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Commissioners deny request for help with drainage

By Rhonda Lattimore
Contributing Writer

Two local landowners left the Colorado County Commissioners' Court meeting in disappointment Monday morning after being denied a request for aid in dealing with a drainage problem on their property.

Cyril and Marti Aratoun addressed the court and asked for consideration in either installing larger drainage culverts or the possibility of building a bridge near their property on Hatterman Lane between Columbus and Weimar.

Mrs. Aratoun presented drawings and photographs of an area of land which she claims is currently under water and has been for some time. She felt the problem with the standing water is due to insufficient drainage culverts in the area.

Commissioner Precinct 2 Johnnie Elstner stopped the discussion of insufficient culverts and said, "Drainage in the area is adequate and all six culverts are fine."

"They are clean and clear, and under normal weather conditions would handle the water just fine. We have had a huge amount of rain recently and very few of the drainage culverts in the area have been able to handle the large amounts of water flowing through them."

He also pointed out that the local ASCS office has the area of land defined as wetlands.

Aratoun argued that the area was not classified as wetlands when he purchased it some 15 years ago and his wife suggested the classification may have come about since the land is constantly flooded due to the drainage problems.

The court took no action concerning the Aratouns' request for help after Elstner said, "Until the county engineer can prove that the area needs new culverts, I think they should remain the same."

In other business, the court:

- Slated a public hearing for Monday, April 27, to discuss closing West First Street in Sheridan between Avenues A and I to be used as part of the proposed city park. The hearing will be held as part of the court's special meeting.
- Received final notice from the Federal Emergency Management Agency denying aid to the county to cover the costs of damages sustained in the Dec-Jan. floods. This notice followed three appeals by the county.
- Held a public hearing concerning posting signs in Garwood prohibiting driving on sidewalks. The court agreed to post the signs, but will allow Mr. and Mrs. Paul Baumgarten a variance since they must cross the place of business to approach their place of business.
- Amended the county's septic system guidelines in regard to duties and powers, giving the authority to the inspectors rather than the county engineer.
- Changed the Monday, May 25, special meeting of the court to Tuesday, May 26.
- Received the preliminary notice from the Lower Colorado River Authority citing the LCRA's 50-year lease with the county for Beason Crossing Park on the Colorado River.
- Agreed to advertise for one new vehicle for the sheriff's department and one new six-yard dump truck for Precinct 3; and
- Awarded Weimar Ford the bid for an eight-passenger vehicle; Colorado County Oil Company and Hoelscher Oil Company, both of Columbus, the bid for fuel; and J.W. Faltsek Contractor Inc. of El Campo the bid for paving and seal coating.

Eagle Lake Police Department Weekly Report

During the month of March the Eagle Lake Police answered 176 calls. There were 54 criminal cases and 138 cases were cleared. The report shows 6 assaults, 8 burglaries, 16 thefts, 10 disturbances, 4 accidents, 14 criminal mischief, and 118 miscellaneous. They made 10 arrests, 4 were misdemeanors and 6 were felony charges.

The week of April 7-14, they handled the following calls:

On April 8, at 5:30 a.m., Officer Eric Hart was dispatched to the 900 block of Warwick in reference to criminal mischief to a vehicle. Upon investigation, Hart observed the vehicle had been covered with baby powder but there was no damage.

At 6:15 that morning, Hart was dispatched to the 1000 block of Warwick to another incidence of mischief. He observed some deep scratches to the hood and sides of the vehicle.

At 5 p.m. on April 8, Officer Keith Matura worked a juvenile case which was turned over to juvenile probation.

At approximately 6:30 a.m. on April 9, Officer Hart was advised of the theft of a license plate and registration sticker from a vehicle on Fairview Street. The license plate has been entered in the computer as stolen.

Chief Lupé Villarreal was dispatched to a criminal mischief reported at 600 W. Main Thursday morning, April 9, to investigate a door having a hole in it. There are no suspects at this time.

Friday, April 10, Chief Villarreal received a report of a license plate sticker being stolen from a vehicle on W. Davis.

Officer Jeff Argo was dispatched to Lake Oil Company on E. Main Saturday morning, April 11, in reference to criminal mischief where he found the telephone lines had been pulled from the building. There was only minor damage.

Officer Argo was dispatched to a family disturbance on Lakeside Saturday night, April 11.

Officer Matura was dispatched to a two vehicle accident at the intersection of Third and E. Main. Ronald Janow of Eagle Lake, driving a 1980 Chevrolet pickup, in an attempt to back his vehicle, pulled forward instead and struck a 1985 Ford Escort driven by Kasha Pratt also of Eagle Lake.

Officer Matura was dispatched to a disturbance in the 1100 block of W. Prairie. Upon arrival he witnessed a subject assaulting a woman. The woman was the subject's wife. Jose Resendez was arrested for assault, booked and transported to the county jail for confinement.

Officer Argo was dispatched to a criminal mischief report at Lady's Restaurant where he found someone had pulled down two strings of lights and broken the bulbs.

Officer Hart was dispatched to a family disturbance on N. McCarty on Sunday afternoon, April 12.

Hart received a report of burglary of a motor vehicle Sunday afternoon on West A Street. The complainant advised that someone had stolen the battery from his car sometime between 2:30 and 5 p.m. that day.

Tuesday, April 14, two accidents were handled. Chief Villarreal was dispatched to an accident at the KC Hall parking lot where Martha Castillo, driving a 1985 Chevrolet Suburban, backed into a parked vehicle, a 1990 Geo owned by Donna Faye Spears. The accident occurred around 10:19 a.m. Tuesday.

At 1:55 p.m., Villarreal was advised of an accident at the intersection of McCarty and E. Main. Upon investigating, he learned Emil Burger of Eagle Lake, driving a 1981 Olds and Laverne Obenhaus of Eagle Lake, driving a 1989 Pontiac, both stopped at the intersection. Obenhaus proceeded through the intersection and was approximately two-thirds of the distance across when Burger entered the intersection, failed to yield right-of-way to Obenhaus' vehicle and struck her car.

Winning windows

Continued from Page 1

A&M University and daughter of the owner. Second place prize was \$75.

The third place entry was The Picture Window. The artist was the daughter of the owners, Shelly Cunningham, a student at Eagle Lake Middle School. Prize for third place was \$50.

The winners not only received checks but also the distinction of having their handiwork on display for the month of April for all the visitors to the Wildflower Celebration.

Judges had a difficult time choosing winners in this contest with all the beautiful window art. Everyone is encouraged to walk around town and enjoy the outdoor art show.

Rhonda Prazak is shown in photo at right with her second place artwork using her Dad's barber shop windows as a 'canvas'.

Photo by Mary Kay Cook

Third place went to Shelly Cunningham, pictured below. Her entry was placed on the front of her Mother's business, The Picture Window.

Headlight Photo by Susie Jackson



Sales tax

Continued from Page 1

between Feb. 1991 and Feb. 1992," Sharp said. "Service employees in the Dallas area led all sectors with an increase of 5,000 jobs during the same period, but reduced consumer confidence due to the recession has resulted in lower demand for manufactured goods."

Other large payments went to San Antonio with \$5 million, +5.5%; Austin, \$4 million, +14.3%; Ft. Worth, \$2.6 million, -2.4%; and El Paso, \$2.4 million, +16.6%.

Cities in the Eagle Lake area and the amounts of sales tax rebates are: Columbus, \$25,048.19, +9.95%; Weimar, \$6,409.37, +3.90%; Sealy, \$23,453.57, -22.77%; Wallis, \$2,321.65, +5.77%; Wharton, \$66,073.39, +10.80%; El Campo, \$72,770.58, +19.70%.

April sales tax rebate checks are for taxes collected on Feb. sales and reported to the state in March.

Area Easter services

Continued from Page 1

April 19, at 5 a.m. in the E.H. Henry Gymnasium. Eagle Lake Community Choir will sing and the sermon will be delivered by Rev. Earl Shorster, pastor of Friendship Baptist Church in Eagle Lake.

Sheridan service at 7 a.m.

A sunrise Easter service will be held at 7 a.m. Sunday morning at Cheatham Cemetery. Brent Pittman will present a short message followed by several hymns. Everyone is invited to attend this Sheridan community service.

Anyone wishing to contribute special vocal or instrumental music may contact Pastor Pittman to be included in the service.

If money talks, this ad is screaming.

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Mild to moderate pain such as occasional headache frequently is relieved through the use of one of several excellent nonprescription medicines. Such products usually contain aspirin, acetaminophen, or ibuprofen. Prescription pain relievers are classified as narcotic or non-narcotic. Sometimes narcotic and non-narcotic pain relievers are given together or they are combined in the same tablet or capsule.

Non-narcotic pain relievers require a prescription include pentazocine, propoxyphene, and the large group of nonsteroidal antiinflammatory agents which include tolmetin, mefenamic acid, sulindac, indomethacin, piroxicam, and naproxen. Medicines in the last group primarily are used for relief of pain associated with arthritis. They work by inhibiting the production of substances called prostaglandins.

Narcotic pain reliever medicines include morphine, codeine, hydromorphone, and meperidine. Many narcotics are derived from the opium plant. These powerful medicines relieve pain by acting on the brain and altering the way pain is perceived. In many instances, severe, chronic pain will not respond to any type of pain reliever other than a narcotic. Other medicines which may be given with non-narcotics and narcotics to help relieve pain include antidepressants, anticonvulsants, corticosteroids, and amphetamines.

Eagle Lake Crime Stoppers 'Crime of the Week'

The Eagle Lake Crime Stoppers is offering up to \$1,000 cash reward for information leading to the arrest and indictment of any person or persons involved in the burglary of a motor vehicle on the parking lot of Country Time Inn on Glen Flora Road the night of April 17 between 9 and 10 p.m. A Craftsman tool box and various hand tools and pullers (valued at \$1,500) were taken from the back of the truck.

If you have any information regarding this case or any case, please contact Crime Stoppers at 234-5555 or the Eagle Lake Police Department at 234-2727.

You will remain anonymous.

Eagle Lake Headlight

One more problem with 1991-92 Drug Grant...

County wants more drug grant funds

Eagle Lake City Council heard a request for additional funds for the 1991-92 Multi-Agency Drug Task Force Grant as well as a new procedure to be put into effect by the current Task Force which would require the passage of a new city ordinance.

County Auditor Raymie Kana told members of the council that she had received a letter on April 1st from the state requesting an additional \$8,065.03 from those participating in the 1991-92 Drug Task Force Grant. According to Kana, the amount paid by each of the three cities and the county was figured on a 75-25 split with the state, but the letter received the first shows a 69-31 split; thus, the additional \$2,016.26 per entity needed.

You will recall, previous problems with payments and exactly what was due on this grant and from whom were the reason County Judge H.O. "Butch" Strunk is now the administrative head of the Task Force instead of Sheriff Bill Esterling.

She told council members the money had already been paid by Colorado County using funds earmarked for the upcoming grant year and each city council was being asked to "kick in" their portion. What will happen, according to Kana, is when the County's portion of the upcoming grant is due, there will not be enough funds available.

Mayor Roy Van Nort stated, "We don't want to do anything until we find out what the other cities are going to do." Columbus and Weimar city councils opted not to take action on their portion of the payment during their most recent meetings.

Councilman Don Bendy said, "This is unfortunate. We could point our finger and say it's not our fault. On the other hand, we don't want to be the only city doing it" (paying the additional).

A motion was made by Councilman Vic Corman to pay the \$2,016.26 if the other cities paid. The motion was seconded by Bendy and passed unanimously. (Councilman Lonnie Somerlatte was not present at this meeting.)

Task Force Commander "Snuffy" Garrett, accompanied by Eagle Lake Police Chief Lupé Villarreal, Sgt. Earl Jones and Task Force member "Mr. Richey" explained the concept of a new program called S.C.A.T. (Street Crime Apprehension Team) which the Task Force would like to implement.

S.C.A.T. is mainly a surveillance procedure which is now used by the City of Brenham in areas of concentrated drug activity. In conjunction with this procedure, a no loitering ordinance would be needed. The ordinance would give the S.C.A.T. officers "probable cause" when addressing a group gathered in a high crime or drug area.

Richey observed the procedure being used when he rode with the Brenham S.C.A.T. team for three days and filed most of the questions from council.

After discussion, Van Nort told Garrett the city would look into the possibility of the ordinance, saying, "I think we need to do the same as the other cities; check the legality first."

As Task Force members were leaving, Fire Chief Darrell Gertson entered. Council was asked if Gertson could tell them about the use of City Square on Thursday, May 7, for a "National Day of Prayer" since no representative was present to answer questions. Also, Perry is to check with the City Attorney as to any legal ramifications (separation of church and state).

"Discussed and voted to change the city's utility collection policy on past due accounts. Apparently, the city is being "stuck" with utility bills covering two months usage when a resident does not pay their bill and leaves town. Accounts will now be worked as a disconnect by the end of the first month of billing.

"Discussed contract negotiations between O'Malley Engineers and the city, but took no action.

Acting City Manager Lucille Perry, as requested by Mayor Van Nort, was charged with the task of gathering information concerning the tax status of the department and whether donations from individuals to be used for this specific purpose would be tax deductible.

In other business, council:

- Tabled a request for the use of City Square on Thursday, May 7, for a "National Day of Prayer" since no representative was present to answer questions. Also, Perry is to check with the City Attorney as to any legal ramifications (separation of church and state).
- Discussed and voted to change the city's utility collection policy on past due accounts. Apparently, the city is being "stuck" with utility bills covering two months usage when a resident does not pay their bill and leaves town. Accounts will now be worked as a disconnect by the end of the first month of billing.
- Discussed contract negotiations between O'Malley Engineers and the city, but took no action.



Future Javelina

Last Thursday at the Ralder Gym, Rice running back Reggie Donner signed a national letter of intent to attend Texas A&I University in Kingsville on a football scholarship as his wife, Felicia, and coach, Mark Johnson, looked on.

Banner Press Photo by Chad Ferguson

Absentee voting for city, school board ends Tuesday

Registered voters of Eagle Lake will be going to vote for two city council members and mayor on Saturday, May 2. The election will be held in the Council Room of the Municipal Building, 100 E. Main Street, Eagle Lake, from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Meanwhile, all registered voters in the Rice Consolidated Independent School District will be voting the same day, May 2, for two school board trustees.

The trustee election polling places will be the Sheridan School, Garwood School and Eagle Lake Community Center. The polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. at each location.

For those voters who will be out of the area on May 2, absentee voting will continue through April 28 for both elections.

Absentee voting for city council takes place at the city offices in the Municipal Building from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. each weekday. Sylvia Rucka is the absentee voting clerk.

For the school board trustee election, absentee voting is at the RCISD Administration Building, Highway 90-A in Altair, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. each weekday through Tuesday, April 28.

Cedar Park man wins this week's prize drawing

As the Wildflower Celebration continues in Eagle Lake both out of town visitors and hometown folk are taking advantage of the many activities and sights.

The youth art exhibit at the old Kids Korner building on the square is one of the pleasurable things to view. Visitors enjoy looking at the art by area students and they can vote on their choices for the best. They can also register to win prizes in a drawing each week by filling out a ballot for the art contest.

The winner of this week's drawing from the art contest voters is Gerald L. Reichl from Cedar Park, Texas. He and his family were in town to see the wildflowers and took a tour of the art exhibit and museum as well.

He will receive as his prizes in the drawing, a two pound package of rice from the American Rice Growers Association, a quarter-pound package of Firecracker 234 wildflower seeds from Wildseed Farms, \$10 worth of gas from Dan's Minute Stop, one meal (\$10 value) from the Sportsman's Restaurant, a movie rental from Video Specialist Movie Club, a haircut from Eagle Barber Shop and a cap from Johnny's Sports Shop.

This weekend is the final weekly drawing for those voting in the youth art contest. The prizes will include a lunch at the Farris 1912, a barbecue plate from Austin's Barbecue and a night for two at the Sportsman's Motel as well as other gifts. Anyone who would like to donate a prize for the final week's drawing on April 26 may contact John Canaris at 234-5933.

The youth art winners will be chosen from the votes cast and announced next week. They will each receive gift certificates for their winning pictures.

Eagle Lake Police Department Weekly Report

Lakeside Drive involving a Plymouth Sundance, driven by Gabriela Ochoa of East Bernard, and a Chevrolet Cavalier, driven by Bertha Montemayor of Eagle Lake. Ochoa stopped at the intersection then proceeded to make a left turn onto East Main, failing to yield the right-of-way to Montemayor. Ochoa was cited for failure to yield right-of-way.

Checked a report of suspicious subjects on Pendleton Street.

Gave courtesy transport to a subject whose keys were locked in car.

Assisted at an accident on East FM 3013 until a county unit arrived.

Answered a bank alarm call at 111 N. McCarty, which proved to be a false alarm.

Assisted a subject with a civil problem.

Met with a complainant at the subjects on Pendleton Street.

police dept. about a harassment charge. Suspect was not located.

Met with complainant on E. State Street about some criminal mischief in which a soda water machine had been turned over.

Dispatched to a report of a burglary of a motor vehicle on C Street. Entry was gained into the vehicle by prying the door open. The dash plate had been removed and an AM/FM cassette radio and five religious cassette tapes were stolen.

Assisted with a civil problem on Shirley Street.

Received a report of theft of a tool box that occurred on the parking lot of 1819 Glen Flora Road. Owner advised that he was away from his vehicle for about one hour when the theft occurred. Estimated value of the tool box is \$1,500.

Arrested Jose Pex Torres for discharging a firearm in the city and public intoxication. He was transported to the county jail for confinement and to see the judge.

Officer was dispatched to Glen Brook in reference to criminal mischief. The gas cap of complainant's car had been pried open and suspect(s) poured sugar into the gas tank. Prints were lifted and there are suspects.

Arrested Anthony Brown of Waco for assault, following an argument between Brown and a victim, the victim was struck in the right eye and sustained abrasions to her right knee from being pushed to the ground. Brown was taken to county jail.

Willie Jackson retires from FNB

Willie Jackson, longtime employee of First National Bank of Eagle Lake, retired from the bank on April 8, after 34 years of service. Jackson, now 75, began his job of cleaning, opening and closing the bank in 1958.

Over the years more duties were assigned and he became the bank's supervisor of maintenance, collector of delinquent accounts, repossession of automobiles, and later was put in charge of all the coin rolling needs of the tellers. Thousands of dollars in coins have passed through his hands as he loaded the coin counting and rolling machine in the bank's vault.

He is a former scoutmaster of Eagle Lake's first black troop and deacon in Friendship Baptist Church. Although he was not the official security officer for the bank, Jackson kept an eye on the premises and checked the locks and lights before he left the area. The security of the employees and customers was always uppermost in his mind.

According to Board Chairman W.H. Harrison Sr., it was rumored in the early day of his tenure at the bank that Jackson kept a rusty old 38 caliber revolver somewhere in the bank to protect himself.

(See Jackson retires, Page 10)

that Jackson kept a rusty old 38 caliber revolver somewhere in the bank to protect himself.

(See Jackson retires, Page 10)



Deadline extended ...

\$10,000 Reward

The deadline has been extended to May 15, 1992, for the \$10,000 reward offered by A&K Railroad Materials.

The reward is being offered for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the individual or individuals responsible for the arson-caused fire at A&K's Yard near Eagle Lake, Texas, on or about September 3, 1991. This offer of reward will be paid by A&K on conviction of the criminal or criminals.

If you have any information regarding the above, contact the Eagle Lake Police Department at 409-234-2727 or Crimestoppers at 409-234-5555.

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