

Farm Bureau convention is Sept. 9

Colorado County Farm Bureau invites all interested persons to join them at their annual meeting beginning at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 9, at the Columbus High School cafeteria said Dean Venghaus, president. A barbecue beef/sausage dinner will be served

to members before the meeting. Dinner tickets, purchased in advance, will be \$3 for adults and children; \$4.25 if bought at the door. Please contact the county office before the Sept. 5 deadline for ticket purchase. State Representative Robby Cook of Eagle Lake will be the guest speaker. (See Convention, Page 10)



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Property, cash seized in multi-agency raid

Thursday evening, Aug. 28, Alcario Barrios of 814 East E Street was arrested after a multi-jurisdictional

raid on his residence in Eagle Lake. Chief Keith H. Webb of the Eagle Lake Police Department (ELPD) end-

ed a long narcotics investigation, working from anonymous tips and confidential informants, and a search and arrest warrant was issued for Alcario Barrios and his trailer residence. According to Webb, the investiga-

tion would not have been the success that it was without the assistance of Commander Keith Majors of the 25th Judicial District Narcotics Task Force and his agents; ELPD Officers Brian Ochoa, Tim Crume and Bill Latti-

more; Colorado County Sheriff's Office, Sheriff R.H. "Curly" Wied, Sgt. Richard LaCourse and Deputies Craig Peikert, Gene Rebel and David Furrh. Officers recovered approximately one half pound of powder cocaine, 4.3

grams of crack cocaine and less than one gram of marijuana.

They also seized approximately \$8,000 in cash, a pistol grip, short barrel 12 gauge shotgun with 00 buck shot and Sabot slug shotgun shells.

Other property at the residence was also seized which included a pickup truck, a Ford Mustang, a horse trailer, numerous pieces of electronic equipment and appliances, four horse saddles and assorted tack and other miscellaneous items.

The property will undergo processing for permanent seizure in District Court.

Barrios was transported to the County Detention Center (CDC) where he was initially charged with possession of the cocaine and being a felon in possession of a firearm.

He is currently on felony probation for previous drug charges.

Steve Heffley of the Colorado County Adult Probation Department (See Police, Page 10)

NEWSBRIEFS

Duplex information available

You may have seen and heard of the new duplex homes being built in Eagle Lake. If you need more information or to reserve a duplex, call 409-234-7892.

RMC needs volunteers

The Rice Medical Center Ladies Auxiliary (Pink Ladies) needs volunteers. Talk to any Pink Lady, come by the Hospital auxiliary room for more information or contact Barbara Pidgeon, president.

Senior Citizens' is dance Friday

A Senior Citizens dance will be held Friday, Sept. 5, at the Eagle Lake Community Center from 8 to 11:30 p.m. with music by Donnie Wavra. Admission is \$5 per person; door prizes will be given. The public is invited.

ELMS PTO meeting, open house Sept. 9

The Eagle Lake Middle School will hold an open house and PTO meeting next Tuesday, Sept. 9, beginning at 7 p.m. in the cafeteria.

White Cloud having homecoming, anniversary

White Cloud Baptist Church invites you to their Homecoming and Church Anniversary and family and friends days services Sunday, Sept. 7, beginning at 3 p.m. Speakers will be Rev. Clarence Owens, Camp Zion Baptist Church; Rev. Obie Rhodes is host pastor.

E.H. Henry meeting is tonight

E.H. Henry Historical Corporation will hold their monthly board meeting Thursday, Sept. 4, at 7:30 p.m. at the E.H. Henry site.

John Everett DAR meeting is Monday

The John Everett Chapter DAR will hold a meeting in the home of Fran Rutta Gillen at 209 Wallace in Columbus Monday, Sept. 8, at 2 p.m. Members are reminded to come with their dues.

Quilting classes start Sept. 8

Have you ever wanted to learn to quilt? A quilting class will begin Sept. 8. There will be five sessions on consecutive Mondays beginning Sept. 8. Classes will be from 2 to 4 p.m. or 7 to 9 p.m. Register for either afternoon or evening workshop by calling the Colorado County Extension office at 409-732-2530. You'll receive a supply list when you register. There's no charge for the workshop and everyone is welcome. No sewing experience is necessary. We request that anyone with a disability, advise of the auxiliary aid or service needed when you registering.

Booster Club meeting set for Sept. 10

The Rice Raider Booster Club will hold a meeting Wednesday, Sept. 10, at 7 p.m. in the PAC Center at the high school. All member and anyone interested are urged to attend.

TAAS/TEAMS test registration deadline nears

Individuals who are no longer enrolled in a Texas public school and who wish to register to retake the exit level TAAS test, and all individuals who wish to take the TEAMS test, may pick up a registration packet at any high school campus, district central office, or education service center. The test registration form must be completed and returned in the pre-addressed envelope and must be received in Iowa City, Iowa, no later than 5 p.m. Sept. 26, 1997.

Cub Scout registration is next Tuesday

Cub Scout registration will be held on Tuesday, Sept. 9, from 7 to 8 p.m. at the Eagle Lake Youth Center on E. Prairie. Boys in grades first through fifth are welcome to join. For further information, contact Mark Rotter, 234-3039; or Andrew Magninat, 234-7601.

Study Club to meet Sept. 10

Members of the Eagle Lake Study Club are very excited about the upcoming year's programs; the theme is "Texas". The first meeting will be Wednesday, Sept. 10, at the Eula and David Wintermann Library at 2 p.m. with speaker Joe Tom Davis of Wharton County Junior College. Mr. Davis will give a program on "Colorful Characters in Early Texas History". You may buy some of his books if you desire. Everyone is invited. Members are reminded to pick up their new booklets.

VFW begins work on fundraiser

The Eagle Lake VFW Post #8783 has begun work on a fundraising drawing to be held later in the year. Anyone wishing to donate an item to be included in the drawing should contact Earl Rodgers or any VFW member as soon as possible. The drawing is tentatively set for Nov. 11.

Raider football tickets on sale

Season tickets for Rice Raider home football games are on sale at the Rice CISD Business Office, those who have not held season tickets may purchase them on a first-come first-serve basis. These will be on sale until Friday, Sept. 5. The cost of the season tickets for all home games is \$20 per set. There will be no reserved seats sold for individual games. Call Jennifer Korenek at 234-3531 for additional information.

Community buyers need your help

It's almost Fair time again and anyone interested in donating to the Eagle Lake Community Buyers is urged to do so by calling 409-234-7432. Your help is greatly appreciated.

Class of 1976 plans reunion

Rice High School Class of 1976 is planning a reunion for Sept. 27 at the Eagle Lake Community Center. Anyone with information on '76 graduates, such as addresses, may contact Denise Austin Janow, 409-234-2418; or Carolyn Bowen Baird, 234-5864.

55 and over fitness classes offered

Rice Medical Center is providing free 55 and over fitness classes 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.

Hospice volunteers needed

Hospice, a program that provides supportive care for persons with a terminal illness and their families, needs volunteers. A training session is being planned for Sept./Oct. For more information, call Margaret at 409-543-9487.

County deputies want back pay

By Lynda Appelt, Contributing Writer

Public discussion with Bill Krueger of the Fletcher and Springer law firm and Colorado County Sheriff's Department deputies regarding labor laws and law enforcement compensatory time was conducted during a special meeting of the Colorado County Commissioners' Court on Aug. 26.

County Judge Vince Slominski told the approximately 25 individuals present that it was the Court's intention to search for the truth and what the law states concerning compensatory time in regard to an officer's lunch, ongoing and unresolved since it first became an issue in March of this year.

Krueger, who specializes in labor law, was called in at the request of County Attorney John Moore.

The issue is for the period of time during which Bill Esterling served as sheriff.

Sheriff R.H. "Curly" Wied, who took office Jan. 1 of this year, has established a policy which addresses the subject.

However, the question is, if an of-

ficer monitors the radio during his lunch hour, is it compensatory time?

Krueger cited precedent cases that confirm the fact that an officer in uniform and monitoring radio is compensated only if he responds to a call during that time, is mandated to sit in an immediate location to monitor the radio or if it becomes a regular interruption of lunch.

"There is no compensation for simply monitoring your radio," said Krueger.

When Krueger attempted to discuss this unresolved subject with the deputies present, Wied said, "On behalf of the deputies, there will be no answer on advice of the attorney secured by the deputies."

Bob Chadwick is the attorney that has been secured to represent the officers, but he was not present at the special meeting.

Krueger suggested that logs and time sheets be compared after it was learned that it was Esterling's policy to change time sheets to always reflect

a lunch hour and those docked times are the hours in question. If time for lunch is taken, it shows up on the time logs and thus not compensated.

"If your log and time sheet documentation show docked time when you actually worked, then there should be compensatory time," Krueger said.

Krueger suggested that employees could submit dates and times they find they are entitled to by studying the logs and time sheets or the County (See Pay, Page 10)

Airport to be closed

City Manager Ron Holland informed *The Headlight* recently that the Eagle Lake Airport would be closed effective Tuesday, Sept. 2, 1997 at 9 a.m. for re-construction.

The runway will be extended, widened and lights will be added. It should take no more than 90 days; the airport will be closed for the duration.

Community Center donates golf course to City

By Lynda Appelt, Contributing Writer

Eagle Lake City Council tabled action on assuming ownership of the Eagle Lake Community Center at the same time ownership of the golf course is transferred. The request was made by the Community Center Board of Directors at Council's Aug. 26 meeting.

Eagle Lake Community Center Inc., a non-profit corporation, was

chartered June 16, 1950. The charter will expire in June 2000.

The charter states:

"In the event that the corporation is dissolved or the charter is not renewed at the expiration of the 50-year term or if the association ceases to do business for whatever reason, then any property owned by the association shall be deemed to the City of Eagle Lake as public property"

The Board intends to let the charter

expire.

"They are going out of business in two years, so we're going to get it (Community Center). It's just whether we want it two years earlier," said City Manager Ron Holland.

The corporation was created for "construction of a library and community center".

The library is now independent; however, Eagle Lake Community Center Inc. owns the golf course,

which the Board has agreed to donate to the City as match for the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department grant.

The golf course will become a part of the City's municipal park. At that time, as per the request, the City would assume ownership of the Eagle Lake Community Center, instead of the year 2000.

Council members asked that more information regarding needed repairs, insurance, City's liability, expenses and income, and so forth should gathered and studied before a final decision is reached.

Eagle Lake Police Chief Keith Webb told Council that a plus for the City owning the center would be that security could be mandated for all functions held there. Webb has advocated mandated security since assuming his position.

An additional request by the Center Board that the City allow someone to shoot pigeons at the Center with a pellet gun resulted in no action by Council. Discussion of other means of pigeon eradication was held.

The large pigeon population at the Center has become a sanitation and cleaning problem.

A request by Mable Buford of the Colorado County Education Coop to employ one or two of its students on a part-time basis was also tabled.

A request by Tom Reed to close Commerce Street between Main and railroad for the purpose of holding a (See Council, Page 7)

RMC sets tax rate

The Rice Medical Center (RMC) Board of Managers met Monday night, Aug. 25, to set the effective property tax rate for Rice Hospital District (RHD). Billy Youens, Colorado County Chief Appraiser, attended the meeting and noted the tax base for RHD had increased from \$291,501,844 in 1996 to \$366,128,549 for 1997.

Increased valuations and the successful passing of the half-cent sales tax have substantially impacted the Hospital District tax rate for 1997. It was motioned and passed that the effective tax rate for 1997 be reduced from .18000/\$100 valuation to .13449/\$100 valuation. This is a reduction of over 25% as compared to last year. According to David Keith, Administrator, the Board's goal is to lower the property tax rate to .09000/\$100 valuation by 1999.

In other discussion, Mr. Keith stated he had contacted the state comptrollers office. The sales tax will go into effect Oct. 1, 1997. Businesses should receive notifications of the sales tax increase by the second week in Sept.

According to the comptrollers office, the sales tax rate for businesses operating within the Eagle Lake city limits will be 8.25%; the sales tax rate for others outside the city limits but in the Hospital District will be 7.25%.

Task Force making a big difference

The year end report for the 25th Judicial District Narcotics Task Force for fiscal year 1996, June 1, 1996, to May 31, 1997, was recently released.

The Task Force covers Guadalupe, Colorado and Lavaca Counties.

A Board of Governors exists to guide the Task Force and is made up of Sheriff Harborth, Guadalupe County; Sheriff Wied, Colorado County; Sheriff Wurm, Lavaca County; District Attorney W.C. Kirkendall; and Gary Hooper, City of Seguin Chief of Police. Chief Hopper serves as project director for the Task Force.

Over the past year, the Task Force has expanded its operations to include a marked Drug Interdiction Unit to enforce traffic laws and intercept drugs flowing on the highways.

District Attorney W.C. "Bud" Kirkendall purchased K-9, "Sultan", from forfeited funds. Sultan is trained in detecting illegal drugs and guns.

Sultan is assigned to the Drug Interdiction Unit and Officer Danny Cas-

tillo who is a Certified K-9 Handler.

The Task Force's duties include enforcing dangerous drug laws; working undercover operations, speaking to schools and civic groups about the dangers of drugs; and assisting local, state and federal agencies.

An example of the way the Task

Force assists local agencies (other than narcotics enforcement) is their providing a police vehicle to the Colorado County deputy who is a school resource officer for the County.

The Task Force is one of 46 operating in the State of Texas. (See Drugs, Page 10)

Tax values higher across County

By Lynda Appelt, Contributing Writer

Property values throughout Colorado County have increased (except for the City of Eagle Lake and the Garwood Water District) due to oil and gas drilling and construction development.

Within the Rice CISD boundaries values have increased significantly from \$273,086,694 for 1996 to \$337,835,702 for 1997, according to the Colorado County Appraisal District, an increase of \$64,749,008.

The Rice CISD Board of Trustees

recently approved a general budget of \$9.7 million with a total budget of \$11,955,366. This budget does not include the taxing of non-income producing vehicles.

At a special meeting held last week, the Board voted to keep the same tax rate (\$1.4217 per \$100 valuation) in order to pay on the loan debt in speculation that there was possibly a necessity for building needed due to the juvenile detention camp now un-

(See Values, Page 10)