

Prison

Continued from Page 1



An overflow crowd gathered Friday evening, June 20, in the Eagle Lake City Council Chambers for a public meeting concerning the City's interest in having MTC build a medium security prison here. Those attending saw a video produced by MTC, heard comments from Eagle Lake Mayor David Mann, Colorado County Sheriff Curly Wied and MTC's warden at their Henderson County facility, J.C. Conner.

An exact attendance count was not possible since the fullness of the entryway caused several citizens to retreat when they opened the front door.

Keith Webb's trip to the Bradshaw Jail. Instead of going to the facility itself, Wied and Webb visited with the local police and county sheriff's departments, finding no problems at all generated by the facility or its inmates.

"We want you to know what is going on. We operate on a good neighbor policy and only want to be where we're wanted," Conner said.

"A prison is a small town inside a fence with a lot more law enforcement," he added.

"We train our people to meet and exceed state standards," Conner stated. "Thirty years of experience, augmented by the expertise and training of our employees, make us what we are."

The assembled group was shown a video about MTC which included the Bradshaw Facility in daily operation. Education and efficiency are the essential elements of MTC's operation.

"MTC began as a job corp operation, training disadvantaged people, and that has given us an edge in the area of education," said Conner. "Obviously, the inmates didn't learn life and living skills before they got to us, so it is up to us to teach them these skills to allow these individuals to be productive, because they will be out at some point."

As one inmate interviewed in the video put it, "They show you they care and don't want you to come back."

According to Conner, programming is the key. When MTC saw a need for drug abuse education, that became a part of their program.

MTC graduated 300 inmates with GEDs last year and 600 tested with appropriate vocational skills.

"We teach all the way from reading and writing to college prep, including music and Shakespeare. Our completion record is 5-1/2 times that of the state's facilities," Conner said.

It was noted that MTC's facility will in no way be tied to the local school district.

The target group for occupancy will be Texas Department of Criminal Justice inmates. According to Conner, it is cheaper for the state to contract a

facility rather than build one.

And, MTC opened its first facility (in Utah) within a year from the start of construction.

"There are 142,000 inmates in the state at the present and we don't intend to let our facility sit idle," said Conner.

By Sept. 1998, it is speculated that TDCJ will have a great need to find some beds.

Federal and out-of-state prisoners will be contracted if it becomes necessary, in order to fill the facility.

It was noted during the question-and-answer session that all inmates are returned to the location of their sentencing when they are released.

"No one is just let out the front gate," Conner said.

When Conner was questioned about MTC's contribution to the local economy, Conner told the group he buys on a competitive basis.

"I will buy as much as I can locally if prices are comparable," he said.

Conner said that MTC feeds inmates at an average cost of \$1.88 per day. Daily cost for each inmate is \$25.32, compared to the state's \$39.

Cost efficiency is an important priority for MTC. The cost per day includes debit service.

Headlight Photo by Jeannine Fearing

"My utility bill in Henderson contributes \$420,000 per year to that city," said Conner.

MTC believes in total coordination with local law and fire agencies and achieves this by holding a yearly planning meeting and hosting a law enforcement appreciation dinner. Its jailers also assist law enforcement in the community at parades, community events and in times of emergency.

According to Conner, MTC has a plan for every emergency situation and those plans are reviewed periodically.

The question was asked, "What is it you're looking for from us?"

"You've done everything you can do at this point," Conner said.

Conner informed the group that the cities of Post and Eagle Lake are dead even in the competition at this point and that a decision would be reached by the senior vice president of MTC in four to six weeks.

Possible sites viewed for the facility were in the FM 3013 area.

As one citizen put it, following the meeting, "I really appreciate a meeting where everyone is so candid and above-board."

Jury convicts Houston man

A Colorado County jury took only forty-five minutes of deliberation last Wednesday to find James Rhodes, a Houston resident, of driving while intoxicated on May 5, 1996, on U.S. Hwy. 90-A at Altair.

The jury was impaneled last Tuesday afternoon by County Judge Vince Slominski and the five men and one woman were seated late in the day, with testimony beginning just after 10 a.m. on Wednesday.

The State's evidence, presented by Colorado County Attorney John Julian Moore, consisted of the testimony of Colorado County Sheriff's Deputy Gene Rebel who made the arrest.

According to Rebel's testimony, he stopped Rhodes for speeding, 77

miles per hour in a 65 zone, at 11:29 p.m. Sunday night, May 5, 1996, just west of the intersection of U.S. Hwy. 90-A and State Hwy. 71 in Altair.

Upon stopping the vehicle, Rebel, who is trained in Standardized Field Sobriety Tests, determined by field tests that Rhodes was intoxicated.

Rebel also found a styrofoam cup containing a brownish liquid which smelled of alcohol under the driver's seat and several empty and partially filled bottles of liquor and cola in the trunk of the vehicle.

Jailor Mike Hoffman also testified for the State. He testified that he observed Rhodes upon booking him into jail and observed his slurred speech,

(See DWI, Page 4)

COLORADO COUNTY COURTHOUSE REPORT



DISTRICT COURT CASES FILED

State of Texas - seizure and forfeiture of one 1988 Saab; filed 6-19-97.

Whyman D. Psencik and wife, Carolyn M. Psencik, vs Robert L. Cummings Jr., suit on contract; 6-19-97.

First Deposit Bank vs Steven W. Strickland, account; 6-23-97.

DISTRICT COURT DISPOSITIONS

June 19, 1997

Fernando Fuentes Vargas, aggravated assault occurring 12-13-96. Defendant was placed on two years deferred adjudication, fined \$500; restitution was to be determined.

LaKeith Dashon Williams, burglary of a habitation, 12-22-96. Defendant placed on five years deferred adjudication, fined \$1,000, 30 days jail with credit for time good served and restitution.

Gloria Jean Moore, aggravated assault, 10-8-96. Defendant placed on five years deferred adjudication, fined \$1,000 plus restitution, 60 days jail (left up to court).

James Lee Roy Jr., aggravated assault, 11-25-96. Defendant placed on five years deferred adjudication, fined \$1,000 plus restitution, 90 days in jail, weekend time.

COUNTY COURT DISPOSITIONS

June 17, 1997

David Hendrick, Houston, driving while intoxicated (DWI), 12-30-95, State Hwy. 71 at IH-10, investigated by Columbus Police Department (CPD) Officer J.R. Pavlicek. Defendant pled guilty; sentenced to one year probation, assessed a \$750 fine, court costs, community service.

Randy Gustus, Sealy, motion to revoke probation. Defendant was placed on probation 11-26-96 for the offense of DWI. Defendant pled true to the violations of probation alleged in the motion on file against him; probation was revoked and he was sentenced to 90 days in the Colorado County Jail; ordered to serve out his \$1,202 fine and court costs by jail time.

Curtis Jackson, Alleyton, DWI, second offense, 4-25-96, City of Columbus, investigated by CPD Officer M.R. Edman. Defendant pled guilty; placed on two years probation; assessed a \$2,000 fine, court costs, community service; 30 days in the County Jail as a condition of probation. In addition, as part of a plea agreement, cause numbers 13,116 and 13,117 (two assault cases) against defendant occurring 5-6-96 were dismissed.

James Rhodes, Houston, DWI, 5-5-96 on U.S. Hwy. 90A, investigated by Colorado County Sheriff's Office Deputy Gene Rebel. Defendant pled not guilty and was tried before a jury 6-17 and 18. Jury found defendant guilty; County Judge placed defendant on one year probation, fined \$1,800, court costs, community service.

Carlos Edward Cruz, San Marcos, DWI, second offense, 1-25-95 on IH-10, investigated by Department of Public Safety (DPS) Trooper Pat Zatopek. Defendant pled guilty; placed on a two years probation, assessed a \$2,000 fine, court costs, community service; ordered to serve 15 days confinement in jail as a condition of probation.

David Thompson, Columbus, assault, 3-20-95, City of Columbus, investigated by CPD Edman. Defendant pled guilty; assessed a \$1,000 fine, court costs and 30 days in jail, all to be served by confinement in the County Jail with credit for time served.

David Thompson, Columbus, terroristic threat, 10-4-95, City of Columbus, investigated by CPD Officer Pavlicek. Defendant pled guilty; assessed a \$750 fine, court costs, 30 days in jail; all to be served by confinement in the county jail with credit for time served.

Jose Obregon, Columbus, terroristic threat, 5-31-97, Rt. 3, Columbus.

COUNTY COURT CASES FILED

June 19, 1997

Jared Wayne Rutta, Columbus, terroristic threat, occurring 5-5-97 on Struss Lane.

June 20, 1997

Robert Black, Eagle Lake, driving while license suspended (DWLS), 5-28-97, City of Eagle Lake.

Eric Christal, Eagle Lake, DWLS, 5-12-97, City of Eagle Lake.

Richard Saldana Duque, Garwood, DWLS, 5-21-97, City of Eagle Lake.

Irene Baumbach Gallaher, Columbus, DWI, 4-20-97, IH-10 milepost 702.

Dennis James George, Houston, assault, 4-28-97, City of Eagle Lake.

Roy Lilo Gutierrez, Eagle Lake, DWLS, 5-18-97, City of Eagle Lake.

Zendell Ellis King, Gunterville, Alabama, DWLS, 5-8-97 on IH-10.

David Joseph Maroul, Rosenberg, possession of marijuana, 4-17-97, IH-10 mile marker 681.

Antonio Mata, El Campo, DWI, 5-30-97, US Hwy. 90.

Jeffrey Scott Mazac, Sealy, DWI, 5-4-97, Alleyton.

Louis Denton Nelson, Cat Spring, terroristic threat, 5-1-97, City of Eagle Lake.

Russell Psencik, Columbus, criminal trespassing, 4-5-97, Alleyton.

Alan Todd Rabel, Weimar, DWLS, 4-12-97.

Gilbert Ruiz, Eagle Lake, resisting arrest, 5-13-97, City of Eagle Lake.

Gilbert Ruiz, Eagle Lake, evading arrest, 5-13-97, City of Eagle Lake.

Linda Gay Semora, Eagle Lake, deadly conduct, 5-23-97, City of Eagle Lake.

Buster Wayne Shuler, Eagle Lake, DWLS, 4-25-97, City of Eagle Lake.

Robert Franklin Stearns, Sheridan, DWI, 5-10-97, US Hwy. 90A.

Fernando Vargas, Eagle Lake, reckless driving, 2-25-97, City of Eagle Lake.

Gerald Woods, Humble, failure to identify, 4-18-97, IH-10.

DIVORCES GRANTED

June 19, 1997

John Edwin Blair and Donna Kay Blair.

Dwyne Ray Blair and Penny Burch Ivy Blair.

David Paul Howard and Shelley Ranae Howard.

Felicia Elizabeth Frazier Solomon and Christopher Solomon.

Pedro Vasquez and Gail Maxine Scott Vasquez.

Craig Douglas Potter and Lynn Anderson Potter.

Alicia C. Stevens and Royal O'Neal Stevens.

Oliver Johnson and Tanya Mae Johnson.

DIVORCES FILED

William Gordon Mercer and Beverly Joan Mercer; filed 6-17-97.

Sandra Lynn Egerton and Mark Edwin-Ayers Egerton; 6-17-96.

Linda Anne Fields and Calvin Bruce Fields; 6-18-97.

Curtis J. Lasley and Dianne F. Noel Lasley; 6-20-97.

MARRIAGE LICENSE APPLICATIONS

Randy Ray Huebel and Sylvia Ann Escamilla; filed 6-17-97.

Juan Reveles Rodriguez and Marisol Obregon Leija; 6-17-97.

Phillip Lorne Cunningham and Christina Michelle Miller; 6-18-97.

Frank Nobel Howell and Evelyn A. Stancik; 6-18-97.

Lawrence Gaston Kurtz and Theresa Ann Stavinoah; 6-19-97.

Steven Kent Carson and Jodi L'Rae Heard; 6-20-97.

Pedro Vasquez and Margarita Rocha Gutierrez; 6-23-97.

Bible Verse of the Week

"Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God and he will draw nigh to you."

— James 4: 7, 8

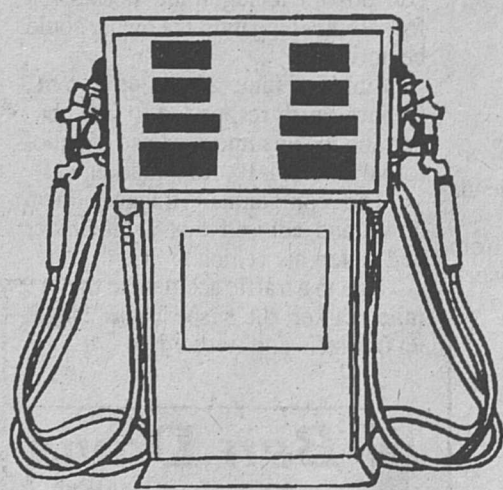
Submitted by Neddy Phillips



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