leaving behind a post usually brings with it mixed feelings including some sorrow, but Roane said he isn't leaving the area where he grew up and he is excited about the next phase of his life.

Roane has served Cooke County for 17 years — first as a justice of the peace in Valley View — and beginning in 2009 as county judge.

He has reinvented himself many times since he was a kid growing up in Cooke County. Indecision was never a problem for Roane.

The son of an US military officer, he always knew he wanted to fly fighter planes.

“I was raised by an Air Force pilot and becoming a pilot was the natural thing to do,” he said.

Roane said he trained for combat and fully expected to fly during wartime.

“I got to fly the F-4 and spent 20 years trying to get into combat,” he said.

Prior to entering the Air Force, Roane completed course work at what was then Cooke County Junior College and North Texas State University. He then spent 20 years as an Air Force officer before retiring to become a supervisor at Texas Instruments. He also owned and managed a cattle business and became a Cooke County justice of the peace in 1997.

Roane began his tenure as county judge in 2009 when former Cooke County Judge Bill Freeman retired.

“As I look back over my life,” he said. “I’ve been in one form of public service or another most of my life. That’s what I consider my role in life.”

Roane said he hasn’t decided how he’ll spend his retirement. He thinks he and his wife Gail — to whom he has been married 46 years — might travel.

“The first 46 years of our marriage were mine,” he said. “I’ve told Gail the next 46 years are hers.”

Public service will continue to be a large part of his life, he said.

“When I retire, I’ll find a way to continue to serve,” he noted.

Roane has affiliations with Cooke County United Way, All Babies Born Alive (ABBA), Cooke County 4-H and Home Hospice of Cooke County.

“My life has been enjoyable,” he said. “I’ve done what I wanted to do.”

Roane said he’ll take away many good memories of his work in Cooke County.

“I love Cooke County and I love the people of Cooke County,” he said. “Being a public servant should be about serving the people. That’s what we are elected to do and I just appreciate everyone’s support while I’ve been in office.”

Roane added he has confidence county judge-elect Jason Brinkley will be an excellent leader.

“My successor will serve the county well,” he said.

Cooke County will hold a swearing in ceremony for all incoming county officials at noon, Thursday, Jan. 1 in the courthouse.