

Club Presidents Welcome Benavidez



Presidents of the three area service clubs represented at the joint meeting held in the Community Center last Wednesday greet Master Sergeant Roy Benavidez (center) of El Campo winner of the nation's highest honor, the Medal of Honor. Left to right are, Ralph Truly, president of the Eagle Lake Lions Club; Dan Thornton, president of the

Eagle Lake Rotary Club; Sergeant Benavidez; and John Mader, president of the Garwood Lions Club.

In Nat'l Guard Training Specialist 4 Vernon Baker, Jr., of Headquarters Company, 386th Engineer Battalion, located in Houston, drove a bulldozer during training at Texas National Guard summer camp in Fort Polk, La. Helping to build an airstrip reportedly was quite a change from his civilian job as a shipping clerk for Dover Corp. in Houston and Baker enjoys the training he's receiving in the National Guard. Baker's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Vernon Baker, live in Eagle Lake.



VERSATILE, The Sales Leader In Four-Wheel Drive Tractors, Has Come To The Coastal Plains Of Texas

- ✓ Versatile sells more four-wheel drive tractors in North America than John Deere, International, White, Case, Steiger or any of the other tractor lines.
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Instill In Youth Pride In Their Country, Says Medal Of Honor Recipient

M-Sgt. Roy Benavidez Of El Campo Speaks At Joint Meet Wed.

"Instill in our youngsters a pride in their country and a pride in serving their country and becoming a part of a great team" and "instill discipline in future leaders so that this country's integrity can be maintained" were keynotes of the address made by Master Sergeant Roy P. Benavidez, USA (Ret.) of El Campo winner of this nation's highest decoration in an address here last week.

Sergeant Benavidez was guest speaker at a joint meeting of the Eagle Lake Rotary Club, the Eagle Lake Lions Club and the Garwood Lions Club in the Community Center beginning at 12 noon last Wednesday, August 12th.

The program was arranged by Rotarian John Chisholm, program chairman for the Rotary Club for that date. Sergeant Benavidez was awarded the Medal of Honor by President Ronald Reagan for service while assigned to the Air Force "Special Forces" in the Republic of Vietnam on May 2, 1968. The speaker was introduced by Brig. Gen. Joe N. Frazer, Jr. (Ret.), member of the Noon Lions Club.

Gen. Frazer cited some of the other decorations awarded to Sergeant Benavidez and said he considered it a "respected and revered honor to introduce such an outstanding and dedicated soldier." He pointed out that Benavidez was a member of the Special Forces which "demands the most

strenuous training that a man can endure." Many Youth Lack Patriotism The decorated speaker told the gathering of a hundred persons present that he has dedicated himself to speaking to groups and organizations because of his great interest in the welfare of this country and the obvious lack of patriotism in many sectors of America.

He put some of the blame for this lack of patriotism on adults, who by their actions and words, "don't instill in them (the youth) the love of our American flag."

The sergeant discussed the early days of his life when he resided with the family of an uncle following the death of his parents and reminded that he "ran away from home because of a lack of love," a love which he later stated he found in the United States Army. The sergeant recounted that one of the greatest moments of his life came when he had the honor to personally meet Audie Murphy, one of the nation's most decorated servicemen from World War II.

He said that in his talks around the country he stresses the need for the youth to set standards and to follow them, and most importantly "they've got to have a good education" in order to compete in today's oftentimes complicated society. He went on to describe his career in the United States Army and credited General Webb with whom he had the privilege of serving as a driver for some time, with helping him to decide to make the Armed Forces his career.

"Old Army And New" Sergeant Benavidez compared the "old Army" and the "new Army of today" and the changing practices and facilities and weaponry. In 1962, Sergeant Benavidez was wounded in action in Vietnam when he stepped on a land mine and was paralyzed from the waist down. Doctors at that time said he would never walk again but he did not take into consideration the will to serve and the great determination of this outstanding American. He recovered and later attended the Special Forces training and earned the coveted right to wear the green beret. The speaker told the gathering that the Special Forces personnel are trained as a team to operate behind enemy lines with no outside support, often in classified operations.

8 Hours Of Living Hell He described the eight hours of May 2, 1968 in Vietnam, the action for which he received the Distinguished Service Cross, later replaced by the Medal of Honor, as "eight days of living hell." He humbly stated, what I did was nothing compared to what a lot of Americans have done" and added, "the real heroes are the ones lying in Vietnam and graves of other countries who have given up their lives for their country. I did only what every red-blooded American would have done."

Nevertheless, he was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for "conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life and beyond the call of duty" and recommended for the Congressional Medal of Honor. Somewhere the Army lost the papers of his conspicuous service and the recommendation and it was not until early this year that sufficient evidence was compiled for the recommendation to become approved by the United States Congress and President Reagan presented Benavidez the nation's highest honor.

The sergeant, at the request of those attending the meeting, described the action of May 2, 1968 in Vietnam when he constantly exposed himself to enemy fire, even engaging in hand-to-hand combat with Viet Cong soldiers, thus saving the lives of at least eight men who were assigned to his Special Forces team or to rescue

helicopter operations.

When the helicopter loaded with the wounded, dying and dead arrived at a medical base, once again the doctors underestimated this American and proclaimed him beyond help and as good as dead. Sergeant Benavidez, with his great will to live, refused to accept that as a final decision and he fought his way back to good health. He said that there is not enough paper money or gold in the world to change his mind and if he had to, he would be glad to do it all over again in defense of his country.

Army Can Get Job Done He hit at the political influence in the Vietnam Conflict and at the lack of interest in the returning Vietnam veterans. "We (the U. S. Armed Forces) can get things done if only the politicians will tell us what they want and then allow us to do the job for which we were trained." He asserted that in his opinion the Vietnam Conflict would have been concluded successfully in several years without political influence. The sergeant continued with a discussion of his efforts to substantiate the recommendation made by his commanding officers that he be recommended for the Medal of Honor. "It (the Medal of Honor) took only eight hours to earn, but took 18 years to receive."

He thanked hundreds who came to his aid with support for his claim to the recommended Medal of Honor and paid special tribute to Fred Barbee, publisher of the El Campo Leader-News, for his assistance and guidance. The application was turned down six times and each time the reason was cited as "lack of substantial evidence." Finally the sergeant was able to locate the last surviving member of his Special Forces team, now living in the Fugi Islands, who provided the last needed bit of evidence to the claim for the Medal of Honor.

Army Is Well Manned "I still love the Army (even though retired)," he stated. He called the U. S. Army as "the best equipped and best trained and with the best educational system in the world."

In concluding he stressed that it is our obligation as Americans to instill in our youngsters the pride of serving their country and in becoming "part of a great team."

Among the special guests for the occasion were: Mayor Elmer Struss, Sheriff Jim Broussard, Chief of Police Earl Winebrenner, El Campo Leader-News managing editor Chris Barbee (who accompanied Sgt. Benavidez), Thurston Webb with whom the speaker attended school in El Campo, and served in the Army, Mrs. John Chisholm, Mrs. Eliot Tucker of Houston, Earl Franks and son Aaron of Sealy, James Moore of Sealy, Forrest Terrell, Larry Rodgers, Dale Cassidy, Rich Farris and Andy Anderson. Mrs. Arthur Behrens and Mrs. Adolph Raabe prepared the delicious buffet meal for this special occasion.

Local Citizens Say Reckless Truck Driving A Sad Situation

Aug. 14, 1981

Dear Mr. Franks: I regret that a prior engagement will prevent my attending the meeting with the truckers on Monday, August 17th. I feel that something must be done to improve the safety of gravel truck operations, not just in the Eagle Lake area but statewide.

It is a sad situation when gravel truck drivers over the entire state have such a bad reputation so far as safety is concerned. I drive a small car. It makes me extremely nervous to be driving along a highway at 55 or so miles per hour and see nothing but a license plate in my rear view mirror because a gravel truck is so close to me. There is no way a truck can make an emergency stop in this distance without running over me. It makes me very angry to be driving along a highway at the maximum legal speed and be forced on to the shoulder by a gravel truck either passing me or passing another gravel truck that I am meeting. All too often I have been traveling along Highway 90A and seen gravel trucks traveling three a

breast when I have been meeting them. I do not think that the people responsible for the safe operations of these trucks (other than the drivers) are aware of what is going on. I do not think that they condone such driving. However, I do feel that they should drive the highways regularly in unmarked cars just to see what happens.

Presently, the worst of fenders I have seen are the trucks with Sprint, Con-Agg or Trucliners. Identification decals. I drive about 35,000 miles per year. I average 20,000 miles in the company car and about 15,000 in personal vehicles. In addition to this, my wife drives about 10,000 miles per year. In recent years, we have been doing our best to avoid traveling roads that gravel trucks are using simply because we fear for our well being.

Furthermore, I am tired of having windshields pitted and headlights knocked out either by rocks falling from a load of gravel or being picked up from a gravel truck. And I don't like having my windshield and car sandblasted by sand blowing from a truck that either is meeting or is passing me.

One other major problem that exists is licensing of trucks to haul sand or gravel under the 72-hour permit law. Some of these trucks have no brakes on the trailer, inadequate or no lights, and tires that are a hazard to themselves and others. This type of truck should not be hired.

If the trucking companies cannot regulate themselves or eliminate these problems, then I intend to exert all of the influence that I can to see that laws are passed AND ENFORCED to have all loads tarped properly as well as total enforcement of a 55 MPH speed limit.

Sincerely, Dan Thornton, President Lakeside Irrigation Co., Inc. and John T. Pilkington

Working In Dist. This Wk. On Monday at 7:00 p.m. the Raiders held a workout at the Garwood school; on Tuesday they practiced at the Eagle Lake Middle School stadium; and Wednesday the workouts were due to be held in Sheridan. Friday afternoon at 8 p.m. the Raiders will hold a photo session at Rice High School. With the opening of school Monday the workouts will be held in the afternoon only. The Raider varsity opens its 1981 season on Friday, Sept. 4th in La Grange.

Over 50 teams will be competing for \$3,750 in cash prizes in the Sixth Partnership Golf Tournament at the Eagle Lake Recreation Center this Saturday and Sunday. Action in the 36-hole best ball competition will open with shotgun starts at 8:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. this Saturday with second round action beginning at the same times on Sunday. There will be five flights in the tournament with each getting \$300. Second place teams will receive \$200, third place teams \$150 and fourth place teams \$100.

A special prize of a \$500 Savings Bond will be awarded to the first golfer to score a hole-in-one in tournament play. The First National Bank and Ashby Oil Co. are sponsoring the prize. Local golfing fans are invited, without charge, to attend the tournament Saturday and Sunday to watch and support some of the top golfers in the area. "Refreshments will be available," say tournament officials, "so come out and enjoy an exciting weekend of competition and help support the Eagle Lake Recreation Center."

All proceeds from the event will go toward maintenance of the golf course and surrounding area.

Raiders Host Tomball In Scrimmage At RHS Thurs

Sub-Varsity Teams Start At 4:30; Varsity At 6:30

Workouts for the Rice High School Raider football participants are being accelerated this week in anticipation of the first of two scrimmage sessions Thursday evening with the Tomball gridders at Rice High School Stadium in Altair.

Coach Clifton Darden and his staff have been working with about 95 prospects and will find out how they perform under pressure in the scrimmage session against some worthy opponents. Darden said the Raiders reported in "pretty good" shape and the past week and a half have been spent in conditioning due to the hot weather which prevailed at the two day workouts.

The Raiders have been doing contact work this week and appear to be eager to get into action in the scrimmage Thursday night, stated the coach.

"Attitude is good and competition has been keen for the 26 varsity positions," added the coach. The freshmen and JV units will open the scrimmage session against similar opponents from Tomball beginning at 4:30 p.m. on the Raider gridiron. The sophomore teams will follow with a scrimmage at 5:30; and at 6:30 the varsity units will take over for about an hour-long scrimmage under game-like conditions.

The coach and staff as well as the Raiders, hope that interested citizens will be out to watch the scrimmage sessions.

The following Friday, August 28th, the Raiders will host Boling for scrimmage sessions at Raider stadium beginning at 6:00 p.m. Working In Dist. This Wk. On Monday at 7:00 p.m. the Raiders held a workout at the Garwood school; on Tuesday they practiced at the Eagle Lake Middle School stadium; and Wednesday the workouts were due to be held in Sheridan.

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All proceeds from the event will go toward maintenance of the golf course and surrounding area.

Jeff Franks, manager for the Raiders softball team, is shown extending a gift of appreciation to Mrs. Sandra Benge for designing and making the "Lakers Cham-

ionship Flag" seen in the background. The gift was presented at the Raiders' end-of-season party last Sunday.

Makes Flag For The Lakers



Jeff Franks, manager for the Raiders softball team, is shown extending a gift of appreciation to Mrs. Sandra Benge for designing and making the "Lakers Cham-

City Champion Lakers Hold End-Of-Season Party At Circle K

The Lakers softball team, champions of the Eagle Lake Men's Softball League for the third year in a row, honored their player-manager Jeff Franks at the Lakers' third annual end-of-season hospitality at Mrs. Ethel Konvicka's spacious Circle K Ranch last Sunday afternoon.

Special guests were the players and friends, special supporters of the Lakers activities, the sponsors and many of the parents of the players. After a social period during which games of pool, dominoes, basketball, and horseshoes were enjoyed with drinks and hors d'oeuvres, a sumptuous barbecue supper was provided by Mrs. Konvicka was enjoyed. Frank Bowen prepared the delicious barbecued brisket and sausage.

A number of the Raiders brought deserts and dips for the occasion. Jeff Franks, player-manager of the team, presided for an awards presentation program following the meal. During that time, he expressed appreciation to all the players and assistants for their cooperation during the year; and for the sponsorship by the Headlight; and for the support of the parents and other friends.

Plaques of appreciation were presented to special supporters, Frank and Rita Bowen; to Fred and Eunice Franks, sponsors; and to Mrs. Konvicka for use of her wonderful ranch for the event following each of the three championship years, 1979, 1980 and 1981.

Jeff also presented individual trophies (two to each) for participation on the championship team for either one, two or three years. He also presented special trophies to: Andy Gertson, recipient of the "Big-Supporter" Award; Trey Kell, Most Improved Player; Wayne Bowen, for Most Dedication to the team; and to Fred Broschee, the "Big L" Award for most outstanding play during the past year.

Also, an engraved plaque was presented to Mrs. Major (Sandra) Benge for making the Lakers' own special flag which was displayed for the first time at the Lakers' annual tournament earlier this summer, and was admired by all who came to the event Sunday afternoon.

Also on display were other trophies won by the Lakers during the year, including a first and a second in area tournaments, plus the league championship trophy.

Tournament director Brock Ashby announced this week that late entries in the event will be accepted through Friday. Interested golfers should contact Ashby at 234-2730 (days) or 234-5441 (nights). Entry fee is \$100 per team and all entries should be accompanied by a pro-attested handicaps. Private carts are welcome or rental carts, on a first basis, will be available for \$30.

Golfers entered in the tournament will be treated to a barbecue dinner on Saturday at 6:30 p.m. with a player auction following the meal. Players may purchase additional BBQ tickets for \$4.00 each.

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★★ Sports ★★

(Jeff Franks, Sports Editor)

Dusters Come From Behind To Win Women's Tourney

The Dusters women's slo-pitch softball team won the Women's Softball League's post-season tournament last weekend, the hard way, coming from behind to stave off elimination in a game with the First National Bank's Greenbacks, and then defeating the Wallis team two straight games after Wallis (the outright league champions) reached the finals without a loss.

The Dusters, co-sponsored by American Hydro-Grass and Rice Aero, Inc., opened play Friday night with a win over Commercial Electric Turn-On, then beat K. R. Abel & Son Trucking Co. Trainers Saturday before losing to the Wallis ladies.

Sunday the Dusters came from a 1-3 deficit in the final inning of play to edge the Greenbacks 5-7 to reach the finals against the undefeated Wallis team. In the finals, the Dusters edged Wallis 2-1 to set up the championship game which the Dusters claimed by an easy 11-0 margin.

Trophies were presented at the close of play to the first place Dusters, second place Wallis and third place Greenbacks.

Labor Day Hunters' Jamboree In Ft. Bend County Draws Interest

As Labor Day weekend grows closer the 1st Annual Hunters' Jamboree to be staged at the Fort Bend County Fairgrounds near Rosenberg September 5th and 6th, is gaining momentum. The event is being sponsored by the Statewide Texas Trophy Hunters Association.

Black powder shooters and bowhunters from across the State are now making plans to participate at the Jamboree in a number of "mountain men" type shooting events. Other events for visitors to see will include a unique bowhunting style competition. Shooters must shoot from simulated hunting conditions and positions.

Persons interested in getting into either bowhunting or black powder shooting will please know that instruction and equipment will be on hand. Anyone interested in competing in the bowhunting competition may contact Jim Jordan at Hillcrest Archery, Houston (713) 467-1577. The black powder competition headquarters are at Bigfoot Primitive Weapons, Mike Harvey, (713) 467-6588.

Rumor has it that the champion bow shooter and the champion black powder shooter are planning a "shoot if you can't" type of game match after the normal competition. One time National Bow Hunting Champion Charlie Langston will also be present for an impressive bow shooting demonstration.

More information on the Hunters Jamboree is available from Texas Trophy Hunters Association, P.O. Box 16307, San Antonio, Texas 78216 (512) 349-4281.

Mourning dove hunters will be allowed to harvest 12 birds per day during the upcoming hunting season, an increase of two over last year. The white-winged dove season for 16 counties along the Rio Grande will be Sept. 5-6 and 12-13. The white-winged bag and possession limits will remain the same as last year, at 10 and 20 respectively.

In all counties which do not have a whitewing season, shooting hours are one-half hour before sunrise to sunset. In counties having concurrent whitewing and mourning dove hunting, shooting hours will be from sunset during the four days of the whitewing season.

The Sunday opening represents a departure from tradition, as the seasons normally start on a Saturday to provide a full weekend of hunting. However, hunters testifying at the hearing and department biologists

concluded that in many parts of Southeast Texas most of the doves are native birds which tend to leave the area early in the season. The North Zone season was adopted as proposed, Sept. 1 through Oct. 30, 1981.

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Raider Boosters To Hold Meet At RHS Mon., 7 PM

Raider Fans Urged To Attend Second Meet Of New Club

A meeting to organize a Rice Raider booster club was held on Thursday night of last week and despite a low turnout, plans have been set for another meeting on Monday night of next week. Only 13 Raider fans attended the planning session last week, however, the enthusiastic group, confident of better participation in the future, set another meeting for Monday at 7:00 p.m. at the Rice High School meeting room in Altair. Each member attending last week's meeting was challenged to bring two Raider fans to the next meeting.

Although no action was taken at Thursday's session, the booster club organizers discussed briefly the purpose and goals of a club and guidelines controlling such an organization. The boosters also saw a film of the 1980 Rice Raider vs. Columbus football game.

Charles Darnell, who initiated the idea of rejuvenating a Booster Club for support of Rice District athletic programs, served as the group leader at the meeting. Others attending included Bill Carpenter, Vic and Cherry Corman, Wayne and Brenda Corman, Al Faichtinger, Jeff Franks, Clifton Grogan, Ralph Johnson, Clark Powers and Bill and Doris Thomas.

Also attending the meeting were Rice High School football coaches Clifton Darden, Wayne Zimmerman, Gil Sulbaum, Finest Axel, Dale Norris, David White and Maurice Gindrant.

An Austin resident fishing in the Colorado River just a few blocks from his house on Aug. 4 may have set a new striped bass record with a 43-pounder. Pete Castro was fishing a white jig with a worm trailer in the swift tailrace waters below Longhorn Dam at 8:30 p.m. Tuesday when the big fish hit.

The fish, if certified by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, will be the second consecutive state record breaker caught from the Colorado River system. Harry Lamb, also an Austinite, caught the current record striper, a 38 1/2 pounder, a few miles upstream in Lake Austin on March 21.

Since returning from the injury, which still aches a bit every now and then, he has kept a 200-plus average and has twice rolled 278 games. Spenrath expressed his appreciation to the Sealy Bowling Palace and to fellow bowlers and friends who supported him during his comeback and during his perfect performance last Tuesday.

Area bowlers and friends extend hearty congratulations to Floyd and wish him continued success on the bowling lanes and continued success directing the Mighty Raider Band. For the coveted honor of rolling a 300 game, he will receive the prestigious "300" ring, with diamond, from the national men's bowling association.

Shooting hours for teal, rails and gallinules are one half-hour before sunrise to sunset. The thought of never bowling again certainly did enter my mind," admitted Spenrath. "As a matter of fact it was about all I could think about while laying around in bed recuperating."

Recuperate he did, but it took about five months of taking it easy before he got the OK in mid-May to bowl again. Since returning from the injury, which still aches a bit every now and then, he has kept a 200-plus average and has twice rolled 278 games. Spenrath expressed his appreciation to the Sealy Bowling Palace and to fellow bowlers and friends who supported him during his comeback and during his perfect performance last Tuesday.

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