

Crime Stoppers 'Crime of the Week'

Eagle Lake Crime Stoppers is offering up to \$1,000 cash reward for any information leading to the arrest and indictment of any person or persons involved in the following crime:

On Tuesday, June 18, 1997, between 1 and 5 a.m., the home of Mr. Robert S. Martin at 610 Walnut Street was burglarized by two or more persons.

Entry was apparently made through a window and

the front door.

The suspects took household items.

If you saw anyone suspicious in the area during these times, or have any information regarding this case, or any case being investigated by the Eagle Lake Police Department, please call Crime Stoppers at 234-5555 or the police department at 234-2727.

You will remain anonymous.

Eagle Lake Headlight

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Eagle Lake Mayor David Mann, far right, introduced persons available for questions and/or would provide information during Friday night's meeting of an overflow crowd in Council Chambers. Mann also provided some background on the City's quest. Pictured with him are, from left, Warden J.C. Conner (MTC's James Bradshaw State Jail), Colorado County Sheriff R.H. "Curly" Wied and Councilman J.W. Shavers.

Headlight Photo by Jeannine Fearing

NEWSBRIEFS

Lissie Methodist 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.

Chamber's Broiler Burger Lunch is July 13

The Eagle Lake Chamber of Commerce will hold its Broiler Burger Lunch at the Eagle Lake Golf Course Sunday, July 13, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. You may eat in the picnic area or plates to go will be available for \$5 per person. Tickets can be purchased at IGA Foods, Blue Plate Cafe, from chamber directors and at the chamber office at 408 East Main or call 234-2780 for more information.

Pilot Club schedules grocery grab

The Eagle Lake Pilot Club will sponsor a Grocery Grab Monday, July 30. First prize is a three minute grocery grab; second prize is a \$50 gift certificate both from IGA Foods in Eagle Lake. Tickets are \$1 each or six for \$5. Tickets are available at Eagle Lake Sewing Center, 221 E. Main; Baumgart Insurance, 205 E. Main; or call 409-234-2619.

Singles dance is Friday

The Fort Bend Singles will sponsor a public dance Friday, June 27, at 8 p.m., at the Needville KC Hall. Music will be provided by the Syl Krenk Orchestra. Door prizes will be given, admission is \$5 per person. For more information call 409-793-6557 or 793-4573.

CGCMC to hold open house

Please join Columbia Gulf Coast Medical Center (CGCMC) for the opening of their newest specialty service: the Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (wound management) Wednesday, June 25. The ribbon cutting will be at 10 a.m. An open house will be held from 4 to 6 p.m. The new service is located in the cardiopulmonary department near the outpatient entrance.

No Seniors Citizens Dance in July!

Due to the 4th of July holiday and scheduling conflicts, there will be no Senior Citizens Dance this month.

RHS central office closed for vacation

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

Safe sitter class scheduled

Rice Medical Center is holding another Safe Sitter Class in July for boys and girls ages 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 to 9:45 a.m. Anyone interested in joining or, if you would like more information about the classes, call 409-234-5571.

PEM children's program needs you!

Prairie Edge Museum (PEM) is providing a program emphasizing local heritage and cultures, local plants and wildlife and pioneer methodology. Spaces are still open if your child is interested in attending. Enrollment is for students who have completed first through fifth grades and is not limited to Eagle Lake or Rice CISD. Sessions are from 1 to 3 p.m., Mondays and Tuesdays. Interested children should be at the Museum by 1 p.m. this Monday.

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.

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 (See Newsbriefs, Page 10)

MTC's short list... Eagle Lake, Post

By Lynda Appelt
Contributing Writer

A special meeting of the Eagle Lake City Council was held last Friday night, June 20, prior to a public hearing on the 1,000-bed medium-security prison facility for which the City is vying. (Medium security means all inmates are locked in cells.)

A resolution creating the Eagle Lake Correctional Facilities Development Corporation as a non-profit corporation for the purpose of developing, owning and financing correctional and detention facilities on behalf of the City of Eagle Lake was adopted.

Council, with just enough members present for a quorum due to vaca-

tions, appointed an initial board of directors for the corporation comprised of Mayor David Mann, City Manager Ron Holland and City Attorney Don Bendy.

If Eagle Lake is chosen as the site for the facility, the corporation will sell tax-free revenue bonds to private investors. The liability for the bonds is

secured by the property purchased and facilities built on that property.

The pay back of the bonds is tied to the income of the prison.

The City will only be committed to infrastructure—roads, water, sewage and fire protection.

Following the special meeting, approximately 135 interested citizens packed the Council Chamber to lend support to the quest of the prison.

The prospective prison, to be constructed and operated by Management and Training Corporation (MTC), is projected to employ 250 with a +\$6 million annual payroll.

MTC was represented at the meeting by Warden J.C. Conner of the James Bradshaw State Jail in Henderson County.

Colorado County Sheriff R.H. "Curly" Wied told the overflow crowd of his and Eagle Lake Police Chief

(See Prison, Page 3)

Drive-by shooting injures one

Sunday night, June 22, at 11 p.m., Sgt. Jack Knox and Officers Bill Latimore, Carl Risk and Tobin Thomas responded to a shooting reported outside the Jazz Room, located at the corner of Fairview and E. State Streets.

A number of young people from the Sealy/San Felipe area had come to the Jazz Room, but were turned away.

After they were denied entrance into the club because they had been involved in a fight inside the club this past Thursday, the group began to get angry at the local youths who were outside.

As the two groups pressed together, one or more males from the out of town group fired a 12-gauge shotgun into the crowd of young people.

One male was taken to the local hospital by a private vehicle.

He was treated for pellet wounds and released the following morning.

The victim's name is being withheld at this time in his best interest and for public safety.

Chief Keith Webb and the department are investigating the incident. (See Police, Page 10)

'And the walls came tumbling down...'

By Lynda Appelt
Contributing Writer

And the walls came tumbling down... no, not the walls of Jericho, but the walls of the old county jail!

Active demolition began around noon Monday, June 16, and by Monday of this week, only a heap of rubble remains on the site.

Active demolition began after the Colorado County Commissioners' Court voted 3-0 to reaffirm its decision of Dec. 1996 to demolish the facility. The vote was taken during an emergency meeting on June 12 called for by Precinct 3 Commissioner Tommy Hahn, abstained from voting.

Originally, demolition was to have begun the day of the meeting, but was delayed, after Hahn felt the possible need to put the issue to another vote after 18 individuals addressed the Court on June 9 in opposition of the demolition.

Some 40 individuals spoke, both pro and con, on the issue during the emergency meeting, at which approximately 100 individuals filled the Courtroom.

At the end of the meeting, Commissioner Sonny Spanihel expressed appreciation for all the comments. "We would have enjoyed it more if this input had come when it was asked for," said Spanihel.

The saga of the old jail began Dec. 27, 1994, and unanimous vote to seek bids for the project was taken more than a year after the first request and aired on the radio. No response was received to the request at that time.

The preservation group had admitted they were slow in coming forward to state their feelings.

Following individual comments, Hahn asked County Judge Vince Slominski what the procedure would be for for a vote of the people?

Slominski replied it would have to be checked by the county attorney.

At this point Spanihel made the motion to reaffirm the demolition decision, Pct. 2 Commissioner Johnnie Elstner provided the second and Pct. 1 Commissioner Richard Seifert voted with Spanihel and Elstner. Hahn abstained!

Hahn, who was not a part of the Court at the time the demolition decision was made, but did participate in the unanimous vote on May 12, 1997, to award the demolition bid, including asbestos removal, to Recovery Contractors of Pearland in the amount of \$33,852, indicated his vote in May was in favor of the low bid, not the demolition project.

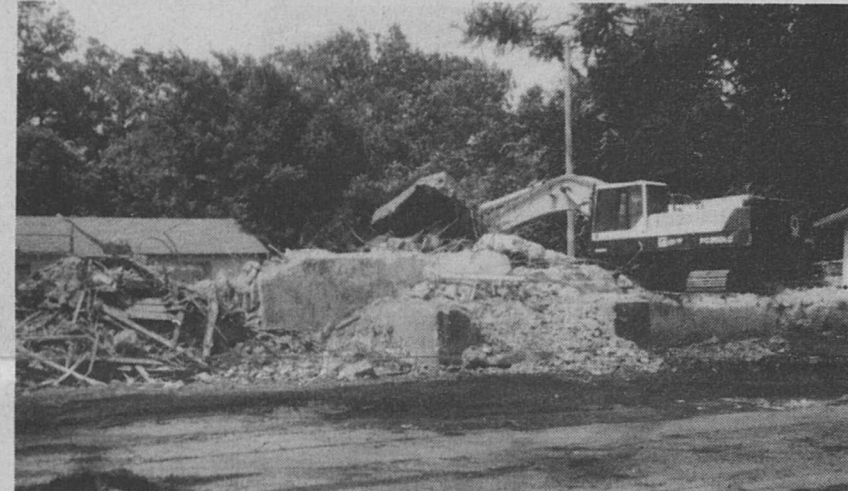
At the beginning of the meeting, Spanihel presented a chain of events that began Dec. 27, 1994, in response to a statement made at the June 9 meeting that the Court was not being responsive to those who elected them and was holding back information.

"I take my position very seriously, representing 18,400 county citizens; 10,000 registered voters and 2,000 citizens in Precinct 4. I always ask myself if my decisions are in the best interest of the citizens," said Spanihel. "We have been working diligently on this matter since 1994."

Crockett Leyendecker a stalwart proponent of the jail's preservation, produced a handout that questioned Spanihel's figures on the Oct. 1996 bid.

The Court was also challenged that since it had no written contract as yet with the contractor, there should be no problem with discontinuing the demolition. The contract is currently being prepared by the county attorney.

Slominski had told the group that it would be costly to the County to back down from its contract at this



You may not recognize this location in Columbus anymore; it was where the Colorado County Jail stood for many years, but is now just a pile of rubble. Demolition of the building was completed the end of last week.

Headlight Photo by Lynda Appelt

point.

County Attorney John Julian Moore said the decision to award the bid based on detailed bid specifications was entered in the official minutes, thus the County did have a contract.

Eagle Lake Mayor David Mann reminded the group that there are many types of contracts and an oral contract is just as binding as a written one.

Jamie Wise of the Texas Historical Commission was present to encourage preservation.

W.A. Schindler again offered to buy the jail property, even if it went to bid, or trade the County a piece of

property he owns in downtown Columbus between Gibson's Muffler and Thrifty Korner on Walnut Street.

"I have a check right now," said Schindler.

He was told this is not legal since land of a political subdivision may be exchanged only with another political subdivision with powers of eminent domain except in an emergency.

Several citizens urged the Court to keep the land in the "county family", instead of splitting its property in two.

In response to the Court's expressing a need for employee parking space at the jail site, thus freeing up space for local business customers, Schindler (See Demolition, Page 10)

County Attorney will now handle felonies...

Bill signed by Bush

House Bill 3572, giving the Colorado County Attorney's office the power to prosecute felony crimes, was signed by Governor George W. Bush on Friday, June 20.

The bill, filed April 11, authored by State Representative Robby Cook and sponsored by Senator Ken Armbrister, was sent to the governor on May 27.

The new system will take effect Sept. 1, but County Attorney John Julian Moore was busy Monday visiting with District Clerk Harvey Vornsand about the backlog of cases.

The system will allow the County to move cases quickly and increase fine and fee collections.

Moore will assume the duties of District Attorney "Bud" Kirkendall whose office presently covers four counties and is located in Seguin.

The salary for the new duties which is paid by the state is set at \$85,000 with an additional \$22,500 for operation of the office.

The County Attorney's present salary, paid by the County, is \$29,920.

A similar system is in operation in Fayette County.

Colorado County Sheriff's Report

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

Tuesday, June 17, at 10:15 a.m., Deputy Richard Frederick responded to a call concerning a theft by check at Nada Grocery. There is one suspect.

At 5:30 p.m., Deputies Troy Neisner and Snyder responded to a call concerning criminal mischief at the corner of Arthur and Hastedt Streets in Garwood.

The complainant reported that juvenile(s) had written on and damaged

the front windows of the complainant's residence. There are two juvenile suspects.

Wednesday, June 18, at 8:30 a.m., Deputy Furth responded to an attempted burglary of a building at The Hill Bar. Furth discovered an attempted break in, but nothing was reported missing.

At 9:30 a.m., Deputy Furth responded to an attempted burglary of a building on Hwy. 90 east of Weimar at the Los Compadres Restaurant.

(See Sheriff, Page 4)



There is nothing left of railroad tower which stood in Eagle Lake, basically behind Eagle Market, for many years. Now the site looks like its ready for someone's garden it's so clean and nicely raked. Hopefully, the continued demolition around Colorado County is a sign of progress.