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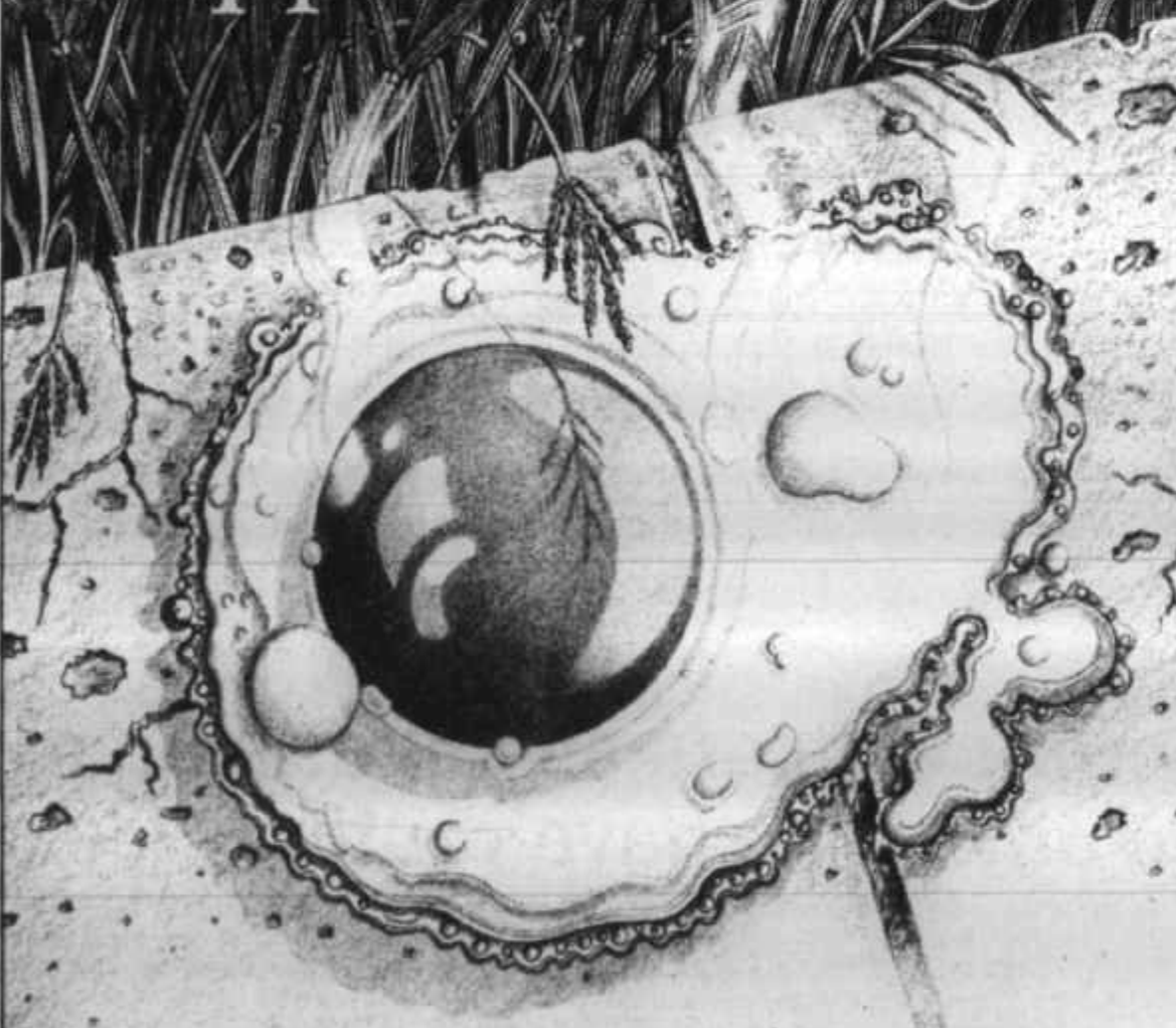
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This usually doesn't happen until August



Summer sizzles after rainy spring...

South Texas saw a cooler, wetter spring than usual this year. Now summer has taken over without warning, bringing a dramatic rise in temperatures with highs soaring into the 90s by day and hovering in the upper 70s at night. The prediction for the rest of the summer is, in a word: Hot!

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To The Editor & You

Taking care of our own costs more in the 90s

Dear Editor:

The following narrative is a personal observation done without prior review of either board of directors of Eagle Lake Community Hospital or Rice Medical Foundation. As the material is a mixture of facts and my subjective evaluation, I take full responsibility for its contents. Thank you for printing this disclosure.

Last week I was asked to help give a prayer of blessing to an 8-year-old boy who is sick at his home. This is something we are taught to do in my church, and is not an unusual request ordinarily. But this situation was unusual in that it brought me into close personal contact with a child whom I have come to know in committee discussions about his health care at the hospital. What follows is a story about this boy, the hospital, compassion, service and needs, as seen through the

eyes of a hospital administrator. Currently this child is at home, confined to his room and tethered to a ventilator and oxygen bottle via a breathing tube connected to his throat. His mind is active and, like any normal young boy, he is fascinated by dinosaurs. An artistically gifted friend has painted various dinosaurs on his otherwise drab walls. Several pictures of Christ attest to the hope of his parents for divine intervention and/or gratitude for the life he has been granted despite his impairments.

The boy laughs to see his two younger brothers wrestling. Actually, no sound emits from his mouth; the tracheostomy does not permit it. Rather, he throws his head back, mouth open, and in an exaggerated fashion shakes his head to let us know that he is laughing from the heart.

The family copes the best they can. Medical specialists at UTMB have taught him and his family how to care for his tracheostomy, the oxygen and the ventilator. He will be ventilator dependent for the remainder of his life, however, and the fragility of his condition is inescapable.

This young boy has received hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of care. His parents could not get this care in Mexico, so they brought him to our area. Without the care he has received in Texas hospitals and from Texas physicians, he most assuredly would not have survived. His father works long and hard, but at minimum wage he will never cover the cost of "Jose's" treatment.

This conundrum has not changed for years. Young Jose is getting care that is life prolonging but is incredibly expensive and much more than his parents can ever afford. As an administrator of a hospital through whom much of his uncompensated care is coming, I morally cannot withhold the care he needs. Yet the hospital is faced with similar, if less dramatic, situations regularly that threaten our fiscal capacity to serve this community.

Who pays for Jose's care? When he was at Ben Taub, the Harris County Tax District taxpayers paid for it. At UTMB the State of Texas taxpayers cover his cost. At Eagle Lake Community Hospital we provide the care as part of our charity obligation, which partially justifies our tax exempt status. The respiratory therapist does a lot of Jose's care on his own time.

The Eagle Lake tradition has been to take care of our own. The hospital was built debt-free in the mid-70s and added a wing in the mid-80s without incurring debt. Funding largely came through community support, and generous contributions through the years have helped keep the hospital well-equipped. As such, we have been able to attract a medical staff and a support staff that are second to none. What we do here in our hospital, we do as well as the perceived "best" institutions anywhere.

The problem is that our community has changed. It has gotten older and poorer. Medicare and Medicaid insured patients are now more than 60% of the users of the hospital. There

are fewer commercially insured patients to whom the costs can be shifted. Employers and insurance companies have wised up to that game and have instituted managed care strategies to help control their costs. We are collecting less than 70% of total patient revenue now. Better medicine has led to fewer admissions and shorter stays, creating some under-utilization.

To illustrate, in 1983, before the "new" wing was built, closets were used as temporary patient rooms.

From an average daily census (average number of inpatients in the hospital) of over 25 in the early 80s, we now run an average daily census of less than 10.

These trends represent perhaps the greatest challenge ELCH has faced since its inception. There are various strategies which the Board of Directors are exploring and are executing to compensate for these trends. They range from physician recruitment to more collaborative networking agreements with other healthcare providers. One fact remains true — however much we want to wish it away — the fact that this hospital needs further community support if it is to continue

providing services at its current level.

A community fund raising drive to help the hospital is underway. Many of you will receive a letter very shortly, asking for a pledge to the Rice Medical Foundation. The Rice Medical Foundation is a non-profit organization designed to raise funds in support of the hospital. Of course, there are other ways to give. The Pink Ladies have ardently supported the hospital through their volunteered time and fund raising activities. Many hospital employees give back to the hospital part of their earnings and volunteer themselves to support the hospital through the Hospital Employees Trust Fund. The hospital also receives donations directly from gracious benefactors.

There are many reasons to support the hospital. The main reason it needs your support is for the service it provides to Jose and to the hundreds of others in our community who depend on a local health care center to survive in times of crisis.

Thank you for caring.
James E. Buckner, Jr.
Administrator, Eagle Lake Community Hospital

Texas students may have to use last year's reading books

Some Texas public school children might have to make do with last year's textbooks and some might have to share books with fellow students because of a \$100 million funding shortfall.

Texas Education Commission spokesmen Della May Moore said seventh graders taking a newly offered life science course in the fall will have to share their textbooks. Also texts for reading, business law and some vocational courses will be the same as last year's unless local school districts can pay for new books themselves.

All but about \$5 million of the state's \$272 million two-year book budget was eaten up in the 1993-94 school year, creating the \$100 million shortfall.

After news of the shortfall was made public, Education Commissioner Lionel Skip Meno proposed that a set amount for school books be budgeted by the Legislature before education officials order books from publishers. In the past, Meno said, education officials made their requests without projecting the costs.

Before Meno made his proposal, Sen. Bill Ratliff, chairman of the Senate Education Committee, said guidelines for publishers set by the TEA in its textbook adoption system have driven up costs.

"I think the entire system of textbook adoption is broken...and has to be restructured," Ratliff, R-Mount Pleasant, told *The Houston Chronicle*. Also, the \$272 million book budget reportedly did not take into account the estimated 65,000 new students who enroll in Texas public schools each year.

GOP, Demos in Labels Battle
Gov. Ann Richards' speech at the Democratic party convention in Fort Worth two weeks ago set off a flood of criticism from the religious right wing of the Texas Republican Party and counter claims.



State Capitol Highlights
By Lyndell Williams
and Ed Sterling
Texas Press Association

Richards invited alienated Republicans to join the Democratic Party after saying the Texas GOP had been taken over by "mongers of hate" who would ban abortion and dictate what is taught in public schools.

The Texas Eagle Forum responded by labeling the governor a "Christian basher" and an "anti-religious bigot." The Democratic Party struck back last week by criticizing the GOP's gubernatorial nominee George W. Bush for not choosing sides between factions in his own party.

Democratic nominee Joe Curbish said, "George W. Bush wants to lead the state of Texas but he won't stand up to the radical right and take leadership of his own party. Mainstream Republicans and reform-minded Texans want a governor who isn't afraid to fight for Texas."

But the Bush campaign responded by saying that the Richards campaign is just trying to divert attention from the governor's record, and claimed that Richards did not participate in forming her party's platform.

Speaker Pete Laney Saluted
More than 2,000 constituents and friends from every part of Texas crowded into Plainview's Ollie Linder Center last week to pay tribute to House Speaker Pete Laney.

The mostly boots and jeans crowd included former Gov. Preston Smith, Lt. Gov. Bob Bullock, Secretary of State Ron Kirk, 77 legislators and former speakers Billy Clayton and Gib Lewis. All praised Laney for integrity, fairness and leadership ability. "Pete Laney brings common

sense, the knowledge of working with people in both parties and getting the job done," stated Bullock. "He's tight fisted with a buck, yet he has a vision that helps every school in Texas."

The catered dinner of barbecue, beans and cornbread, was free to everyone who attended. Banker John Anderson, who chaired the event, commented, "Pete's a person without any pretensions. What you see is what you get."

Organizers said they wanted to thank Laney for his service in the Legislature since 1973.

Deadbeat Lawyers Peeve Parker
State Sen. Carl Parker, a lawyer himself, said he is considering introducing legislation that would keep tax-shirking lawyers from getting their licenses.

Last month, comptroller John Sharp estimated that 3,400 of the 39,000 lawyers in the state have not been paying a \$200 annual state professional occupational tax and about 2,300 of them have never paid the tax since it went into effect in 1992.

Parker, D-Port Arthur, told reporters, "I wouldn't want a lawyer who didn't obey the law to represent me." About \$1.3 million in back taxes are owed by the deadbeat lawyers, according to the comptroller's office.

KKK Member List Protected
The Texas Supreme Court said last week the state cannot force Texas Ku Klux Klan leader Michael Lowe to divulge the secret list of his group's members.

In a decision reached without hearing oral arguments, the court said the state was wrong to jail Lowe, Knight of the KKK grand dragon, for refusing to surrender membership lists.

The trial court had ordered Lowe to release the membership lists but the high court said the "rights to form, discuss and express unpopular views" were protected fundamental rights.

Let's Look Back...

24 & 48 YEARS AGO

September 25, 1969

The Eagle Lake Study Club saluted their 50th year with a Founders Tea and fashion show of period dresses modeled by the officers. Models were Mrs. Dexter, Mrs. R.L. Lange, Mrs. K.B. Szynanski, Mrs. W.F. Meitzen and Mrs. C.H. Matthews.

Mr. & Mrs. William K. Lehrer are to be honored on their 50th anniversary this weekend by their children, Mr. & Mrs. William N. Lehrer and Mr. & Mrs. Homer I. Lewis... Mr. & Mrs. H.L. Bowers (See 24 & 48, Page 11)

OLPH Parish picnic scheduled for June 26

Preparations are underway for the annual parish picnic of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church on Sunday, June 26. The picnic will be held at the Eagle Lake Knights of Columbus Hall.

The menu this year will be chicken fried steak and sausage with trimmings. Serving will be from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in the KC Hall. There will also be carb service for plates to go. Tickets for the meal are \$5 for adults and to-go plates, \$3 for children.

Among the day's activities are a horseshoe pitching tournament, mixed volleyball, country store and



Musician preforms for children
Joe Scruggs, at left, renowned children's composer and musician, with Peter Markham, right, present "the Bicycle Song" during their concert at Eagle Lake Primary School. The concert was sponsored by the school PTO, Alpha Delta Phi and Xi Psi Sorority chapters of Beta Sigma Phi.

Lynda Appelt, music teacher at ELPS arranged for the Scruggs concert. Scruggs records for Shadow Play Records in Austin.

Photo Courtesy ELPS

Sheridan News

By Janet Dupré

I was out of pocket a lot last week, and out of town over the weekend, so I would not have had any news this week, but I did get a call from Leah Ross letting me know about the End-Of-Season Little League Party this coming weekend at the new Park.

Saturday, June 18, beginning at 5 p.m., there will be lots of food, lots of fun, and recognition with awards and trophies. It should be a fun time for all the Little League players and their parents, so be sure to come out and participate in all the festivities. This will also be the time to turn in

your uniforms and equipment. An inventory will need to be made. And I'm sure the parents will like not having another item to keep track of.

The Little League season seemed like it was a big success at the new park, and I'm sure the community expresses their thanks to all who

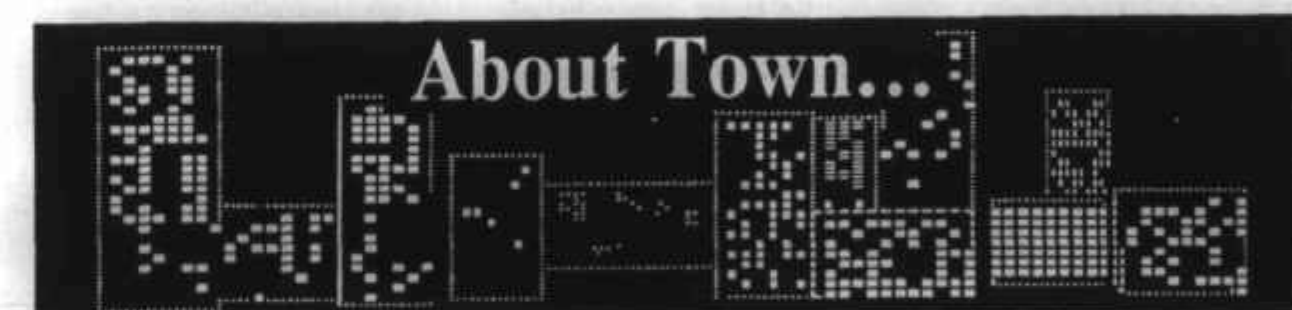
helped with the concession stand, those who helped coach and to those who just came out to give their support and watch the games.

Just a quick reminder of the Sheridan Community Reunion, sponsored by the Sheridan Lions Club, set for July 2 and 3.

Bible Verse of the Week

"Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness: come before His presence with singing." Psalm 100:1-2

Submitted by Neddy Phillips



About Town...
Annette Fajkus, who retired from the Eagle Lake Middle School, was honored with a backyard party June 5. Her husband Jerry Fajkus with Suzanne and Pat Pavlu did the party and presented her a corsage in the school colors of blue and white.

Balloons, streamers and miniature books decorated the house and yard. Suzanne even decorated her cake in School's Out theme. They enjoyed barbecue with friends and family who came from Eagle Lake, Hallettsville, Columbus, Garwood, Austin, Deer Park and Pearland to add their wishes for her retirement along with gifts.

"The American flags have really had an airing in Eagle Lake recently. After flying for Memorial Day and a few out for D Day on June 6, they were again in full glory Tuesday, June 14, in honor of Flag Day. And, of course, we can look forward to another colorful display in a few weeks for our Independence Day, July 4. What a magnificent symbol we have. Thank you to the men and women who care for and put out the flags for our community."

"It is great to have Elizabeth Boode back in action. Be sure to read her museum column in today's Headlight."

"This is a friendly reminder to a local resident who teaches swimming... bathing suits are mandatory!" Seems Glenda Blair is not only hooked on French toast, she even nibbles on "Beef & More" (jerky-type treats for dogs).

"There's always someone who likes to call and try to cause trouble. A local painter had a question concerning the photo and picture of Judy Cooper's 'This Old House'. He wanted to know, if it is the second oldest standing house in Eagle Lake, which is the oldest?"

We contacted a couple of people, including Judy, and they said the oldest standing house in Eagle Lake is owned by Bill Kell. It stands at the corner of Stockbridge and N. McCarty.

Now, are you happy, Steve? "Alva Brewer, who drives for Lake Motors, narrowly escaped with his life last Thursday. He was transporting a car for Tom Reed and was traveling south on Hwy. 59 when an 18-wheeler suddenly changed lanes. The side impact completely demolished the windshield of the new car and forced it to cross the median into the oncoming lanes."

Luckily, there was no northbound traffic at that time and Brewer was able to get out of the vehicle. The car was a total loss, but Brewer, who lives in East Bernard, received no injuries. He was wearing his seat belt, according to Tom.

Volunteer training will be held June 24-25.

Funding provided by the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services

COLORADO COUNTY COURTHOUSE REPORT

DEEDS

Deed: Durwin W. Windle, et ux to Victoria Bank & Trust Company, 10 acres of the R.R. Railroad Survey, Abstract No. 686; filed 4-11-94.

Deed: Henry Wicks Jr., et al to Daisy Wicks Williams, part of Lot No. 1, Block No. 57, Weimar; 4-11-94.

Deed: Adolph M. Kloss to Adolph M. Kloss Revocable Trust, 5 tracts in Austin and Colorado Counties, multiple mineral and/or royalty interests; 4-12-94.

Gift Deed: Lisa Gail Bullock to Patricia Bullock, and, int. in 28,417.2 acres in the William Allen Survey, Abstract No. 58 et al; 4-12-94.

Deed: Robert H. Long, et ux to Earl J. Carroll, et ux, parcel in the Henry Austin Survey, Abstract No. 4; filed 4-13-94.

Deed: Phillips Thorp, executor of the estate of Harold I. Thorp to Henry Thorp, 685 acres of the N.C. Griffin Survey, Abstract No. 234; filed 4-13-94.

Deed: Leona Stanley Wicks Hewitt to Glenn Dale Wicks, part of the Henry Austin Fire League Grant, Abstract No. 4 and part of Lot No. 4, Block No. 36, City of Weimar; 4-14-94.

Deed: Charles Lynette Soechting Long, trustee of the Lillian G. Soechting Revocable Trust to J.C. Long, et al, property in Wharton and Colorado Counties; 4-14-94.

Deed: Gilbert L. Kiel, et ux to Jerry Pusztovskiy, et ux, 4,645 acres of the James Cummins League; Abstract No. A-12; 4-14-94.

Deed: Thomas E. Cook, et ux to Compot Investment, Ltd., 1.0 acre of the A. Mehrens Survey, Abstract No. 648; 4-15-94.

Gift Deed: Helen Grisham to Edward Charles Grisham and Lora Ann Thye, 13,235 acres of the William Freils Survey, Abstract No. 207; 4-15-94.

Deed: Charles D. Ziomke to the Charles D. and Jean S. Ziomke Family Trust, Lot No. 36, Shirley Oaks Subdivision, Abstract No. 648; 4-15-94.

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4-19-94.

Atha Baker to Ken Savage & Associates Inc. 61.75 acres of the P.T. Miles Survey, Abstract No. 817; 4-19-94.

James Reynolds Beane to Ken Savage & Associates Inc. 61.75 acres of the P.T. Miles Survey, Abstract No. 817; 4-19-94.

Thelma Pate to Ken Savage & Associates Inc. 61.75 acres of the P.T. Miles Survey, Abstract No. 817; 4-19-94.

Lois Marie Alexander to Ken Savage & Associates Inc. 61.75 acres of the P.T. Miles Survey, Abstract No. 817; 4-19-94.

Frances B. Alford to Ken Savage & Associates Inc. 61.75 acres of the P.T. Miles Survey, Abstract No. 817; 4-19-94.

Nettie Evelyn Durham to Ken Savage & Associates Inc. 61.75 acres of the P.T. Miles Survey, Abstract No. 817; 4-19-94.

Opal Beane Adcock to Ken Savage & Associates Inc. 61.75 acres of the P.T. Miles Survey, Abstract No. 817; 4-19-94.

Mary Jane Mayfield to Ken Savage & Associates Inc. 20 acres of the S.M. Williams Survey, Abstract No. 606; 4-19-94.

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