

APC releases in 1996 highly successful

Submitted by Terry Rossignol, Manager, Attwater Prairie Chicken National Wildlife Refuge

The release of 69 endangered Attwater's prairie chickens (APC) into the wild last summer has been labeled a major success by wildlife officials due to the high survival rate of birds on the Attwater's Prairie Chicken National Wildlife Refuge (APCNWR) in Colorado County and the Texas Nature Conservancy's Gulf Coastal Prairie Preserve in Galveston County.

Twenty-six of the birds have survived to date, 15 at the refuge and 11 at the preserve. This survival rate (38%) is more than double the rate of a pilot release effort on the refuge in 1995 in which only 15% of the birds survived after six months.

"We're thrilled with these results," said Terry Rossignol, Refuge Manager at the APC Refuge. "No one expected to have such impressive results after the last birds were released."

Releases of captive-reared grouse have not been very successful in the past. Research conducted during this release has provided valuable information on ways to acclimate the bird to the wild before their actual release, Rossignol added.

Last summer marked the first full-blown release of captive-reared Attwater's into the wild.

Each bird was fitted with a small, light-weight radio transmitter when released so that biologists could monitor their movements. Each transmitter also was equipped with a mortality sensor, which indicates if a bird died. Some very important information has already been discovered from this first release.

Some of the most revealing information deals with the survival rate of the birds in relationship to the amount of time they spent in acclimation pens.

These pens are 30' x 50' in size and constructed of chainlink fencing material. A soft netting is draped on the inside of the pen to prevent injury to birds that fly to the top or sides of the pen. An electric fence surrounds it to discourage predators from attacking the birds during their stay.

Birds left in the pens for longer periods of time had a much better survival rate.

Only 8% of the birds that stayed in the acclimation pens for 14 days died during the first 30 days compared to 50% that stayed in the pens for three days. After release, the majority of the birds' mortalities were caused by predation, mostly avian predators.

"Much of the information gathered from this first release will be helpful in conducting future prairie chicken releases and very helpful in the recovery of the species," Rossignol added.

An Attwater's Prairie Chicken Population and Habitat Viability Analysis conducted in 1994 indicated

that the probability of extinction for the species would drop to zero with the continuing addition of five reproducing females per year to each population. This analysis has put the captive breeding and release programs at the forefront of the Attwater's recovery program.

RMC lists logo contest winners

The marketing team at Rice Medical Center (RMC) announced the selection of the winners in the logo contest this week. The team had asked students in Rice CISD to help design a new logo for the hospital. The contest ended March 28.

Dick Weatherly, team chairman, said, "We had a hard time selecting just 12 winners. There were so many good entries." There were more than 150 entries from all the schools in the district.

Winners were: 9th-12th grade: Francisco Varela, Rice High School, first place; 5th-8th grade: Marshall Peck, 7th grade, Sheridan Elementary, first place; Chriss Schierring, 8th grade, St. Mary's, second place; Isreal

Lozano Jr., 5th grade, Eagle Lake Middle School, third; kindergarten-4th grade: Stephanie Hardiman, 3rd grade, Sheridan, first place; Stacy Romo, 3rd grade, Eagle Lake Primary, second place; Tyler Kloss, 4th grade, Sheridan, third place.

Because of the limited entries at the high school level, there were five fourth place awards given. They are: Ashley Kiekan, 3rd grade, Sheridan; Alejandra Cano, kindergarten Eagle Lake Primary; Stephen Hardiman, 3rd grade, Sheridan; Mayra Marquez, 1st grade, Eagle Lake Primary; and Clayton Bowen, 2nd grade, Eagle Lake Primary.

The prizes will be awarded at the Board meeting on Monday, April 28,

The recovery goal for the species is to have a total of 5,000 individuals located at three different geographic areas.

For more information, contact the Attwater's Prairie Chicken National Wildlife Refuge at 409-234-3021.

at 7 p.m. The winner will receive a letter of invitation at their schools.

"We are very pleased with the entries, but we wished that we had a few more entries from Garwood and the high school," Mr. Weatherly said. "We only had one entry from the high school, so we decided to give the additional prizes to the fourth place winners."

The entries will now be used to design the new logo. "We will use the ideas the students gave us and come up with a usable design. We really want to thank all those that participated in the contest."

The entries are on display at the hospital and everyone is invited to stop by and see them.



A birthday celebration, milestone

The oldest and most prominent citizen of Altair, celebrated her 94th birthday. Lelia Jackson, born on April 13, 1903, in Colorado County, celebrated yet another milestone on Saturday, April 12, at Wright Grove Baptist Church in Altair.

At least four generations of family and friends participated in this great event. Loved ones came from far and near to share in the joy of the day.

Guests included her only living sister, Callie Newsome of Wallis; seven grandchildren, Leo and Richard Axel, Loretta Wilson and Kathy Walker of San Antonio, Shirley Axel and Parris Deason of Houston, Willie Axel of Ypsilanti, Miss.; and a host of other close relatives and friends.

Photo Courtesy of Kathy Axel-Walker

About Town...

*Susan Tomchesson informed the *Headlight* that an umbrella and a child's glove were found at the Community Center after the Festival. If you are missing either of these, please call her at 409-234-5591.

*Mr. Joshua F. Grahmann, son of Fred and Sharon Grahmann of Rock Island, was initiated into Gamma Sigma Delta, the National Honor Society of Agriculture, at Texas A&M University.

This outstanding student was se-

lected from more than 3,500 juniors, seniors and graduate students in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and the College of Veterinary Medicine based upon scholastic achievement. Joshua is majoring in Agricultural Economics/Agricultural Business.

*The Texas A&M Chapter of Ag Economics and Agribusiness Association held its Spring Banquet Saturday, April 19, at the Kyle House in Bryan. Kristi Jochec, daughter of

Geraldine and August Jochec Jr. and a junior Agribusiness major, received the Friends of Tommy Stuart Scholarship of \$500. She was also recognized for serving as the National AEAA Journal Editor, second place National Quiz Team Member, 1997-98 Chapter Parliamentarian, 1997-98 National Agriculture Marketing Association Vice President and member of the University Quiz Bowl team to represent Texas A&M this summer at the National Convention in Toronto.

Along with this honor, she was initiated into Gamma Sigma Delta, the National Honor Society of Agriculture, at Texas A&M University. Her selection was based on and made just like Joshua Grahmann's. Kristi is majoring in Agricultural Business.

*Congratulations to Matt Hentzell, winner of an American History essay contest held by the John Everett Chapter of Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR). Matt's essay was judged on historical accuracy, adherence to topic, organization of material, (See Town, Page 14)



'Egg-cited'

The Easter Bunny paid a visit to the Garwood School. These Kindergarten students were "EGG-CITED" to see this special visitor.

Garwood School Photo

Police

At 3:17 p.m., Chief Webb responded to a complaint of a panhandler at the washateria on Boothe. Webb asked the subject to leave at the request of the management.

Lt. Clem Johnson and Chief Webb met with subjects at the police department at 4:04 p.m. in reference to a civil matter. No other action was taken.

On April 16, at 12:15 p.m., Chief Webb met with a subject in connection with a terroristic threat complainant. A statement was obtained and the investigation was turned over to the Columbus Police Department, due to the offense having occurred at the Courthouse in Columbus.

At 7:09 p.m., Lt. Johnson assisted with a juvenile problem on Shirley Street.

At 8:25 p.m., Lt. Johnson observed a two-vehicle accident at E. Main and Third Street involving a 1992 Chevrolet pickup driven by Wilbert Otto Dernehl of Orchard and a 1990 Chevrolet pickup driven by Clinton Louis Mascheck of Eagle Lake.

Dernehl and Mascheck were both east-bound on Main when Dernehl attempted to move to the outside lane, striking the vehicle driven by Mascheck. There were no injuries to either subject.

At 8:46 p.m., Lt. Johnson received a report of loud music at the corner of Church and Dobbins Streets, but after checking the area, he was unable to locate any music.

On April 17, at 2:35 p.m., Chief Webb responded to Eagle Lake Primary School in reference to a reported disturbance. Chief Webb stood by until the situation was resolved by the principal and subject left the scene. No other action was necessary.

At 5:27 p.m., Officer Keith Norman made a traffic stop on a pickup in the 1500 block of E. Main and discovered six Hispanic males crammed into the cab of the pickup. He further found nine more Hispanic males under a bed sheet in the bed of the pickup.

While waiting for Chief Webb's arrival, Colorado County Attorney's Office Investigator Randy Davenport arrived and assisted in securing the

scene.

Chief Webb arrived and requested the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) to authorize the detention of the illegals. Once authorization was received, Webb, along with Officer Tim Crume and Sheriff's Deputy Richard LaCourse, transported the 15 illegals to the Colorado County Detention Center.

INS picked them up from the jail at 1:30 p.m. along with eight other illegals which were arrested near the same time on I-10 by Sheriff's Lt. Ron Holub. The 1989 pickup truck was towed for INS investigators who will attempt to seize it.

Sgt. Jack Knox and Officer Ochoa were assigned to work in joint effort with the 25th Judicial Narcotics Task Force on I-10 in the Weimar area, working an intensified drug interdiction operation.

At 6:26 p.m., Sgt. Knox made a traffic stop that resulted in the arrest of David Joseph Maroul of Rosenberg for possession of marijuana. Maroul was transported to the county jail for confinement on said charges.

On April 18, at 9:19 a.m., Lt. Johnson assisted Dulany Funeral Home with an escort to Lakeside Cemetery.

At 2:29 p.m., Chief Webb received a call of loud music on Dobbins Street, but the car was gone upon the Chief's arrival.

Officer Ochoa met with a complainant at the police department in reference to disorderly conduct and a report was filed.

At 10:17 p.m., Sgt. Knox was dispatched to the Middle School in reference to a juvenile disturbance.

At 11:08 p.m., Officer Ochoa was dispatched to E. State Street in reference to loud music, but was unable to locate the loud music.

On April 19 at 3:41 a.m., Officer Ochoa was dispatched to Raezer Street in reference to a fight, but the matter was resolved at the scene.

At 5:46 a.m., Officer Ochoa was dispatched to 8th Street in reference to an unwanted person. The subject was advised by Officer Ochoa at the request of the home owner to stay off of

the property and not to return.

On April 19 at 11:32 a.m., Officer Eric Bilbo assisted Dulany Funeral Home with an escort from the funeral home to Lakeside Cemetery.

At 1:31 p.m., Officer Bilbo assisted with traffic control on E. Post Office in reference to an overturned horizontal drilling rig.

At 2:44 p.m., Officer Bilbo met with two individuals at the police department who were involved in domestic violence. Officer Carl Risk and Bilbo took written statements and Chief Webb interviewed the parties involved. The incident will be referred to the county attorney's office.

At 8:33 p.m., Officer Risk received a call to speak with a complainant. At that time, the matter was civil and a report was filed, if any other action should become necessary.

On April 20 at 6:46 a.m., Officer Brian Baklik took a report of a stolen trailer from N. McCarty Street. At 7:57 p.m., Officer Crume was advised the trailer had been located on W. Post Office Street. Investigation continues in this case.

At 11:30 a.m., Officer Baklik received an anonymous report of loud music on W. Post Office Street, but was unable to locate any loud music.

At 8:05 p.m., Officer Crume was contacted at the police department in reference to criminal mischief. A report was filed and the case is under investigation.

At 11:15 p.m., Officer Ochoa was dispatched to Church Street in reference to a theft. A statement was taken and a report was submitted.

On April 21, Chief Webb assisted Lt. Holub of the Sheriff's Department on an auto theft which involved three separate scenes. The case is still under investigation by the Sheriff's Department.

At 11:40 a.m., Lt. Johnson provided escort to Dulany Funeral Home from the funeral home to the Masonic Cemetery.

At 1:55 p.m., Lt. Johnson was dispatched to the 100 block of N. McCarty in reference to damage to the sprinkler system. A report was filed.



If you want her to have a shot at reaching the stars, she needs to get her baby shots now.

Every child deserves the best opportunities life has to offer. Especially yours.

The odds of her becoming an astronaut and reaching the stars are out of this world.

But the chances are more than 1 in 4 that your baby isn't protected against childhood

diseases like polio, measles, chicken

pox, tetanus and others.

So, even if you're sure your child is up to date and on schedule with her baby shots, ask your doctor at every visit. It couldn't hurt.

In fact, it could give her the chance to grow up to be whatever she wants to be.

Even if it's something out of this world.



Even if you're sure, ask again.

1-800-232-2522

