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Costs estimated at \$300,000... Repair process for Primary School okayed by Board

By Lynda Appelt, Contributing Writer The Rice Consolidated Independent School District Board of Trustees heard the recommendation of PBK Architects of Houston regarding repairs required on the 4-year-old Eagle Lake Primary School (ELPS) building during a special meeting last week. The meeting was held at ELPS campus to allow staff to have input into the existing situation. The post-construction problems with the building's foundation were the subject of litigation filed by Rice CISD against a variety of contractors and sub-contractors associated with the project. The case was settled out of court in 1994 for an undisclosed amount and non-disclosure of parties involved. Settlement funds have been set aside in interest bearing accounts since that time, pending PBK's recommendations. Ron Bailey of PBK Architects, in consultation with Saluatoro Conti, structural engineer with Cagle, Conti & Jumper, summarized findings of the investigation into the structural defects of the ELPS facility. PBK is of the opinion that the foundation was not properly constructed given soil conditions at the time it was poured. The foundation appears to be sinking more toward the interior of the building, rather than the exterior. Bailey told the group that the basic building frame is not moving, only the slab. The recommendation that repairs proceed, according to the following steps, was presented by Bailey: 1) Take the following actions to improve water drainage around the building: a) Install a six-foot sidewalk around the perimeter of the building; b) Regrade where necessary to improve drainage; and c) Add extensions onto drain pipes to redirect rain water; 2) Take core samples of soil beneath the building to establish a benchmark of foundation movement and determine the extent of the problem at present. Periodic core samples will be taken to monitor further foundation movement; 3) Replace cracked masonry walls and other damaged walls inside the building with wallboard, at least until the foundation has stabilized; 4) Monitor movement of the building over a two-year period to determine whether measures taken have helped to stabilize the foundation; and 5) Take further steps as necessary, possibly including mud-jacking or adding piers beneath the foundation, if the foundation does not stabilize. The Board, upon the recommendation of Superintendent Dr. Richard Gott, also voted to construct a new carport at the automobile dropoff. The carport will be constructed of metal siding and brick columns to match the existing building. The existing concrete paving and sidewalk at the auto dropoff also will be reworked to eliminate ponding water. The repair of existing air conditioning due to overflowing, the lighting and canopy at fascia at the bus dropoff, the releveling of the existing lay-in acoustical ceiling system and replacement of damaged ceiling tile throughout the school were also included in the repairs. The Board voted unanimously to authorize PBK Architects to seek bids for contracted services in the estimated amount of \$300,000. The work will start as soon as possible following the last day of school, May 25. "I've 're to finish by the beginning of school Aug. 16 (Aug. 14 for staff), we must hit the floor running the last day of school," said Gott.

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repeal the ordinance limiting the use of sidewalks for sales by commercial businesses without proof of liability until the legal aspects to the City are checked with its attorney. Non-profit organizations are exempt from the ordinance. Stewart recently had a permit rejected because of insufficient insurance. Councilman Joe Frazar questioned Council, stating, "As bad off as we are, why restrict our merchants?" Municipal Court Judge Mary Lou Szymanski once again presented her request for a part-time clerk as she no longer plans to handle these duties. Council assured Szymanski that the new computer program will relieve some of those duties. Szymanski, who serves only part-time as municipal judge and full-time as justice of the peace, told Council there is no municipal judge office anywhere without a clerk. Szymanski does plan to set certain court dates so as to eliminate individuals walking in any time or day to take care of a ticket. In other business, Council: -Granted a request by Hortensia Salinas to conduct a bike-a-thon April 22 for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital; and -Received notification from Councilwoman René Cooper-Scott that the Police Chief Search Committee has narrowed the 36 applicants down to 11. Interviews are projected to begin at 8 a.m. on Saturday, April 15. The committee will present six candidates to the full Council for its final decision.

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"Watch the Lamb" performances are at 7 p.m. on Friday, April 14, and Sunday, April 16. There is no admission charge, so come early to get a good seat. Also feel free to join Sealy Assembly for their Easter Sunday morning worship service at 10:30 a.m. Call the church office for more information. There is no admission charge to any of the events. For more information call the church office at 409-885-3113.

Registered Voters of the Rice School District... Don't Miss Out! Town Meeting Thursday, April 6 Prairie Edge Museum Auditorium 8p.m. On the Agenda: Questions & Answers... Rice Hospital Tax District Don't miss this opportunity to voice your opinion and/or have your questions answered!

Happy Easter! 'Benefair' seeks entries Sheridan Ambulance Corps members are making final preparations for their 12th Annual Benefair to be held all day Saturday, May 6, at the Sheridan Fire and Ambulance Hall. The Corps urges you to make plans to attend and participate in their annual fund drive. Entries are now being solicited for co-ed volleyball and barbecue cook-off teams, craft and commercial booths, parade floats, and horseshoe and washer pitching contestants. Adoption papers are being printed so (See Benefair, Page 8)

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Meeting on Rice Hospital tax district fills Museum

Well over 200 people attended the Town Meeting held by Eagle Lake Community Hospital (ELCH) Board of Directors to explain the proposed Rice Hospital District and answer as many questions as possible. Some arriving as much as 30 minutes prior to the 8 p.m. start. Along with members of the Board, Comptroller Blair Hickey was there to provide answers to and statistics for financial questions. Hospital Board President Steve Balas, in charge of the meeting, began with a quick explanation of how Medicare's change in payments has contributed to ELCH's financial situation. Balas also attributed the undesirable position of the Hospital to the loss of physicians and the downturn in the local economy. Balas told those assembled that the financial deficit through Feb. 1995 was \$168 million. But, with what he termed "a terrific March", the Board projects that \$149 million debt will be turned over to the taxing district on May 6 if the proposition passes. Taxes will be collected for 1995 beginning in Dec. 1995 and Jan. 1996, he said. Voicing the opposing viewpoint was Bill Wilson of Eagle Lake who began by asking how many in the audience were in favor of socialized medicine. "We're creeping in the direction of socialized medicine when we pay a tax for a hospital that everyone can use," he said. Wilson told those gathered that he and his wife, Helen, do not use ELCH because a friend had recommended a doctor in Wharton to whom they first moved to Eagle Lake. Other points by Wilson were: 1. the addition of an oppressive tax on a community that is already economically depressed; 2. a more desirable county-wide hospital district; and, 3. questioned the ability of the community to successfully operate the hospital since positions on the board would be added responsibility to persons already burdened by responsibilities. The most moving speaker of the evening was Mrs. Leland Eisel from Bonus. She followed Wilson as a complete surprise to Board Members and almost everyone else in the room. Eisel's 18-year-old son, Cory, was injured in a wreck on Hwy. 90A re-



With people still filling in, the auditorium at the Prairie Edge Museum was filled to capacity shortly before the first "town meeting" concerning the formation of the Hospital taxing district. Residents, Hospital employees and Board Members, absentee land owners and other interested parties as well as reporters from Colorado County newspapers made it standing room only as Board President Steve Balas began the exchange of information and viewpoints. Headlight Photo by Jeannine Fearing

NEWSBRIEFS

Courthouse, Headlight closed Good Friday The Colorado County Courthouse will be closed on April 14th in observance of Good Friday. The Eagle Lake Headlight will also be closed Good Friday, and will re-open for business on Monday, April 17. The staff at the Eagle Lake Headlight wish you and your family a very happy and safe Easter.

Nada KCs fish fry Friday The Nada Knights of Columbus are holding their all-you-can-eat fish fry on April 14 at the Nada Community Center. Serving of catfish, french fries, coleslaw and trimmings will be from 6 to 9 p.m. Homemade desserts will be available. Adults eat for \$6.75; kids 6-11, \$3.75; and kids under 6 eat for free. Plates to go will be \$5.50.

Sheridan Easter egg hunt this Saturday Sheridan Parks & Recreation Center will hold its second annual Easter egg hunt this Saturday, April 15, at 11 a.m. Alice Hinz will be in charge of egg donations. If you'd like to donate or volunteer, call 234-3436.

Chamber to meet April 17 The Eagle Lake Chamber of Commerce will meet at noon on Monday, April 17, at the Prairie Edge Museum. Call the Chamber office for more information, 234-2780.

CCA commodity distribution next Monday CCA will distribute USDA food on Monday, April 17, 11:30 a.m.-12 noon at the Providence Baptist Church, 1207 E. State. They will also distribute food in Columbus at the old CCA building, 903 Preston, 1:30-2 p.m.; and at Weimar at City Hall, 106 E. Main, 10-10:30 a.m.

Pilot Club spaghetti supper The Eagle Lake Pilot Club will hold their 10th annual chicken spaghetti supper on Tuesday, April 18, 5-7 p.m. at the Eagle Lake Community Center. The \$4.50 ticket must be purchased in advance from any Pilot member. Proceeds will benefit Pilot community projects.

St. Anthony School re-registration St. Anthony School will have pre-registration for the 1995-96 school year April 18 through 21. Classes are offered for pre-K through grade 8. Anyone wishing more information is asked to call the school office at 732-5505.

Fort Bend Singles to sponsor dance Fort Bend Singles are sponsoring a dance on Friday, April 21, at 8 p.m. at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Needville. Music will be provided by Krenck Texas Sounds. The public is welcome; door prizes will be given. For more information, call 713-242-4782 or 409-793-4573.

Houston Happy Hikers going to Brazos Bend April 22 and 23, Houston Happy Hikers will sponsor walking events at Brazos Bend State Park, southwest of Houston. The public is invited to help celebrate the club's 16th birthday by participating in these non-competitive, healthful events. For more information call 713-369-2122 or 713-487-2662.

Defensive Driving courses set A Saturday defensive driving course has been slated by Gene Cremonets in Columbus on April 22 from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Mansfield Building, 930 Travis Street. The class in Eagle Lake will be held April 29 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Winterrman Library. To register call 409-543-7849, 234-5411 or 1-800-285-8297 any time.

Alzheimer's meeting April 23 The Colorado County Alzheimer's Support Group will be meeting at Heritage House on Sunday, April 23, at 3:30 p.m. We would like to invite the public as well as our family members. If you have any questions please call Nancy Segler at 234-3591.

Spring blood drive Gulf Coast Medical Center in Wharton will hold a spring blood drive on Monday, April 24, 12 noon until 7 p.m. at the GCMC classrooms. Call 532-0434 for more information. Walk-ins are welcome.

Legion Post #108 meeting April 25 The Eagle Lake American Legion Post 108 will have a quarterly meeting in The Depot at 7 p.m. Tuesday, April 25, with the election of officers. Plans will also be made for decorating the graves of deceased veterans with flags on Memorial Day, May 30. All members are urged to attend.

May community theatre in Wharton Community theatre in Wharton (The Footlighters), assisted by the Colorado River Band and Strings, will present their first musical, "You a Good Man, Charlie Brown", on Friday, May 5, and Saturday, May 6, at 7:30 p.m. On Sunday, May 7, they will perform at 2:30 p.m. Tickets are \$5; reserve yours by mail, P.O. Box 1067, Wharton 77488 or call 409-282-2970.

Beasley School reunion next month The 29th Beasley School reunion is planned for May 7 with registration beginning at 2 p.m.; visitation and a short business meetings will follow. Drinks will be furnished, but each family is asked to bring a dessert or sandwiches. Join past students, teachers and patrons in remembering the past.

Honor graduates announced... RCISD Alternative Campus open, showing results

pal Tony Jackson reported that three more students were assigned from his campus Monday and Sheridan Principal Larry Vray reported that the word has already spread that the alternative campus is not the place to be. Gott reported that several parents have visited the facility and had high praise for the program that has been implemented. Gott complimented Fred Grahmann for his successful efforts as acting principal at Rice High School and seeing the need and volunteering without being asked to relieve the burden of having no principal from the district. Grahmann announced graduate rankings for Rice High School. They are Shea McClanahan, valedictorian; Nicholas Korenek, valedictorian; and Jana Elizabeth Buckner, Ashley Ann Craney, Sharon Elaine Grahmann, Nancy Frances Hernandez, Kimberly E. Korenek, Kelly I. Thomson, Jessica Anne Whinsant and Jamie Breanna (See Board, Page 8)

Saving the Hospital, doing the tax district... Part 4 The healthcare future, with and without a tax district

Submitted by Eagle Lake Community Hospital Administration and Board of Directors The Eagle Lake Community Hospital Board of Directors, administration and medical staff are cautiously optimistic about the immediate future of hospital care if the tax district passes. There are signs that the physician recruitment and clinic strategies are going to pay off in the short term, and the demands on a tax district will lessen. This has been the experience in many hospital tax districts. Columbus Community Hospital was able to discontinue its tax district and Lavaca Medical Center has been able to lower its tax rate. The current Board believes that the plan for the Hospital needs to be three-fold. The Hospital needs to continue its clinic development strategy. The efforts in Eagle Lake and Sealy can be augmented with clinics in Garwood and Sheridan. The second strategy is to develop relationships with nearby hospitals to share services that reduce overhead yet maintain quality. The third strategy is to position the Hospital as a better merger partner. There is no apparent escape from the "downsizing" of hospital services. Projections clearly point to a need for even fewer patient beds in the near future. That is not to say that Eagle Lake must be the one to take the first bullet. But the Hospital must prepare itself for that contingency if the south county area does not attract new business and population. By planning now to have a stronger affiliation with a regional or national network of providers, ELCH may immunize itself against the managed care and Medicaid (See Hospitl, Page 8)

Eagle Lake Police report criminal mischief, fights

The Eagle Lake Police Department reported the following case for the week ending April 10, 1995. Officer Brian Ochoa, while conducting a traffic stop on Boothe at East Main on April 6, at 3:01 a.m., learned from a check of records that subject was driving under SR-22 suspension. Michael Joseph Barajas of San Antonio was arrested, processed at the police department, then transported to the county jail for confinement for driving while license suspended. Officer Eric Hart responded to a report of a fight on Clay Street on April 7 at 4:12 p.m. assisted by Sgt. Steve Hassin. An investigation was conducted and charges are pending. On April 7 at 11:58 p.m., Officer Jake Garcia was dispatched to a report of criminal mischief on Simmons Street. A report was taken and the case is under investigation. On April 8 at 1:23 a.m., Officer Clem Johnson was dispatched to East

Local company gives land to Revitalize Eagle Lake

Revitalize Eagle Lake Inc. board members highlighted their recent monthly meeting with the acceptance of a deed from Eagle Lake Development Company for two tracts of local property. In making the donation, Development partners Ed Krivacki, Mae Ashby, Raymond Thomas and Glenn Tryon stated, "We want to assist the 'Revitalize' members in their efforts toward community improvement and we hope this gift will be a useful asset toward those objectives." The properties total nearly two acres and are located on Austin Road, next to Kevin Courts Apartments, and on Heritage Road across from the Heritage House. Revitalize President Robbie Cook expressed appreciation on behalf of the board, saying, "We thank the Eagle Lake Development Company partners for this generous contribution. We are already considering ways to use these properties for the betterment of Eagle Lake." Revitalize Eagle Lake Inc., a non-profit 501 (c) (3) tax exempt corporation, has initiated or assisted several projects in recent years, including the Prairie Edge Museum, the Civic Garden Club and its downtown beautification activities and the Eagle Lake Community Pool. Board members will be again soliciting community financial support for pool operations slated to resume in late May.

COLUMBUS LIVESTOCK AUCTION REPORT

Columbus Livestock Auction Inc. Sale Every Thursday at 11:30 a.m. We will be on the air at KULM, Columbus, every Wednesday from 6:30 to 6:45 a.m., and every Thursday, live at rig side from 2:05 to 2:20 p.m. The market was weaker on the plainer calves. But the good quality calves sold steadily and strong. The packer cows and bulls were \$2 to \$3 hundred lower on approximately 125 head. We had a light run due to the rains in our vicinity. We had a lot of buyers on hand and a few new buyers which make for a good market. If we can help you with marketing your livestock, please call George Hagan or Art Moeller at 409-732-2622 or 1-800-944-2622. If you need a truck or trailer or man to work your cattle, we're as near as your telephone. Out of town, call collect. Your calls are welcome. Try us on your next shipment. Call George Hagan, residence 409-732-2553, Art Moeller, 409-732-2934, Roy Burger, 409-865-5042 or Kenneth Brown, 409-732-5815. "We're at your service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week," say George, Art, Ken, Roy, Max and Charley. "We appreciate your business." Market Report for March 30, 1995 Cattle on hand: 709; sheep, 6; horses, 4; Packer Cows: higher dressing utility and coter cows, 39-45¢ per lb.; lower dressing utility and coter cows, 34-39¢; light weight coter cows, 25-34¢. Packer cattle: heavyweight bulls, 45-51¢ per lb.; utility and coter bulls, 40-45¢; light weight coter bulls, 37-45¢. Stocker/Feeder Calves/Yearlings Steers #1: 150-250 lbs., 95¢-1.02; 250-350, 94¢-1.07; 350-450, 79-88¢; 450-500, 69-85¢; 550-650, 68-78¢; 650-750, 62-71¢. Steers #2: 150-250 lbs., 72-84¢; 250-350, 64¢-83¢; 350-450, 50-78¢; 450-550, 50-68¢; 550-650, 55-67¢; 650-750, 50-61¢. Heifers #1: 150-250 lbs., 90¢-1.03; 250-350, 80-97¢; 350-450, 75-86¢; 450-550, 65-99¢; 550-650, 68-73¢; 650-750, 50-57¢. Heifers #2: 150-250 lbs., 70-90¢; 250-350, 50-80¢; 350-450, 60-74¢; 450-550, 55-84¢; 550-650, 50-67¢; 650-750, 45-46¢. Stocker Cows: good stocker cows & heifers, 45-50¢/lb.; medium stocker cows & heifers, 40-45¢/lb.; good cow & calf pairs, \$700-795 pr.; medium cow & calf pairs, \$645-700 pr.; coter cow & calf pairs, \$500-550 pr. Columbus Livestock Auction will have a herd dispersal on Thursday, April 6, at 1 p.m. There will be 75 cows, 50 to 60 calves at side; and 3 bulls. They will be available for viewing April 4. For more information call 1-800-944-2622, or contact George Hagan.

CLASSIFIED ADS Continued from Page 9 25 Real Estate TRULY PROPERTIES 129 N. McCarty 409-234-3776 LAKESIDE LOTS ADDITION: Residential lot available. WHARTON COUNTY: Pagan Valley Addition, 1+ acre tracts. EAST LAVACA COUNTY: Wilderness Area, 10-15 acre tracts. RALPH TRULY 234-7514 SANDY BENDY 234-3925 Zalman - Petty REALTORS*, INC. Experienced & Professional Realtors can help smooth the path to your new home. 543-2228 Days, Nights or Weekends 500 N. Mechanic, Suite B, El Campo, Texas Foreclosure: 612 N. McCarty: Reduced to \$38,000 3BR, 1.5BATH w/DR, LR, and Steps Down. Located on tree-lined w/2 car garage. Tractor Parts Save 40-60% - Used & New Case-IH, John Deere, MF, AC, Ford. Buying salvage tractors daily EAGLE TRACTOR 409-234-2516 1-800-833-5867 EB AIR CONDITIONING & HEATING SERVICE 215 County Road 291, East Bernard 409-335-4262 LENNOX Your Independent Lennox Dealer