

Loans available for socially disadvantaged

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) can make and guarantee loans to socially disadvantaged applicants to buy and operate family-size farms and ranches. Funds are reserved each year specifically for these loans.

A socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher is one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic or gender prejudice because of their iden-

tity as members of the group without regard to their individual qualities. For purposes of this program, socially disadvantaged groups are women, African Americans, American Indians, Alaskan natives, Hispanics, Asians and Pacific Islanders.

The FSA office in Columbus is open from 8 a.m. to (See Loans, Page 10)

Eagle Lake Headlight

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NEWSBRIEFS

Public hearing is Friday... BE THERE!

A public hearing to obtain public opinion on the building of a prison in Eagle Lake will be held Friday, June 20, at 7 p.m. at City Hall. Your presence and input would be greatly appreciated. MTC will not build a prison here if the public doesn't back them. Please come out and show your support. Let's put some life back into Eagle Lake's economy.

RHS central office closed for vacation

The Central Office of Rice High School will be closed for vacation from June 23 through June 27. No business will be transacted during this time. The office will reopen Monday, June 30. Please mark your calendars.

Guitar lessons available

Rev. Barry Bauerschlag is offering guitar lessons in the Eagle Lake United Methodist Church chapel for beginners and intermediate. Cost of the lessons is \$30 which will cover different costs. Lessons start Monday, June 23, at 6 p.m. For more information, call 409-234-3288.

Safe sitter class scheduled

Rice Medical Center is holding another Safe Sitter Class in July for boys and girls from age 11 to 13. This class will teach baby-sitting safety, basic first aid, rescue breathing and rescue choking and more. The class lasts for two days and the fee is \$25. Anyone interested, please call Vicky Pavlu or Stephanie Guthman at 234-5571. Enrollment is limited so please call by July 1!

Softball tournament to be in Gonzales

The Andy Rice Softball Tournament will be held July 4, 5 and 6 in Gonzales. Men's and women's teams are urged to sign up. For more information, contact Jerry Bonewald at 512-798-5396 or Terrell Herring, 798-5251.

McGrew's family reunion set for July 26

The McGrew's Family Reunion will be held July 26 at the Eagle Lake Community Center. For more information, call Myrtle McGrew Waddell at 1-281-344-0816; or write P.O. Box 609, Richmond, Texas 77469-0609.

Check it out!

...Grace Lutheran's signboard, that is. It's a great way to get your weekly dose of spiritual humor. If you enjoy the signboard, try coming in on Sunday mornings at 10:30. We would love to have you at 408 N. Stevenson.

55 and over fitness classes being offered

Rice Medical Center is providing free 55 and over fitness classes on Tuesday and Thursday mornings, 9 a.m. to 9:45 a.m. Anyone interested in joining or if you would like more information about the classes, call 409-234-5571.

PBC to celebrate 29th anniversary

Providence Baptist Church (PBC) 1207 E. State Street in Eagle Lake will celebrate its 29th Anniversary for 41 years of service for Rev. and Mrs. Coby Shorter Jr. on Sunday, June 22, at 3 p.m. Rev. Coby Shorter III, Pastor of Rosewood Avenue Baptist Church in Austin, will deliver the anniversary sermon.

Row crop tour set for June 23

The Colorado County Extension Row Crop Committee will conduct its annual row crop tour Monday, June 23, beginning at 5 p.m. at the Nada Community Center. They will leave the center at 5 p.m., traveling by caravan to view corn, grain sorghum and soybean variety demonstrations being conducted by area producers. Presentations will be made by informative speakers. Following the tour, a barbecue meal and refreshments will be served at the center, compliments of area agri-businesses. One CEU will be given to private pesticide applicators participating in the tour. For more information, call 409-732-2082.

Sealy Assembly VBS starts June 23

The Sealy Assembly of God is holding their Vacation Bible School (VBS) June 23 through June 27 for children ages four through sixth grade. The event times are 9 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. each day. As always, Fair Day will be Monday, June 23. VBS will close with "parent's night" Friday, June 27, at 7 p.m.. For more information about VBS or any of Sealy Assembly's other ministries, call the church office in Sealy at 409-885-3113.

CGCMC has new unit, plans open house

It's here! Columbia Gulf Coast Medical Center (CGCMC) is proud to announce it's newest service - the Hyperbaric Medicine Unit. You are invited to attend the Hyperbaric Medicine Unit's open house Wednesday June 25, beginning a 4 p.m. Stop by... ask questions, meet the staff and see the chamber. For more information, call 409-282-6109.

20-Year Spears-Norwood Reunion scheduled

The 20-year Reunion of the Spears-Norwood family will be held Saturday, June 28, starting at 11:30 a.m. in East Bernard at the American Legion Hall. For more information, call 409-234-2497.

PEM children's program starts Monday

Prairie Edge Museum (PEM) will provide a program emphasizing local heritage and cultures, local plants and wildlife, and pioneer methodology. The program starts Monday, June 23, at the Museum, 408 E. Main. Enrollment is for students who have completed first through fifth grades and is not limited to Eagle Lake or Rice CISD. Jeannie Jackson and Betty Janish are planning a full program of enjoyable activities. Sessions begin at 1 p.m. and end at 3 on Mondays and Tuesdays, June 23 through July 15. Interested children need to be at the museum at 1 p.m. this coming Monday.

All Stancik descendants... attention!

The 30th Stancik Reunion will be held Sunday, July 13, at St. Roch's Catholic Church Hall in Mentz. The fun starts at 10 a.m. and will include a basket lunch, lots of visiting and maybe even a few surprises. If you need more information, please call Melvin or Joyce Stancik at 409-234-3449. Mark your calendars. We're looking forward to a GREAT day!!

Lissie Methodists plan ice cream social

The Lissie United Methodist Church will host their annual ice cream social and community sing along Sunday, June 29, with ice cream being served between 5 and 7 p.m. Evening Sing Along will begin at 7 with selections from the congregation. It will last approximately one hour. This is an opportunity to enjoy fellowship and good singing. An invitation is extended to everyone.

Defensive driving course scheduled

A six-hour defensive driving course has been scheduled by retired DPS Sgt. Gilbert Kiel for June 23 and 24 in Columbus at the Agricultural Building, 316 Spring St. For more information or to register for the course, call 409-732-2734; or arrive a few minutes early.

(See Newsbriefs, Page 10)

No support... no prison!

By Lynda Appelt, Contributing Writer

A 1,000-bed, privately-operated prison could belong to Eagle Lake if the community shows its support.

This was the message Eagle Lake Mayor David Mann, Police Chief Keith Webb and City Manager Ron Holland relayed to the Eagle Lake City Council at its June 10 meeting.

There will be a public hearing on the subject Friday night, June 20, at 7 p.m. in the Council Chamber to give

citizens an opportunity to show their support and make public comment.

On June 3, Warden J.C. Conner and Assistant Warden Michael Bell came to Eagle Lake to evaluate the community as a possible site for the medium security facility that would be owned and operated by Management Training Corp. (MTC).

MTC wants to see community support or it will not locate a facility

in town.

Eagle Lake, along with Post and Gladewater, are in the race to obtain the facility.

To show support, Council unanimously adopted a resolution in support of construction of the prison and pledged to work diligently and in cooperation with MTC to facilitate construction and operation at the site.

"MTC believes in and operates with a good neighbor policy and they don't want to be anywhere they're not wanted. MTC has made it very clear that with no local support, there will be no prison!" said Mann.

Webb gave a report on a visit that he and Colorado County Sheriff R.H. "Curly" Wied made to the Bradshaw State Jail Facility located outside of Henderson in Rusk County.

"We wanted to know what kind of impact that I, as police chief and a citizen, and Wied, as the sheriff and a citizen, can expect from a prison such as this," Webb said.

"According to our visit with the police chief of Henderson, there has been no community impact except positive economic development and strengthening of law enforcement due to the inner relationship and communication with the staff at MTC's facility. Jailers from the facility assist local law enforcement in emergency situations at parades and so on."

According to Webb's report, Henderson and Rusk County have had no increase in calls, no complaints, and no problems with the inmate's visitors.

The Sheriff's Department of Rusk County reported not one single call in the County as a result of the facility or

call to service at the facility has occurred.

Council accepted the bid of Smith Barney Inc. and approved an ordinance authorizing the issuance of \$1 million City of Eagle Lake Certificates of Obligation for street improvement with 5.334705% effective interest rate.

Eight bids were received and it was announced that the City's excellent credit history qualifies for a AAA insurance rate.

"That says a lot about your City and the way it does business," said Moss Fetzner of Moroney, Beissner and Company Inc., the City's financial advisor.

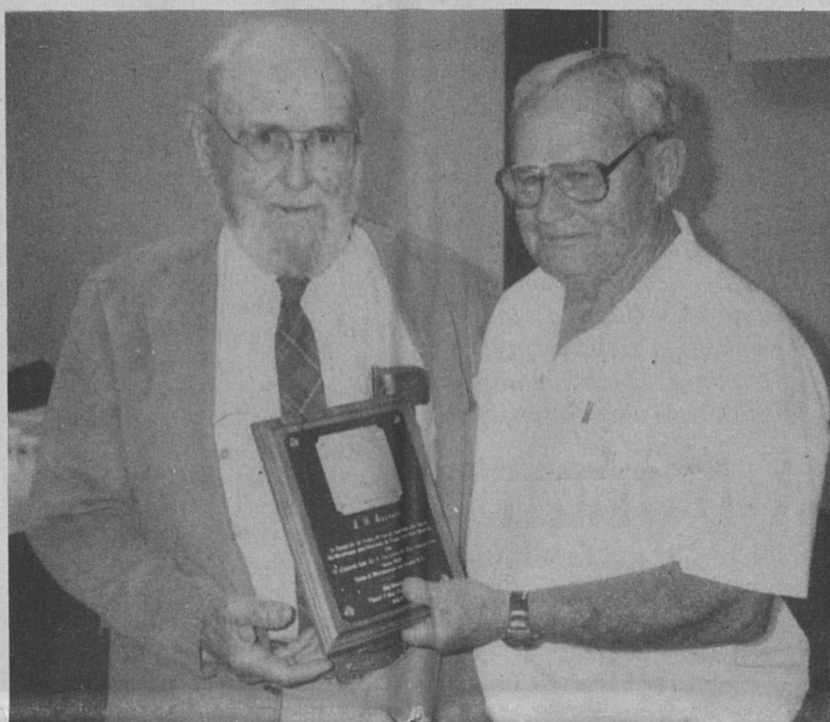
In other business, Council:

- Approved a contract for the operation of the public swimming pool with Revitalize Eagle Lake Inc. in the amount of \$4,000;

- Authorized insurance general liability coverage for Eagle Lake Housing Finance Corporation (HFC) under the City's coverage with HFC reimbursing the City for the cost;

- Approved two amendments to the electrical code ordinance to remove requirement of a master electrician to provide proof of worker's compensation insurance and limit the life of an electrical permit to six months, the same as a plumbing permit;

- Publicly thanked Central Power and Light and Bryan Hale, who was present at the meeting to show CPL's support for the prison, for the donation of modular work stations that has given the City office a "new look" and contributed to a more efficient and (See Council, Page 10)



Honored

J.T. Garrett, one of the original founders of Eagle Lake Rice Dryer Inc., was honored last Thursday during the company's 50th anniversary dinner and celebration. Jimmy Thomas, right, presented Garrett with a plaque of appreciation for his years of dedication. (See additional photo and story, Page 7.)

Headlight Photo by Jeannine Fearing

Eagle Lake's sales tax rebate up again

John Sharp, State Comptroller of Public Accounts, last week delivered a total of \$161.6 million in monthly sales tax payments to 1,089 Texas cities and 117 counties.

"So far this year, Texas allocations are running 5.5% ahead of those for the first six months of last year, once again indicating that the Texas economy is continuing its strong, steady climb," Sharp said.

The City of Eagle Lake received a rebate in the amount of \$9,353.39, 5.60% above the \$8,856.63 received last June. Year-to-date, Eagle Lake's total for 1997 is \$67,107.40, 14.32% ahead of 1996.

Sharp delivered sales tax rebates totaling \$147.7 million to Texas cities, 4.8% higher than last June's payments of \$140.9 million. Rebates of \$13.9 million to Texas counties were 2% higher than allocations of \$13.6 million to counties in June 1996. Another \$185.2 million went to the state's eight transit authorities; 26 special purpose districts around the state were

delivered \$4.4 million.

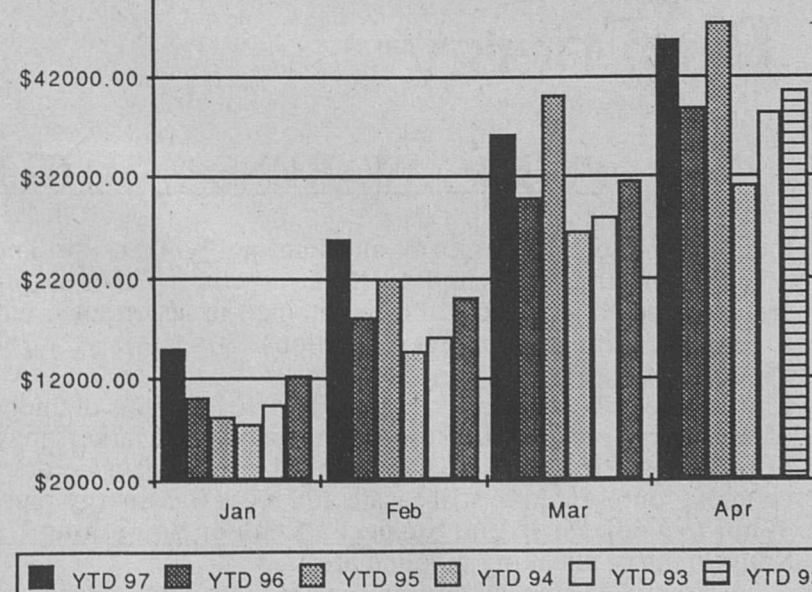
This month's sales tax rebates include local sales taxes collected on April sales by businesses filing monthly returns and reported to the Comptroller in May.

The City of Houston received a sales tax rebate of \$19.8 million in June, 4.7% higher than last year's \$18.9 million payment for the month. Year-to-date payments to Houston are up by 3.3%.

The \$12.8 million local sales tax allocation to the City of Dallas for June reflects a 2.3% increase from the \$12.5 million in sales tax rebate for the same month last year. Year-to-date payments to Dallas are running 2.5% ahead of those for the first six months of 1996.

San Antonio's sales tax allocation for June was \$8.4 million, 4.4% higher than the June 1996 payment of \$8 million. Year-to-date, San Antonio has received a 4.5% increase in local sales tax payments.

The Austin sales tax rebate for



City of Eagle Lake's year-to-date state sales tax rebates for the last six years charted by the month the tax was collected by area businesses, not the month the rebates were received by the City.

June totaled \$6.4 million, 2.9% higher than the June 1996 payment of \$6.2 million. For the first six months of 1997, Austin's sales tax rebates are 2.2% higher than those for the same period last year.

The City of Ft. Worth's \$4.3 million allocation was 7.8% above the \$4 million delivered in June 1996, placing year-to-date rebates 4.2% ahead of 1996.

Arlington's \$3.8 million in sales tax allocation was 5.9% more than the rebate of \$3.6 million for June of last year. Year-to-date rebates to Arlington show an increase of 4% over the first six months of 1996.

El Paso's sales tax rebate of \$2.957 million was 1.2% below the \$2.994 million payment delivered in June 1996. However, El Paso's local sales tax payments are 1.1% ahead of those through June of 1996.

Other cities with year-to-date payments showing steady increases were: Tyler with a \$1.5 million rebate, placing that City's allocations up 45% year-to-date, due in large part to a tax rate increase; Richardson, \$1.4 million, year-to-date increase of 13.7%; Plano, \$2.4 million, 71% ahead of 1996; and Irving, \$2.5 million, year-to-date increase of 6.9%.

The Comptroller's next sales tax

allocation is scheduled for Friday, July 11.

Other cities in our area, the amount of their sales tax rebate this month along with the change from the same month last year are:

Columbus, \$51,876.70, up 10.15%; Weimar, \$9,980.63, up 0.44%; Sealy, \$50,011.13, up 8.46%; Bellville, \$16,119.62, -7.94%; El Campo, \$121,917.36, -5.64%; and Wharton, \$67,346.52, -16.64%.

Year-to-date for the cities above are, Columbus, \$319,729.28, up 43.67%; Weimar, \$57,888.74, down 6.42%; Sealy, \$338,689.74, +2.08%; Bellville, \$109,748.73, -3.39%; El Campo, \$799,741.23, +1.83%; and Wharton, \$488,670.19, +4.11%.

On the county level, Colorado County received \$41,452.26, down 8.89% from last year's \$45,501.22. Austin County received \$56,717.30, down 4.95%. Wharton County received \$87,836.85, down 2.59%.

Year-to-date figures for the above counties are, Colorado County, \$309,135.99, up 16.63%; Austin County, \$370,580.41, +4.64%; and Wharton County, \$549,185.87, +0.18%.

*Columbus increased its portion from 1% to 1.5% effective 4-1-96, therefore, this is not an accurate comparison.

COLORADO COUNTY SHERIFF'S REPORT

The Colorado County Sheriff's Department reported the following cases for the past week.

Sunday, June 8, at 5:16 p.m., Sgt. Richard Lacourse responded to a call concerning a burglary of a building on Hwy. 71 south.

The complainant reported that one Evinrude outboard motor, one Gamefisher outboard motor and assorted tools and four props were stolen from the building.

Tuesday, June 10, at 2 p.m., Deputy Richard Frederick responded to a call concerning a forgery at Hickory Hill Drive-Inn. One suspect was charged.

Friday, June 13, at 8 a.m., Lt. Ron Holub responded to a call concerning the theft of livestock on County Road 234.

The complainant reported that one cow-calf pair was missing.

At 9 a.m., Lt. Holub responded to a call concerning criminal mischief on

County Road 207.

The complainant reported that the door to a camphouse was broken.

At 11:15 p.m., Deputies Craig Peikert and Peterson responded to a report of an intoxicated subject on railroad property. One arrest was made.

Saturday, June 14, at 12:46 a.m., Deputies Peikert and Peterson arrested one suspect for possession of marijuana at Hwy. 90 and Hwy. 71.

At 1:55 p.m., Deputy Jason Pavlicek responded to a call concerning a burglary of a building at the Garwood Little League Park.

The complainant reported that the suspect(s) kicked in the door of the equipment room.

Sunday, June 15, at 12:15 a.m., Deputies Gene Rebel, Peikert and Peterson and Lt. Holub responded to a call concerning the sexual assault of a child on Marek Road.

Upon investigation, one suspect was arrested.