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CELEBRATE:

July is National Rice Month

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Hunt brings farmers up to date at meeting

Dale Hunt's reports to the rice growers of the Garwood area brought the members of the Garwood Division of the American Rice Growers Co-Op Association up to date last Thursday on activity on several fronts.

The thorough and understandable reports covered action by the Texas Rice Research Foundation and on the legislative front. Hearing the reports, and knowing Hunt's services to the community as a member of the ARI board, serving last year as its president, it is understandable why the co-op also honored him for the time he has spent helping others.

Hunt is not eligible to serve another term on the ARI board, because of the terms he already has served; Billy Ray Krenek was elected in his place.

Other reports were delivered by ARI executives who attended the dinner at Schobel's in Columbus. Co-op manager Richard Seifert said that the meal was switched to Schobel's because last year the 80 people who attended at Rice high school's large Commons area made it look sparse. However, this year, more than 140 crowded into the dining room.

Co-op president Mark Wied welcomed guests and called on Fritz Leopold to read a resolution. It honored Frank Waligura, Frederick M. Schoellman and Richard Korenek, who passed away since the last meeting. Together, they leave 25 children, 52

grandchildren and 18 great grandchildren, Leopold said.

Mark Wied and Laddie Lee Korenek were re-elected to the board of directors.

As the meeting neared its end, Seifert announced the best farmer award. It was presented to Billy Ray Krenek of El Seven Ranch. One group of his rice was rated 63/70 No. 1, with a total damage and no smut. Judge Wm. A. Hefner and Mrs. Frank Popp won two of the door prizes.

Among the ARI reports, Billy Knowlton, vice president for logistics and member relations, said it was time for the same song, third verse. The fall of OPEC and the strength of the dollar still are the villains, he said. "The federal government has got to get into it somehow, to get your rice to foreign markets."

The farmers in Thailand had a good crop, and the next harvest in December looks good too. "There is a lot of talk going around Washington for an export PPK program and we think this is a good idea," Knowlton said.

He detailed some of the reasons ARI decided to move its plant, and why it chose Freeport. The co-op was looking for additional ways to cut expenses, he said, with property taxes about \$700,000 a year in Houston. Transportation from that mill to the port of Galveston is expensive, but it is even more expensive to pay the tariffs at

the Port of Houston.

While they were considering a move to Galveston, they learned long after they began looking at the possibility that Galveston presented some pollution problems. Freeport then offered a package which ARI accepted. The new mill, to be started this summer and completed in two years, will operate with 120 fewer people, and make their land in Houston available for sale for development.

"Once we get on the water (in Freeport), the savings to the farmer will be astronomical," he said.

In his report on TRRF, Hunt recalled coach Vince Lombardi's book called *Run for Daylight*. He said the super successful coach believed in the importance of training, in running plays until players knew them in their sleep, in preparation in every way. When a ball carrier escapes through the defense, then it is just a run for daylight, Hunt said.

"We in the rice business call that maximizing our returns," he said.

Reviewing the short history of TRRF, Hunt recalled that in the early 80s farmers realized they were at a turning point. The research arm was created to help reduce unit costs, increase field yields, reduce production costs and to do all that on an accelerated schedule.

ARI made a loan to the research foundation for its first year of

operation because farmer funds couldn't come in until late in the year. In Garwood, farmers account for about \$50,000 of the TRRF income, which is about eight percent of the total. Garwood farmers' contributions make up about 95 percent of the total in district 11.

Because of the research, Lamont was released two years ahead of schedule. Last year 160,000 acres of the variety was planted and this year about 210,000 are planted. Hunt said Lamont produces about 1,050 more pounds per acre than Labelle. He said most areas have responded well to the use of Lamont, but in Garwood the response has been slower since Labelle produces very well there. However, he reminded the audience of Lamont's superior ability to remain standing during heavy rains.

Hunt said there is an estimate by the USDA that there will be a 19 percent yield increase over the next four years, and that is causing legislation problems.

Later in the program, specifically talking about legislative matters, he master of factly said "We don't have a farm bill." He outlined these problems facing today's agriculture industry: the high U.S. deficit; a 20 to 30 percent increase in the dollar since 1981; large agricultural commodity surpluses; decreases in exports and increases in imports; a farm credit system with serious problems; rice milling at 50

percent capacity, and equipment manufacturers at eight percent of capacity.

"Couple that with Washington telling us the rice program is the most expensive, that the rice producer is getting more than their fair share," Hunt said, and you can see why there is a legislative battle ahead.

"We think we have a long way to go," he said, adding that "there is good news. This division is in a strong position. TRRF is working. ARI is strong financially, and farm legislation may not be as bad as first expected," especially as first proposed by the current administration.

As chairman of the five-state political action caucus, he also reported on the many meetings that have been held with members of the house and senate in Washington, so farmers are kept aware of political happenings.

As the meeting neared its close, Leopold presented Hunt with an award of appreciation, and highlighted his 16 years of service as Garwood's representative to ARI and other organizations. "Locally, Dale is always willing to sit down with a person and explain what is going on. He truly is an asset to the community."

Other remarks praised Bill Lehrer for his service to the industry. "There would be no such thing as deficiency payments if it were not for the time and expense put into it," a speaker said.

Bicycle helps nab juveniles at scene

When patrolman John McKee's police cruiser malfunctioned during his shift last Sunday night, it didn't stop him from patrolling the city.

In fact, it probably helped him clear four burglaries and arrest two Hispanic juveniles attempting to break into Eagle Tractor, Inc., on Main St.

About 130 a.m. McKee was patrolling on the bike and saw the boys, age 14 and 16, at Eagle Tractor. Because he wasn't in a noisy police car, the boys didn't hear him approach. Had he been in a car, speculation is they would have had time to escape. After they were taken into custody, McKee and the boys walked back to the police station.

The boys were arrested and charged with two counts of burglary and two counts of criminal trespass. The boys were turned over to juvenile authorities Monday in Columbus, and released to their parents.

The charges were in connection with two burglaries at the Wintermann Warehouse, at Coastal Contracting and at Eagle Tractor. Police recovered about \$1,000 worth of property belonging to John Perry of Coastal.

A possible increase in the fee city residents pay for the garbage service, and a discussion of the merits of another Main St. traffic signal were topics at last week's City Council meeting.

Council also discussed an ordinance to make a left turn out of the First National Bank parking lot illegal, and asked a Southwestern Bell Telephone representative to address council.

At their July 9 meeting, councilmen will discuss an amendment to the city's rate ordinance to increase residential garbage collection service \$1. The fee now is \$5 a month. Last week, council asked city manager Robert Klockman to review each commercial garbage collection account. Those rates start at \$7 monthly. The rate reviews were sparked when Sprint Waste Materials of

Houston, operators of the dump the city uses on U.S. 71 near Altair, nearly tripled its fees. The old rate was \$125 per yard, and under a new contract will be \$3 per yard. That contract still is under review by the city attorney, and therefore was not available for signing last week.

The discussion of the proposed traffic light, at Allen Ave. instead of at the intersection of FM 102 and Main St. by Lake Off's Mobil Station, was fairly negative, Klockman said. T.J. Smith, Dairy Delite owner, and Dan Canaris owner of D&S Grocery, said they felt it could hurt their business.

Because of the congestion at the FM 102 intersection, the city asked the state department of highways to study placement of a traffic signal. Their answer was that the Main St. traffic is sufficient for a signal, but that

the FM 102 traffic was not. But, they suggested that if the light was installed at Allen, the traffic from the Primary School combined with 102 (Lakeside Drive) would make the intersection qualify for a light.

The highway department also said that installing a light at 102 and Main would be complicated because it would have to be wired into the railroad crossing signal lights, and that Beaks St., on the north side of Main, creates another problem. Klockman said Mayor Elmer Struss asked council to study the highway department suggestion further, before reaching a local recommendation.

As for the possible re-routing of FM 102 between McCarty and the western city limits, Klockman said council and the audience again appeared negative. Because FM 102 cur-

ves closer to the tracks as it nears McCarty, it is on Southern Pacific right of way, and the railroad doesn't appear willing to grant further easements for widening or for installation of curb and gutter.

Curb and gutter work would eliminate the mud hole at the Farris 1912, which Bill and Helen Farris have been trying to have fixed for years.

The highway department made a very preliminary suggestion that FM 102 traffic from Columbus be routed across the tracks at Stevenson, then down Main St. Council is concerned about the existing businesses on Post Office St., and the problem additional traffic on Main St. would create for parking at the Community Center and the Library.

The Commerce St. left turn ordinance may be considered to help solve a traffic problem

there when bank customers make use of the drive in facilities. One solution to the problem would be to make Commerce St. one-way northbound, but that has been proposed in the past without success. A one-way turn ordinance would require enforcement by the police department, while one-way street designations would probably enforce itself because the public awareness would be greater.

At the July 9 meeting, Klockman said council probably would hear a report from the Airport Committee, and for the July 23 meeting, council asked Klockman to invite Paul Johnson, community relations manager for Southwestern Bell for this area. The Chamber of Commerce and others here are interested in SWB's equipment plans for the city.

Three area highway deaths bring total to near '84 mark, DPS says

Highway fatalities in the area last week have added to the roadway death toll this year, and compared to the same period last year, highway deaths across the state have decreased four percent, according to the Texas Department of Public Safety.

Viola Castillo, 19, of Eagle Lake, was killed in LaVaca County about 11:15 p.m. last Friday night on U.S. 90-A. The day before on U.S. 71 in Garwood, two semi-tractor trailers crashed head-on, killing each driver.

According to the DPS office in Pierce, five people have lost their lives in four wrecks in

Colorado County in the first six months of 1985, while during the 12 months of 1984, eight people were killed in six accidents.

The accident in Garwood created a grim, fiery scene but according to police officers who were on the scene for nearly four hours, it also shows how a community can help in the time of need. Residents near the scene became a support force for the troopers, sheriff's deputies and others in the area by providing coffee and soft drinks throughout the morning.

According to the report by DPS trooper Jake Sanchez, a truck pulling a flat bed trailer crossed the center line into the oncoming lane at about 6:25 a.m. The other vehicle, a gravel truck, braked in an unsuccessful attempt to avoid the collision.

Killed was Camillo Reyes of El Campo, the gravel truck driver, and Robert Wayne Senne of Corpus Christi who was returning home after making a delivery to Seguin.

The DPS report did not indicate a cause of accident, but said there were no tire marks from the Senne vehicle, leading to speculation that he may have fallen asleep at the wheel. Another trucker behind the wreck, said he saw what was about to happen, but was not able to use his CB radio in time to warn either driver.

The wreck caused a large fire and smoke plume, demolishing the cabs and burning the

drivers beyond recognition. Identification of Senne was made through a traffic ticket found in the truck.

Colorado County Constable Lawrence Burger was the first officer on the scene. He called the sheriff's office and DPS. In addition to trooper Sanchez, Sergeant Gilbert Kiel, trooper Ron Garcia of Wharton County and trooper Bill Schutte of the license and weight service were on the scene. Sheriff's deputies assisting were Bert Fuller and Bill Esterling. Sanchez said after the accident the DPS appreciated the assistance of the deputies, constable Burger and the Garwood fire and ambulance

volunteers. The Eagle Lake fire department was called to the scene to use their Jaws of Life equipment to remove Senne's body from his vehicle.

Traffic was directed around the accident to an adjacent street for nearly four hours, Sanchez said.

The report on Miss Castillo, said she was traveling east on 90-A at a high rate of speed. She pulled into the westbound lane in pass, lost control and ran off the road to the left. The car struck a culvert and overturned. Justice of the peace Robert Kubena pronounced her dead at the scene, about 2.5 miles west of Sublim.

Delinquent tax suits to be filed soon

If you live in the Rice Consolidated Independent School District, and haven't paid your taxes for 1984, standby. The Central Appraisal District, responsible for appraising property and collecting the district's taxes, is preparing at least 100 suits to file against those who won't pay their share.

Billy Youens, chief appraiser, is continuing his program of filing suits, which is something that hasn't been done on a

regular basis county-wide for years. His office recently completed a similar program in the Columbus school district, and knows it works. Half of the suits he filed there have been paid in full, and a "good percentage" of the owners of property on which taxes are not paid have signed agreements to do so.

Those agreements allow the taxpayer to make monthly payments on back taxes, rather than face a forced sale of their property. It allows them 36 months to pay, and keeps the county from pressing suit during that time.

In the Rice District, Youens said he first will send a registered letter to those delinquents who meet certain qualifications. That usually brings some payment response, he said. Then, if need be, he will file the suits. And, if there still is no contact, the suit could end in a sheriff's sale of the property.

However, Youens said if delinquent taxpayers will con-

tact his office in the courthouse, and either pay what is due or sign an agreement to pay, the suit will be delayed.

In other business, the appraisal review board will finish its work this Friday, allowing the appraisal office to certify the tax rolls by July 10. That means the taxing entities, such as cities and school districts, will know the value of taxable property, and then can adjust their tax rates to provide the income they need.

This Friday, from 9 a.m. to noon in the second floor district courtroom at the courthouse, Capitol Appraisal of Austin will be available to discuss their appraisals of mineral, gravel and utility properties. That afternoon is the last date scheduled to hear other property appraisal reviews by the review board.

Last year, when many properties were revalued by the appraisal district, there were 150 review board appeals. As of last Friday, only 24 were heard.

Holiday

Businesses in the area, including the First National Bank, Post Office and Colorado County Courthouse, will be closed Thursday, July 4 in observance of Independence Day.

Laker Printing has announced they will be closed Thursday and Friday, July 4 and 5. They will be open at their regular time on Monday, July 6.



Vance Duncan, immediate past president of the Rotary Club, presented a bouquet to Emma Pustejovsky last Wednesday at the club's new officer installation ceremonies. Duncan also gave Mr. Albert a diamond-studded perfect attendance award for attending the weekly meetings for 51 years. Story on page 8