

Sales tax increase passes 3 to 1

Last Saturday's election deciding four Rice Hospital District Board members and whether or not the Hospital District would be allowed to benefit from the remaining .5% sales tax. The tax increase carried by a three-to-one margin.

Even though the margin of "victory" for the Hospital sounds good, the total number of voters was just over 200... that includes the same area as the Rice CISD

covers.

Of the 204 votes cast, 154 were for the sales tax increase for the Hospital and 50 voted against it.

A low turnout was expected due to the cancellation of the Rice CISD Board of Trustees and City of Eagle Lake elections. (Both were cancelled under a provision in the Election Code which can be used when there is a (See Election, Page 10)

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Texas House honors Dr. Raymond Thomas

Dr. Raymond Thomas of Eagle Lake was honored by the Texas House of Representatives on April 30 for being named "Family Physician of the Year" by the Texas Academy of Fam-

ily Physicians.

The resolution honoring Dr. Thomas was presented by State Representative Robert L. "Robby" Cook of Eagle Lake who is serving his first

term as a member of the House of Representatives.

Dr. Thomas was honored, appropriately, on Rural Health Care Day at the Capitol when many people involved in the field of rural health care visited Austin to discuss the importance of rural care in Texas.

Representative Cook introduced Dr. Thomas, who was accompanied on the House floor by his wife, Elfe,

and members of his family.

Cook spoke of Dr. Raymond's many accomplishments and importance to the rural community of Eagle Lake and the surrounding area.

After the resolution honoring Thomas was adopted unanimously by the House, he was congratulated by members of the Legislature and honored at a small reception held in the Speaker's Dining Room.



Dr. Raymond Thomas, (back row, center), was honored recently by the Texas House of Representatives. Pictured with him are Dr. Griff Thomas and his wife, Dr. Sandra Thomas, and their children, Lana and Sarah Mason; Kurt and Diane Thomas, and their son, John; Mrs. Russell (Robin) Thomas and son, Barrett; Mrs. Julia Pardue; Kay Thomas (sister-in-law) and Megan Seaholm (niece). Dr. Thomas is also pictured with Representative D.R. "Tom" Uher, Speaker Pro-Tem of the House of Representatives; Dr. Raymond's wife, Elfe; and State Representative Robert L. "Robby" Cook.

NEWSBRIEFS

G.A.T.E. program to be presented May 15

Would you like to be able to recognize gang and other youth problems? Come join the Eagle Lake Police Department and Crime Stoppers in a Gang Awareness Through Education (G.A.T.E.) program Thursday, May 15, at 7 p.m. at the Eagle Lake Primary School. The program, in English and Spanish, will be presented by Aldine ISD Police Departments Gang Task Force. See up close display items such as gang clothing, artwork, graffiti, etc. that officers will bring. Contact Chief Keith Webb at 234-7307 for more information.

E.H. Henry Alumni meeting tonight

The E.H. Henry Alumni will hold a meeting on Thursday, May 8, at 7:30 p.m. at the E.H. Henry site.

New facility grand opening is May 27

May 27 at 10 a.m. is the Grand Opening of the new specialty Clinic located at the Eagle Lake Medical Clinic owned by Rice Medical Center. This new clinic is currently under construction and being readied for the specialty physicians that come into Eagle Lake for the convenience of the community. There will be a ribbon cutting ceremony and reception at the clinic. Come help us celebrate. All will be welcome.

Cholesterol/triglyceride screening is May 14

A cholesterol/triglyceride screening will be held on Wednesday, May 14, from 7 to 9 a.m. at Columbia Gulf Coast Medical Center Lab. The cost is \$8 (Senior Friends \$5), you must pre-register by calling 409-532-2500, ext. 1300.

'Life After Loss' meeting set for May 13

A Life After Loss Support Group meeting will be held Tuesday, May 13, from 7 to 8:30 p.m. at the First Presbyterian Church, 312 Depot, in El Campo. The speaker Pat Davis, LPC will give a program on "Grief and Guilt". The meeting is free and sponsored by the Columbia Hospice Gulf Coast. For more information, call 409-543-9487.

SVFD to hold car wash

Sheridan Volunteer Fire Department will hold a car wash fundraiser from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the ambulance/fire hall on Saturday, May 10. Donations will be accepted. Proceeds will help pay for pagers and additional equipment to serve the community more effectively.

Boost your job search

Wharton County Junior College-Dislocated Workers Program offers free assistance to individuals who have been laid off or have been notified of an upcoming layoff. Services include career counseling and testing, job search skills classes, retraining and job placement assistance. Orientations are held every Tuesday. Call to register at 281-344-0279 Ext. 32.

RHS Sport Banquet tonight

The Rice High School (RHS) Sports Banquet will take place on Thursday, May 8, at 7 p.m. in the RHS Commons. Tickets are \$6 per person and may be purchased from Coach Dennis Jackson at the high school.

Study Club President's Luncheon is Friday

The Eagle Lake Study Club will hold their President's Luncheon at the Eagle Lake Community Center Friday, May 9, at 12 noon. The guest speakers will be Mr. and Mrs. Tex Rodgers, publishers of the *Colorado County Citizen*. The program will be on education. You may purchase your tickets from the Wintermann Library for \$6 per person.

My Friend's House 'camp' to begin June 2

The United Methodist Church's My Friend's House will begin a "Summer Camp" program on June 2. The camp is offered to all pre-school and primary school children. Register by May 15 and take off 5% of the registration fee. Sign up a friend and take an additional discount. For more information, contact Gail Gertson at 409-234-3330.

My Friend's House schedules registration

The United Methodist Church's My Friend's House is holding pre-registration for the 1997-98 school year. Programs are offered for all pre-school children. Contact Gail Gertson at 409-234-3330 for more information. Remember, enrollment is limited!!

Class of 1987 plans reunion

Rice High School Class of 1987 will be holding its 10 year reunion at the Eagle Lake Recreation Center (golf course) Saturday, May 31. Activities will begin at 10 a.m. Bring a picnic lunch for you and your family or guests. For more details, call Lesley Matthews at 409-234-5713 (daytime) or Stacey (Causey) Hlavinka at 409-335-7546 (evenings).

Juneteenth Celebration slated for June 14

A Juneteenth Celebration is slated for Saturday, June 14. Parade and booth entry deadline has been set for Sunday, June 1. A Mr. & Miss Juneteenth Contestants will also be chosen Friday, June 13. Deadline for entry is also June 1. For more information, call 234-5651, 234-2467, 234-5067 or 234-7948

Texas Commission helps blind

Losing your vision doesn't mean losing your independence. The Texas Commission for the Blind (TCB) helps thousands of people who are blind or visually impaired get the skills and information they need to live successful and fulfilling lives. Services are available for children and their families, adults seeking employment and older persons who may need assistance adjusting to severe vision loss. For more information on TCB, call 1-800-687-7043.

Chambers sponsoring job fair May 20

The Brookshire/Pattison Chamber of Commerce, in conjunction with the Sealy Chamber of Commerce and Sealy Outlet Center, will sponsor a Job Fair at the Outlet Center on Tuesday, May 20, from 5 to 7 p.m. Representatives from the Outlet stores or their application forms will be available for job opportunities ranging from stockers to retail merchandisers to assistant or head store managers. Currently, the Sealy Outlet Center has 34 stores with new additions coming regularly. For more information, call 409-885-3200.

'Fifth Disease' suspected in some area schools

As if sneezing and coughing and congested noses weren't enough this allergy season, many kids in the area are also suffering from a viral illness called Fifth Disease.

There have been several suspected cases in the Rice C.I.S.D. Without a doctor's diagnosis, symptoms are all school officials can look for. The children should see their family doctor.

So what is Fifth Disease?

Fifth Disease is a quite common childhood illness. It is named Fifth Disease because it is fifth in the list of common childhood illnesses after measles (Rubeola), Rubella (German measles), Chickenpox and Roseola.

Fifth Disease is a viral illness that occurs primarily in infants and young children of school age, although it can occur in adolescents and adults.

It is characterized by mild flu-like symptoms and a blotchy red rash beginning on the face, especially the cheeks, giving a characteristic 'slapped cheek' appearance.

The disease is spread by sneezing, coughing or sharing toys and/or eating

utensils. Fifth Disease most often occurs in the later winter or spring months, resulting in localized outbreaks usually among pre-school and school-aged children.

The incubation period is four to 14 days and, according to information offered by a school health protocol, the most contagious period is just before the onset of fever.

Just like the other viral infections listed, by the time the rash appears, the sufferer is no longer contagious.

Symptoms include a low-grade fever and muscle aches. The red blotches of rash eventually run together. Within one or two days, the rash may appear on the arms, legs or

(See Disease, Page 10)

Controversy continues over old jail

By Lynda Appelt, Contributing Writer

A controversy on a matter that was first made public in Nov. 1995, when the Colorado County Commissioners

asked for ideas and input on what to do with the old jail building, continued at Commissioners' Court on April 28

when Commissioners opened bids for demolition of the building, but put off awarding a contractor until the bids could be reviewed.

Bids ranged from \$33,853 to \$89,670. The County has \$25,000 budgeted for the possible demolition, but, since asbestos was not included in the \$25,000 estimate, Commissioners will review the bids to determine which ones include handling asbestos abatement and removal.

Several citizens at the meeting said they hoped the Court will not make a selection but allow time for more input from taxpayers concerning the future of the building.

Buddy Prause asked, "Why don't you put it to a vote in the next general election? The building is a historical monument. Let the taxpayers decide." Dorothy Leyendecker also asked the Court to let the taxpayers decide.

The issue continued in Feb. 1996, when Lili Stallman of Columbus, Helen Craig of Eagle Lake and Jerry Vahlala of Weimar were appointed to study the future of the jail.

Citizens were asked to contact the committee with ideas.

There was no response. In June 1996, a group of 15 individuals toured the building and expressed a desire to save the old structure.

At this time, several citizens expressed that the public had not been aware of the plans.

They were told it had been in all the media across Colorado County. The controversy began and at this point, continues.

Leyendecker asked, "What will you put there and why are you so anxious to tear the old jail down?"

County Judge Vince Slominski replied, "We do have a contingency plan for the location."

He explained a great need for additional parking around the Courthouse. According to Slominski, the old jail site could be used for County employees parking so spaces could be free around the square for citizens, especially on court days.

Slominski revealed that a study by County Attorney John Moore as to the feasibility of placing the issue on a ballot in the next general election showed it to be very costly.

"We need to make sure we are doing the right thing," Leon Dittmar told the Court.

Dittmar continued, "The water tower on the square and the Alley Log Cabin have historical value now. It was fortunate they were not destroyed years ago."

EAGLE LAKE POLICE REPORT

The Eagle Lake Police Department reported the following cases and calls for the week ending May 5.

On April 29 at 7:52 a.m., Lt. Clem Johnson received a harassment call on FM 3013. At this time, the problem is a civil matter and no police action was required.

At 9:10 a.m., a subject came by the police department and filed a report with Lt. Johnson in connection with the theft of a dog. The case is being investigated.

At 9:26 a.m., Lt. Johnson was requested to assist the ambulance on N. Lake Street.

At 4:16 p.m., Officer Carl Risk was dispatched to a report of a non-vehicle accident on Waverly Street. After meeting with the complainant, she was advised to contact the judge if further assistance is needed.

A report of a burglary was taken by Officer Risk at 6:49 p.m., which occurred on Raezer Street. The case is being investigated.

On April 30, at 12:59 a.m., Officer Tim Crume was dispatched to E. State Street in reference to a fire, but no fire was found.

At 1:16 a.m., Officer Crume was dispatched to the New Town area in reference to a family violence call. Officers arrived and held the scene until a county deputy arrived.

At 6:40 p.m., Officer Risk received a call of a reckless driver near the Little League Field. The area was checked, but the vehicle had left the scene.

A call was received concerning loud music on Walnut Street at 7:35 p.m., but Officer Risk was unable to locate any loud music.

At 4:48 p.m., Lt. Johnson and Officer Risk arrested Wendy Sharon Scott, Richard Joe Spates and Eric Andra Christal on outstanding warrants. The subjects were transported to the police department for processing, where Scott's fine was paid and she was released.

Spates and Christal were transported to the county jail for confinement.

A traffic stop on S. McCarty at 11:40 p.m. by Officer Brian Ochoa resulted in the driver being issued a

summons for displaying fictitious license plates.

On May 1 at 2:10 a.m., Officer Crume was dispatched to a prowler report on N. McCarty Street, but no one was located.

At 10:43 a.m., Lt. Johnson received a report of a theft on D Street, but the matter was settled at the scene.

At 12:29 p.m., Lt. Johnson was dispatched to a report of a suspicious vehicle on E. Main, but the vehicle was gone upon his arrival.

At 4:38 p.m., Officer Crume was advised of an unwanted subject on some property on Boothe Drive. Officer Crume met with the subject and the subject left the property.

At 9:07 p.m., Sgt. Jack Knox was dispatched to W. Post Office in reference to a theft. A report was taken and the case is under investigation.

On May 2, at 12:30 a.m., Officer Risk was dispatched by the Colorado County Sheriff's Office to check a disturbance on FM 102 South until a county deputy could arrive.

The subjects were located and the matter was resolved at the scene, with no other action taken.

At 4:56 a.m., Officer Risk received a call of a disturbance on Fairview Street. Upon arrival, no violence had occurred. One subject was transported to another location for the night.

At 11:34 a.m., a theft on D Street was reported to Lt. Johnson. Upon Johnson's arrival, an agreement was reached and no other action was taken.

At 7:44 p.m., Sgt. Knox met with a complainant at the police station in reference to sexual assault of a child. A report was taken and the case is under investigation.

At 8:14 p.m., Officer Crume was dispatched to a report of a disturbance on B Street which was resolved at the scene.

At 9:40 p.m., Sgt. Knox assisted Children's Protective Services with a report of injury to a child.

On May 3 at 9:28 a.m., Officer Eric Bilbo met with a complainant in reference to a dog at large. The dog catcher was contacted to pick up the animal.

At 12:41 p.m., Officer Bilbo was

dispatched to Lakeside Drive in reference to 911 calls.

It was determined that children were playing with the phone.

At 2:46 p.m., Officer Bilbo provided escort for Dulany Funeral Home from N. McCarty to Lakeside Cemetery.

At 7:54 p.m., Officers Risk and Tobin Thomas conducted a traffic stop in the 600 block of E. Main, which resulted in the driver, Ray Ramirez, being arrested on an outstanding warrant from Wharton County.

On May 4 at 12:47 a.m., Officer Ochoa conducted a traffic stop which later resulted in the arrest of Santa Irene Tavera Torres for driving while intoxicated.

Torres was processed at the police department, then transported to the county jail for confinement.

At 3:46 a.m., Officer Ochoa was dispatched to Schley Street in reference to a car alarm. Upon arrival, he arrested Yoshio Yave Ruvalcaba on five outstanding warrants, processed him at the police department, then transported him to the county jail for confinement.

At 12:31 p.m., Officer Brian Baklik was dispatched to 801 S. McCarty in reference to a gas drive off. The subject later realized the mistake, returned and paid for the gas. No other action was taken.

At 1:20 p.m., Officer Baklik was dispatched to Raezer Street in reference to a juvenile problem. Baklik spoke with the parents of the juveniles involved and no police action was taken.

Officer Baklik, at 2:09 p.m., assisted the EMS with a call on Maple Street and also at the hospital emergency room.

At 9:29 p.m., Sgt. Knox was dispatched to a family disturbance on Willis Street. Sgt. Knox stood by while one subject removed belongings from the residence. No other action was taken.

At 11:03 p.m., Officer Ochoa was dispatched to 601 E. Main in reference to people loitering, but upon his arrival, was unable to locate anyone.

On May 5, at 1:26 a.m., Officer (See Police, Page 10)