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Touchy Road Problem Discussed Again

Colorado County Commissioners' Court, in regular session for the first time in the new 1979 year Monday, tangled with the "touchy" road problem in Commr. Crockett Leyendecker's Precinct 3 where a new gravel enterprise is seeking ingress and egress to and from property where sand and gravel are being mined.

It was another controversial session, mostly with members of the Rau families, across whose property the Smith-Rau road, one of three possible accesses to the property, crosses.

After an hour or so of discussion, much of which has been gone over at at least three previous sessions, the court decided that the Smith-Rau road would probably be the one the least costly and most advantageous. However, County Judge Lester Cranek took a consensus of opinion from the members of the court and no official action was taken. He told the gathering during the discussion that it was his duty to take an overall look at the situation and to act in the best interest of all of the taxpayers in the county, indicating that he favored the Smith-Rau road as the least expensive route.

Three Alternatives

He pointed out that there are three alternatives to consider in getting to the property where the gravel is being mined. The first is over the Piney Creek bridge which a representative of the Raase Bridge Co. told the court was unsafe for the heavy loads of gravel being hauled over the road and recommended immediate load zoning of the road. Another alternative would be to use the New Road but it has two crossings over Brushy Creek and Commissioner Leyendecker told the court that he estimates that it would cost \$15,000 to \$16,000 to place three 10-inch pipes at each of these creek crossings.

Lead Limit OK'd

The court later approved a 10,000 pound lead limit on the Piney Creek Bridge. It was noted that on the

afterward to discuss possible federal aid in improving off-system bridges in the county.

Ramert stated that some "very limited funds" have been made available for such work under a federal program. He said that \$6 million is allocated to this work in the entire state and on the basis of 254 counties, "that would amount to around \$26,000 per county." The assistance would be on a basis of 80-20% with the federal program paying 80 percent and the county 20 percent.

He indicated that the first step to take would be a complete inventory of all bridges in the county and indicated the state would conduct such survey if requested by the county. He added that the county should designate the one bridge which needs immediate attention so that an emergency inventory of this project could be started as soon as possible.

The county would set up a priority program for the four-year program, but the district engineer added that there likely would be "little to show" in the first year of the program.

The court voted unanimously to request the state highway department to make the countywide inventory of "off-system" bridges and will decide in the immediate future which bridge needs the initial attention.

Grievance Committee

A grievance committee was named including three persons from the two grand jury lists for this county, including Christine Grafe of Columbus, Mrs. Leslie Miller of Bernardo and Ben-H. Waligura of Garwood. Also serving on the committee to look into salary grievances that might be brought to its attention will be the full-time elected county officials with the county judge a non-voting chairman of the committee.

Emergency Meet. Mon.

Judge Cranek said Tuesday that he was contacting prospective bidders on providing the pipe necessary to construct the two Brushy Creek crossings, indicating that this apparently will be the route that will finally be approved. The bids are due to be opened in a special meeting at 10 a.m. Jan. 15th (Monday), on an emergency basis.

Base also indicated that the cost of a new bridge would run from \$80,000 to \$100,000. In the session last month it was noted that the bridge has been "walking" or giving several inches when used by the heavily-loaded gravel trucks.

Precinct 4 Commissioner Bill Stiles commented that he had a bridge over Coushatta Creek in his precinct that was in worse shape than the Brushy Creek bridge and urged that a countywide survey of the bridges be made to determine the best route to follow in improving the bridges in this county.

Help From Highway Dept.

Carl Ramert, district engineer for the Texas Highway Dept., and resident engineer Bruce Bayless met with the court shortly

Commr. Court Fights 'Very Tight' Budget

Home Economics Sec.'s Hours Are Reduced

Colorado County Judge Lester J. Cranek labeled the 1979 county budget as a "very tight one" when he drew it up. It was approved last year, but this fact was brought even more to light Monday when the court in its initial session of the 1979 year, had to take negative action on several requests for additional employee allocations.

Mrs. Donella Pagtel, County Home Demonstration agent, met with the court and discussed the need for secretarial assistance in the home economics office in the county agricultural building. The present secretary in the office, Evelyn Brown, is working 32 hours per week, but when the court set up the 1979 budget it cut the secretary's allocated time (on the basis of \$2.78 per hour) from 32 to 20 hours per week.

Mrs. Pantel and Mrs. Shirley Brown, assistant home economics agent, stressed the need for the secretary and asked the court to consider increasing her hours to 32 hours per week and if possible to 40 hours per week.

After Mrs. Pantel told the court of the wide range of functions of the secretary, the court appeared impressed but decided to stand firm on its action upon adoption of the budget and Judge Lester J. Cranek finally declared the issue dead for lack of a motion.

Mrs. Pantel said that she made 2529 personal contacts from Mar. to Dec. in 1978 and anticipated reaching 2736 citizens in home economics programs in 1979. Mrs. Brown noted that there are 337 enrolled in 4-H work.

Work May Be Curtailed

They indicated that if the secretary's hours are left at 20 hours per week, the

BUZZIN' ABOUT TOWN

Shepherd (white), Penny Garrett of Houston reports that her family has the dog. It appears the dog was running loose and some hunters were about to shoot the dog when Mr. Garrett rescued the animal and took it to Houston for safekeeping. If you're missing a dog, call 444-3303 later o'p.m. or weekends.

• We're mighty proud of the accomplishments of the Houston Oilers. Of course they won't be going to the Super Bowl at least not this year. Our tip of the hat goes this week to the 40 to 50 thousands of loyal Oiler fans who were on hand at the AstroDome Sunday night for the Pep Rally upon their homecoming from Pittsburgh. Such loyal support, even in a losing cause, should be a great inspiration to the Oilers in 1979.

• Of course, congratulations to the Dallas Cowboys who will be meeting the Pittsburgh team in Super Bowl 13 on Jan. 21st.

• Friends in the community will be glad to hear that Daughtry Roberts of Fulton, a former resident here, is recuperating nicely from heart surgery recently in a Corpus Christi hospital. Daughtry is associated with the Teneco plant in that area and formerly was at the Chesterville plant.

• The temperature skidded well below freezing again this week, continuing a long and wet winter spell. The temperature dropped to 24 degrees both on Monday and Tuesday mornings. Although rainfall readings were not excessive, there's an awful lot of water in the area, probably more than has been seen at this time of the year in a long time.

• If you're missing a very friendly, full-grown German

Phillip Saucedo First 1979 Baby Gets Many Gifts

Phillip David Saucedo, at six pounds thirteen ounces and nineteen inches long, became the first baby of 1979 to celebrate his arrival at the Eagle Lake Community Hospital with numerous gifts provided by the Eagle Lake and Garwood area merchants.

The proud parents are David and Norma Saucedo of 510 Eighth Street in Eagle Lake. David is a life-long resident of Eagle Lake and Norma was reared in El Campo. David has been employed at the Eagle Lake Rice Dryer for several years. The Saucedos were married in East Bernard November 27, 1977.

Phillip David arrived at 11:42 p.m. Saturday, January 6, 1979 and became the first baby at the Eagle Lake Community Hospital to qualify for the car load of gifts furnished by area merchants. Young Phillip registered his delight at receiving the gifts by furnishing his parents with numerous smiles while his happy parents surveyed the gifts.

Pleased grandparents of the newborn are Mr. and Mrs. Laura Davilla, Jr. of El Campo and Mrs. Lupe Saucedo of Eagle Lake. Mr. Joseph Guerra of El Campo is his great-grandmother.

The following is a list of the merchants who gave gifts: First National Bank, Merle Norman, Clothes Closet, Royal Cleaners, Gifts of Distinction, Eagle Lake Headlight, Gardner Seashell Insurance Agency, Spangle and Son, Rice Drug Store, Bill's Dollar Store, Spangler Hardware, Duncan and Son, Western Auto, Fink's Variety Store, M&M Western Store, Eagle Lake Sewing Center, Miller's Grocery, Furniture Shoppe, Epps Department Store, Wilcox Minimax.

Also, Eagle Market, Brazos Office Supply, Eagle Lake Drugs, J. F. Miller Ford, Inc., Lake Motors, Canaris Nursery, The Farris 1912, Lake Crest Flower Shop, Clyde's Food Market, Eagle Lake Community Hospital, Jack's Restaurant, Eagle Lake Dairy Delite, Dairy Queen, Austin's Grocery, Strickland Insurance Agency, Scott's Snack Shack, Beauty Box, Priesmeyer's, F&W Food Market of Garwood, Eagle Lake Implement Co., Eagle Tractor, Shoe Tree, G&D Drive-In Grocery, and the Eagle Lake Community Hospital Ladies' Auxiliary.

An order was also passed authorizing expenditures, as set when the budget was adopted, to libraries, fire departments, the National Guard, the Historical Survey Committee and the Soil and Water Conservation District.

The court Monday decided to examine the need for the assistant county attorney (\$500 per month) on a quarterly basis. He had been appointed up to Jan. 1, 1979, but the new action makes his position in effect through Mar. 31, 1979. At that time it is anticipated the court will take another look at the need for the position. Funds were included in the budget for a full-year of salary, but the court is thinking that the funds might be needed more in the tax office or possibly in some other area.

A story on increases in business handled by the tax office is published elsewhere in this issue.

In other action the court

Eagle Lake Headlight

5 Car Derailment Causes Evacuation at 1 A.M. Mon.

Anhydrous Ammonia Fumes In Empty Cars Cause Concern

The derailment of five railroad tank cars which were empty but just recently had been used for hauling anhydrous ammonia caused considerable concern in the area near the Canaris Nursery on West Main Street early Monday morning.

Eagle Lake patrolman Richard LaCourse reported a switch engine was moving some cars on the Southern Pacific track behind the nursery, when the five tank cars derailed and partially tumbled down a steep bank.

Pete Canaris, who lives nearby with his family, said there was quite a lot of noise and all he and his wife, Janet, could think of was "grabbing the children and getting out of the house."

The officer made a check with the Chemical Transportation Emergency Center in Washington, D.C. and was advised that this type of ammonia was "very toxic and could cause permanent damage if inhaled for a long period of time."

As a result, fourteen citizens who reside on the south side of the Southern Pacific tracks and the Canaris Nursery were advised to evacuate their homes. The officer noted, however, that some chose to remain in their homes.

Leaks Repaired

Southern Pacific crewmen rushed to the scene and plugged leaks in the tanks and at 3:50 a.m. those who had evacuated were allowed to return to their homes.

Although the cars were empty there was still some residue in the tank cars and there was considerable fumes in the area. Since there was no wind, most of the fumes were restricted however to the area directly behind the Canaris home.

Southern Pacific had some heavy equipment on the scene later in the day and before noon Tuesday the tank cars had been lifted and replaced on the tracks.



Southern Pacific repair crews are shown lifting one of five tank cars which derailed behind the Canaris Nursery on West Main early Monday morning causing some evacuation in the area due to anhydrous ammonia fumes.

City Asks Cooperation in Delay On 1978 Tax Statements

City Manager T. J. Smith told members of the city council last week that the city tax statements for 1978 could be completed, hopefully, by the middle of February.

The city has had problems in getting the tax roll set up on the new computer in use in the city offices and the tax statements, which should have gone out around Oct. 1st, are still a long way from being ready.

It is the plan of the council to extend the period for delinquency on the taxes from Jan. 31st to a period at least several months in advance of the date on which they are finally mailed to taxpayers in the district.

Meanwhile the city manager and city officials ask the cooperation of local taxpayers because of this delay and promise that the tax statements will go out as soon as possible.

Once the tax roll is set up in the computer, it should be less of a task to get out statements and, again hopefully, the 1979 tax statements will go out on time early in October of this year.

Heritage House Helping Hands Meet Thurs.

An organizational meeting for the Heritage House Helping Hands Auxiliary is scheduled for Thursday, Jan. 18, at 7:30 p.m. in the City Council room of the Municipal Building.

Guest speaker will be Gary Hoffpaur, Volunteer Coordinator for the Texas Health Department. His topic for the evening will be "A Nursing Home's Role With State Standards and the Role of a Volunteer."

Fate Of County Fair Is Still Up In The Air

Attendance Last Thursday Short Of Committee's Goal Of 150 Persons

The question of whether or not to have an annual County Fair in Colorado County is still unanswered, despite two public meetings on the proposal.

The second meeting called specifically to provide information gathered by a Steering Committee and to vote yes or no on the proposal was held in Columbus elementary school last Thursday night, but the number of persons attending did not meet the goal of at least 150 persons, which the committee had decided must be present in order to bring the matter to a vote.

Bill Harrison, Jr., spokesman for the steering committee, announced that the committee met Monday night of last week and decided that a minimum of 150 persons (out of around 17,000 in this county) would have to be present in order to get a representative opinion.

He presented findings of the committee and commented that the purpose of the Fair would be education, to give recognition to skills learned by young and old and to inform the public of programs and progress in Colorado County.

He added that the Fair would not "compete with but rather complement youth programs (such as 4-H, FFA, FHA) now active in the county."

Site Proposed - Columbus Harrison said it was the opinion of the committee that the Fair should be held

Sheridan Youth Dies In Auto Accident Sun. Three Armed Robbers Arrested Here Monday

James Osy Sheridan, 18, of Sheridan was killed in a tragic accident when his 1973 Chevrolet pickup struck the west approach railing of the Navidad River Bridge just west of Sublime at 2:15 Sunday morning, Jan. 14th.

Sheridan was driving eastward when his pickup struck the approach railing. The truck bounced across the highway and struck the other side of the railing and rolled over. Sheridan evidently flew out of the overturning pickup and he suffered a crushed head and other injuries when the pickup rolled over him.

Justice of the Peace Wilton (Bill) Hrcer held the inquest at the scene and reported accidental death. The body was taken to the Kubena Funeral Home in Hallettsville.

It is thought that possibly Sheridan's pickup struck an

Absentee Vote Begins in School Bond Election

Absentee voting began this Wed., Jan. 17th in the Rice Consolidated Independent School District's Feb. 6th \$825,000 school bond election.

Absentee ballots may be obtained at the Administration offices at Rice High School. The absentee voting will end Friday, Feb. 2nd.

The Rice CISD board called the election on Tues., Feb. 6th for the purpose of issuing the \$825,000 in bonds to meet serious building needs in the Eagle Lake Middle and Primary Schools.

The bonds, if approved, can be retired in 30 years, but a schedule provided to the board by the district's fiscal agent, Underwood, Neuhaus & Co. of Houston, has informed the board that the bonds could be retired in as little as fourteen years with an anticipated 7.48 per \$100 valuation tax increase.

Council Sets Its Pay; OK's \$3000 Homestead Ex.

Eagle Lake City Council, in regular session Jan. 9th, approved the same pay for the elected officials, five councilmen and the mayor, as last year; made appointment of some city officers; and voted to continue the \$3000 ad valorem tax exemption for persons 65 years of age and older for 1979 taxes.

The pay for the city councilmen will remain at \$15 per meeting and for the mayor at \$22.50 per meeting. This was the recommendation of Mayor Struss and approved unanimously by the council.

The council approved the appointment of Willard W. Shurt as the city's attorney; Bill Thomas, Jr., as the city's fire marshal; and Ed Tate, as Civil Defense director. The appointment of a city health officer is expected to be made at the next session.

The council also approved Wm. Pierce Arthur of Columbus as the city's auditor for the 1978-79 year which will end on March 31st, 1979.

Mayor Struss also appointed city councilman Roy Dean Van Nort as the city's representative on the Board for the Eagle Lake Library which meets at 1 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month.

The council considered a request which had been

Beef Cattle Shortcourse Tues., Wed.

Colorado County livestock producers will have an opportunity to brush up on their beef cattle production techniques and better tune the practices they are currently following by attending a Beef Cattle Production Shortcourse March Tuesday and Wednesday, January 23 and 24 reports George Little, chairman of the Colorado County Livestock Committee. The sessions will begin at 7:30 p.m. each night and will be held in the conference room of the County Agriculture Building located at 316 Spring Street in Columbus.

The first session will cover general beef cattle and pasture management. Leading the presentations on those topics will be Dr. Larry Boleman, Extension Service Livestock Specialist, and Don Dorsett, Extension

County Go-Texan Activities Sunday

This Sunday, January 21 at the Veterans' Community Center in Columbus the Colorado County Go Texan Committee will sponsor its local activities to promote the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo. The Houston Livestock Show yearly awards a one-year \$1,500.00 scholarship to top students in 35 different counties.

Kicking off this year's activities will be a trail ride beginning at Allair at 9:00 a.m. and riding to Columbus. A barbecue lunch will be available at the Veterans' Community Center in Columbus. For more information contact Frank Tate in Eagle Lake.

Schedule of Events

The schedule for other events follows:

8:00 a.m. Check in meat for Barbecue Cook-off

12:30 p.m. Judge Miss Trail Ride Queen

1:30 p.m. Judge Barbecue Cook-off contest

2:00 p.m. Judge Miss Go Texan Queen

2:30 p.m. Hay hauling contest

3:30 p.m. Fiddling Contest

6:00 to 10:00 Dance with music by Gaylon Ackley.

Barbecue Cook-Off

For the second year, a Barbecue Cook-off will be held. Contestants signed up so far include last year's Eagle Lake.

(Continued on page 12)

Rob Walls Night Spot; Attempt Robbery At Garwood

Three black males, all estimated to be around 20 years of age, from Houston were arrested here shortly after ten p.m. Monday night, following their robbery of a night spot and bar in the Wallis area and an attempted robbery of another business near Garwood.

Eagle Lake city patrolman Richard LaCourse reported that it was a "ticklish situation" for a while before he got assistance from private citizens and officers and the arrest was completed.

The three men reportedly robbed the Wallis place at around 2:20 p.m. Monday and got away with around \$155. A description of the men and the green Plymouth, heavily damaged on one side, was broadcast by radio to area officers.

At around 10:05 the three men, wearing masks, were seen in an apparent attempt to rob the Garwood business, but the arrival of some citizens on the scene apparently scared the trio away. It was reported over the radio that the men were heading east on Farm to Market Road 950 and Constable Lawrence Berger, who owns a service station here, and Patrolman LaCourse set out in separate vehicles toward Garwood. About three miles south of Eagle Lake the vehicle was spotted traveling at a fast rate of speed toward Eagle Lake on FM 102. Berger got ahead of the vehicle in his pickup truck and LaCourse trailed in the city police car.

Apparently the men noted that the police car was

(Continued on last page)

Thurs. Last Day For C.C. Banquet Tickets

This Thursday, Jan. 18th is the deadline for the sale of tickets to the Eagle Lake Chamber of Commerce's annual banquet to be held on Thursday, Jan. 25th, beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the Community Center.

The tickets, at \$5.50 each, may be obtained from the chamber office in the Municipal Building or from any of the directors. After Thursday, special provisions for tickets may be made only with the chamber office.

Mrs. Bill Clements, Texas' first lady as wife of Texas' new governor, William P. (Bill) Clements will be the principal speaker.

Mrs. Frank Broesche will cater the roast beef and rice menu.

White Cloud Church To Sell BBD Dinners Saturday

White Cloud Baptist Church will sponsor the sale of Barbecue Dinners this Saturday, Jan. 20th beginning at 11:00 a.m. at the church grounds for \$2.50 per plate.

You may call the following numbers to place orders: 305-254-5252 or 305-2722. The Rev. Olan Hudson is pastor of the church.

(Continued on page 12)

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