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Commentary: FM 102 needs more work; street cleaning; potholes

In a very nice conversation I had last Friday with Bruce Bayless, supervising resident engineer for Colorado and Austin counties for the state department of highways and public transportation, I learned about a couple of road improvement projects for the Eagle Lake area.

Actually I would have learned about them sooner had I been more organized. Several weeks ago county commissioner Bill Stiles handed me an envelope from Mr. Bayless, and that envelope got shuffled into the disarray of my desk. When it surfaced Friday, I found it was a public notice (printed in this edition's classified advertising section) about a bridge-widening project on FM 102 between Eagle Lake and Columbus.

Stiles wanted to make sure people in this area knew about it, so he handed the notice to me. I guess at age 38, I won't be able to look forward to ever being super-organized, so things will continue to get lost.

However, in his Columbus office Bayless brought me up to date on the bridge project. He also told me about a resurfacing project on U.S. 90-A. In the fall, a Sealy contractor will begin work on a real rough section of the road from the Colorado River eastward, and for the east-bound lane only from Eagle Lake to East Bernard.

Because the grooves pounded into the lane from the gravel trucks, the contractor will "mill-out" the

high spots then resurface it back into a level road.

Also, Bayless said in July he and district engineer Carl Rasmus will present to commissioners a plan for future work in the county. It may include a report about the county's bridges, for which the field work has just been completed. The highway department calls this their "off-system" program, because the bridges do not have to be a part of the state road network. The last report was done three years ago.

But it is the "future plan" that interests me. The work advertised in today's Classifieds for bridge widening on FM 102, is only a good start.

Bayless said that starting at the bridge at the city limits between Burns Ave. and Austin Road, (scene of a recent highway death), the highway department plans to widen that bridge, and the next four. That would take the project to about the Thomas Dryer. Also included are four bridges from Alletton back toward Eagle Lake. That will get those bridges where the guard rail narrows the road right to the edge of the pavement. Cost of the project is about \$500,000.

Although he didn't say how wide the bridges would be, he said specifications call for the work to put them within standard safety limits.

However, my question concerns the rest of the road. If you will stop and think for a moment about how isolated

Eagle Lake is, perhaps you too would be concerned.

Transportation and communications out of Eagle Lake with the rest of the county could be considered almost primitive. Here's how:

*Try to do business in the county seat. Mail a letter and if you are lucky it will reach there in two days, after going from here to Houston to Austin and finally back to Columbus. Why else do I take the Columbus and north county copies of the Headlight to the Columbus post office each week, and the Colorado Co. Citizen does the same for its Eagle Lake and south county circulation?

Recommendation: contact the post office and get them to understand county lines; perhaps they would consider Colorado County in the same Zip Code.

*Telephone Garwood or Sheridan, then count the miles. Those telephone exchanges are in our local dialing area. Now call the courthouse in Columbus, and count the miles. Are your counts different? Now look at your telephone bill and wonder why there is a long distance charge? If you think that is expensive, call the telephone company and ask about a direct line to Columbus. Get your Heart Medicine first though.

*Now get in your car and drive to Columbus. Notice the pretty countryside and the rolling hills. Also notice the road. If you notice the pretty countryside comes right up to the roadway. Remember FM

3013. At least on that road the curves are wide and sweeping, and there is room to pull to the side to let faster traffic around.

FM 102, while it may not have the traffic 3013 has, should be rebuilt from start to finish so people here can go to Columbus and conduct business safely. I guess we could ask for a courthouse annex for Eagle Lake, but even then only a small percentage of the business conducted at the courthouse could be conducted here, making such a move a real waste of tax money.

I bring all of this up not to chide the highway department, but to help some of us realize the situation we're in. We want to grow and attract business—looking for more local spenders—but new business prospects would have a hard time communicating. Such problems are another strike against us, but it is not something about which we should have a "C'est La Vie" attitude. Working as a group, modification of these problems can be done, if anyone cares.

"United we stand and divide we fall" and all that. Another area which Bayless enlightened me about was the maintenance of state and federal roadways within a city limits. Painting and surface maintenance is done by the state. But cleaning and, for commercial establishments, berm maintenance (especially) at drive entrances is left to the cities and businesses.

Several businessmen along 90-A on McCarty Ave., Boothe Drive and Main St., have complained about the abysmal look of the roadway because of the dirt and trash. Bayless said the state has an agreement with Eagle Lake that curb-to-curb cleaning is the city's responsibility. But, before you start calling City Hall and asking that the street sweeper regularly clean the aforementioned streets like it does around the main business district, remember it costs money. The city philosophy is to keep taxes low and operate on a shoe-string. Also remember the impression we give to visitors (again to prospective businesses who generate local spending). If you think the city should increase taxes and keep the place looking neater, let council know. Or, start another volunteer group to keep the city clean, perhaps patterned after the Civic Garden Club that has had such a beautiful and positive impact here.

Then, a few more potholes have been brought to my attention. After Bayless told me that a pothole in the entrance-way to a commercial establishment is the responsibility of that establishment, I had a flashback to the heavy Queen. One of the second-hand pieces of information (second-hand since I still have had no contact from the DQ corporate folks) is that the first pothole I hit was the entrance-way to the state since it was at the edge of McCarty

St. Wrong again, ice cream folks.

And, others mentioned the craters in the driveway between the Sportsman Motel, Inc. (owned by an out-of-town interest) and the Sportsman's Restaurant, owned by Doug and Janie Schwemm. The Schwemms tell me that that part of the lot is not owned by them but by the motel corporation, and that by some strange thinking, that company doesn't want to fix the holes because the patches will just tear out again. Good thing the motel attracts a lot of hunters, because their four-wheel vehicles can track through the lot more easily than a bird-watcher's passenger car.

Yes, I did receive a lot of ribbing about not having Amy strapped into a seat belt, as suggested by the article I printed last week on the same page as the DQ column. Luckily the lesson I learned was not at the expense of an injury. However, when I have to strap my family in a car to favor a business with my money, I think I'll stick to spending money in the stores that care enough about their customers, their families and their vehicles to help make it safe. DQ has dumped a little cash on the lot, but hasn't started a "complete" repaving project as I was told they were going to. Perhaps the Civic Garden Club ought to pick another spot to revitalize, rather than the triangle in front of the DQ.

Joe Nocito is the new pharmacist at Eagle Lake Community Hospital. He moved to Eagle Lake last month from Omaha, Nebraska.

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Dropping oil prices has state officials fighting for every cent due state

In these delicate days of budget peril due to dropping oil prices, several state officials are fighting for every cent due the Lone Star State.

In recent days: •Texas Land Commissioner Gary Mauro challenged the Supreme Court to reconsider a controversial ruling he says could lose millions in future revenues to Texas schoolchildren.

•Texas Railroad Commissioner Mack Wallace warned that conditions are ripe for another Arab oil embargo.

STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS
By David W. Evers, D.D.S.

Mauro challenges ruling
In June, the Texas Supreme Court gave shallow mineral rights on 817 acres to a Webb County property owner, a position opposite the state's longstanding claim of ownership.

But Mauro is challenging the high court to reconsider its

decision, saying if applied statewide, it could eventually affect about seven million acres of land and the millions in revenues which finance Texas public schoolchildren.

Mauro manages that fund, the Permanent School Fund, and warns that as much as \$918

million in future monies will be lost.

Texas lawyers surprised
The Court's ruling changes the traditional interpretation of the 1985 Legislature's intent when it passed the Relinquishment Act, allowing the state to

sell the surface but not the minerals of public lands. Since then, the state has divided all mineral income off Relinquishment Act lands 60-40 with the surface owner.

But the ruling would take from the state its heretofore assumed ownership of the

shallow minerals, coal and lignite, and Mauro is arguing that the Supreme Court has given away the mineral rights to state land that the surface owner had never even paid for.

The case strikes near the heart of Texas' traditional mode of funding its public system, and the Texas legal world and several present and former state officials are much surprised, if not astounded, by the high court's decision.

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DAVID W. EUERS, D.D.S.
CLEANING OF BRACED TEETH
A dental pulp brace on a child's teeth to straighten them or correct dental handicap. But braces make teeth harder to clean, can act as food traps and thus increase the chance of tooth decay. But this can easily be overcome. One of the best methods of cleaning debris from braced teeth is the oral irrigator, an electric device which directs a pulsating stream of water onto the teeth.
Dental researchers at Loyola University tested this premise. Braced youngsters were divided into two equal groups. The first brushed their teeth after each meal, then used an oral irrigator once a day. The second group also brushed, but followed with a simple rinsing. After nine weeks, group one (the irrigators) showed an 80% reduction in total bacteria. In contrast, the group of rinsers had only an insignificant drop in bacterial count. The results indicate that if the irrigation cleaning process is combined with brushing, proper diet, and frequent examinations, a child can have straight teeth without the penalty of additional cavities.
Prepared as a public service to promote better dental health. From the office of DAVID W. EUERS, D.D.S., 794 S. McCarty Avenue, Eagle Lake, 234-3525.

Eagle Lake woman files suit to regain her property

An Eagle Lake woman has filed suit to regain ownership of property she has owned for more than a decade. Her three acres were sold two years ago to recover taxes that were not paid since the early 1970s.

Mrs. Minnie Kuykendall of Old Altair Road in New Town, through her attorney Edward Woolery-Price in Columbus, claims in the suit that the sale of her property should be ruled invalid, saying the property was not properly described in the sale suit notice, that there is no order of sale on record, and that she was unaware taxes were due.

Chief appraiser Billy Youens said his records show unpaid taxes totaled \$3,323 when the suit was filed about 1981. The property was sold in the spring of 1983 to the Rev. Henry A. Idebird of Houston, and the year he received clear title to the property. However, when he sought to have Mrs. Kuykendall evicted from the property, the tax office said they didn't know

anyone was living on it, since no one ever responded to the tax bills or suit notices.

This past week, Youens said Mrs. Kuykendall came to his offices and said that just last month she received her 1979 tax bill from the Rice school district, and a 1982 letter from the sheriff's department about the sale. Youens said both letters had 22-cent stamps on them.

Youens said the suit is scheduled for a hearing on July 3, and he has asked their tax collection attorney, Henry Stein Jr., to represent them.

The sale seems like a cold-hearted thing to do, Youens said, but added his office was unaware anyone was living on the property. It illustrates the point, he said, that if someone is facing a suit over back-taxes, they can come to his office and sign an agreement to make monthly payments, rather than have their property sold out from under them.

According to Mrs. Kuykendall, she obtained the property in a gift deed dated June 25, 1971, which was about the same time the Rice Consolidated school district was formed. Youens said that most of the county taxes had been paid, but the taxes for the school district never were paid.

June weather had ups, downs in rain and temps

The weather in June, as you well know, had its ups and downs in terms of rainfall and temperature. Thanks to the Texas A&M Experiment station here, we know exactly how much.

This past weekend was an unusual and most pleasant late June period. Not only were night temperatures low, but the humidity was extremely low. Saturday morning was the lowest temperature for the month with an 8 a.m. reading of 60 degrees. And, even though Saturday and Sunday afternoon highs were in or near the 90's, the 30 percent humidity range made it most bearable. Sunday the low was 64, matching two other dates in June. On Monday, July started off with a 66 reading. Three days last month the high was 96.

After the massive rains of May, the first 17 days of June were dry scorches. But in the days that followed, the experiment station recorded 6.53 inches, while farmers in other areas around the city recorded much more. Last year, only 3.8 inches of rainfall were recorded.

This past Monday, the ag station was getting visits from 15 foreign countries. They were here looking over our rice

Letters to the editor

Point the finger at yourself
To the Editor: GRANTED: You have a right to complain about the potholes on the DQ lot, but your anger should have been directed at yourself for not buckling your child into her seatbelt before you left home!

Remember: When you point an accusing finger at someone, you have three pointing back at yourself.
Charlyne S. Spaniel

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Heritage House News

BY PATRICIA A. HORNDT

Worship services were held Sunday afternoon in the dining area at Heritage House by Rev. Aldridge. We want to thank Pastor Aldridge for the wonderful sermon and church services, which our residents are so thankful for.

Wheelchair pads
We want to extend our sincere thanks to Helen Berger of Nada who beautifully hand-made wheelchair covers for many of our residents. The covers are gorgeous and bright colored which everyone is enjoying. Mrs. Berger, thank you very much for your dedication to our home—you make each visit so special.

Seems like bingo gets better every Wednesday—so many of our residents make this activity their highlight of the week and I can honestly say it is lots of fun. Quarters were given as prizes and the residents that play bingo, love winning the change so they can purchase "soda pops" or whatever they might need to be more comfortable.

Residents playing last week were: Ronnie Ingram, Evelyn Redmond, Edith Morris, Docia Bowen, Dee Sopchak, Sara Grays, Lillian Williams, Lillie Mae Williams, Lou Ella Malek, Roie Hoffman, Herbert Hoffman, Bennett Reichert and Nellie Darnell.

Our thanks to Jean McInteer for donating money for our

Birthday party

Our monthly birthday party was held in the dining area of Heritage House and our delightful hostesses for the occasion were the Lissie United Methodist Church ladies.

Celebrating birthdays in June were Elizabeth Walker and Emma Randolph. Refreshments of assorted cakes and punch were served graciously to the residents attending this special occasion.

Special thanks to the ladies of the Lissie United Methodist Church for hosting the birthday party for Heritage house.



Joe Nocito is the new pharmacist at Eagle Lake Community Hospital. He moved to Eagle Lake last month from Omaha, Nebraska.

County Courthouse Report

REAL ESTATE
Deed, George W. Sanders to James R. Mikulien; 22.90 acres, R. Dowdy Leagues 5-11-85.

Deed, Beverly Neundorff to Ronald Neundorff undivided interest; Ranges 19 & 21, Smith & Jones Addition; 4-13-85.

Deed, Thomas L. Davis et ux to James F. White et ux; 5 acres, P.R. Splice Leagues 5-14-85.

Deed, Bob Hudson to Harold O. Schrieffer et ux; 0.879 acres, Garviel Broward Leagues 5-14-85.

Gift deed, Dorothy Horvath to Roy Robinson undivided interest; lot 12 blk. 1, The Falls Subdivision; 5-30-85.

Deed, Ray Robinson et al to Walter H. Evans et ux; 9 lot 12 blk. 1, Columbus; 4-24-85.

Deed, Colorado Oaks Enterprises Inc. to Samuel R. Curry Jr. et ux; lot 3 blk. 5, Shirley Oaks Subdivision; 5-30-85.

Deed, Thomas H. Lee, trustee to Thomas L. Davis et ux; 5 acres, Peyton R. Splice Survey; 5-17-85.

Deed, Bruce A. Campbell et ux to TXO Exploration Co.; 9 acres, R. Maxwell Survey; 4-25-85.

Deed, Donna Betting et ux to TXO Production Corp.; 15 acres, James G. O'Farrell Survey; 4-25-85.

Deed, Fred R. Burger et ux to TXO Production Corp.; 15.882 acres, John Brenas & John Prode Survey; 4-25-85.

Deed, Louise A. Dieringer et vir to Ballard Exploration Co.; 22.35 acres, Henry Austin Five League; 5-20-85.

Deed, Fred R. Burger et ux to Ballard Exploration Co.; 1.21 acres, John Gillispie Survey; 4-25-85.

Deed, Laura Mae Glick Ind. Executrix of Estate of Ella E. Glick Sr., deceased to B & P Properties Inc.; 130 acres, German Emigration Co. Survey; 5-15-85.

Deed, Plan Lee Baker et ux to Adena Exploration Inc.; 2.5 acres, John Gillispie Survey; 4-25-85.

Deed, Barbara Joplin et vir to Adena Exploration Inc.; 3 acres, John Gillispie Survey; 4-25-85.

Deed, Charles Ray Bartels et ux to Adena Exploration Inc.; 1.31 acres, John Gillispie Survey; 4-25-85.

Deed, H.C. Mosler Jr. et al to Adena Exploration Inc.; 18.54 acres, Frederick Grimes Survey; 5-05-85.

Deed, Hilda Trujan et vir to Adena Exploration Inc.; 5.428 acres, John Gillispie Survey; 5-05-85.

Deed, Lambert Daubach et ux to Adena Exploration Inc.; 2.5 acres, John Gillispie Survey; 4-25-85.

Deed, Darrell Little et ux to Adena Exploration Inc.; 18 acres, John Gillispie Survey; 4-25-85.

Deed, Billy W. Brown et ux to Adena Exploration Inc.; 3.2 acres, John Gillispie Survey; 4-25-85.

Deed, Howard J. Morrison et ux to Adena Exploration Inc.; 50 acres, Hanson Wood Survey; 4-15-85.

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"Hanes" Socks, T-shirts, Shorts
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