

More Colorado County Fair Pictures

See Pages 4 and 7

Colorado County Hay show is Oct. 10

The Colorado County Hay Show, sponsored by the Texas Agriculture Extension Service and Colorado Soil and Water Conservation District, will be held Friday, Oct. 10.
(See Hay, Page 8)

Eagle Lake Headlight

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NEWSBRIEFS

Check your health, then give the 'gift of life'

The Eagle Lake Ministerial Alliance is sponsoring a semi-annual blood drive of the Gulf Coast Regional Blood Bank in conjunction with the Rice Medical Center Health Fair. The Health Fair/Blood Drive is slated for Thursday, Oct. 2, at the Eagle Lake Community Center from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. While you are getting your free testing, share the gift of life, your own blood, for use throughout Southeast Texas. The need is critical, especially for Type O+.

Study Club Auction is Oct. 25

Mark your calendars for Saturday, Oct. 25, for the Annual Study Club Auction to be held at the Eagle Lake Community Center. If you have an item to donate for the auction contact Fair Wells at 234-3105.

Defensive driving course

A six-hour defensive driving course has been scheduled for Oct. 8 and 9 at the Wintermann Library in Eagle Lake from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. To pre-register for the course, call 409-234-5411. If unable to pre-register, arrive to the class a few minutes early.

Attention retired teachers!

Retired Teachers of Colorado County will meet for the first Fall meeting Monday, Oct. 6, at Schobel's Restaurant in Columbus at 12 noon. Please come all retired teachers - we will be looking for you!

Columbus having German Festival

The First Annual Columbus German Festival has been scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 11, in the 1000 block of Millam. There will be a sausage making championship, strudel and sauerkraut contest, beer garden, rides and games for children, sausage tasting and local entertainment. "Ompah" music will be provided by Jason Keepers and "Simply German". A street dance that night will feature the music of the "Emotions".

ELMS Student Council having bake sale

Friday, Oct. 3, the Eagle Lake Middle School (ELMS) Student Council is sponsoring a bake sale as a community project. Items will be available at B&B Food, First National Bank, Eagle Lake Drugstore and Dollar General. Donations of baked goods and/or volunteer time is being requested from parents of students and community. Baked goods need to be delivered to ELMS by Thursday afternoon, Oct. 2, or early Friday or delivered to one of the sale sites. All funds raised will benefit ELMS.

Study Club meeting Oct. 8

Please mark your calendars for Wednesday, Oct. 8! The Study Club will meet at the Eula and David Wintermann Library at 2 p.m. Mr. Bill Harrison Sr. is to give the program, "Early Eagle Lake". Don't forget the auction and stew supper on Oct. 25.

UMC to celebrate anniversary

The Eagle Lake United Methodist Church (UMC) will celebrate their 125 year anniversary Oct. 11-12. A weekend of events is planned.

Singles dance this Friday

The Fort Bend Singles will sponsor a public dance on Friday, Sept. 26, at 8 p.m. at the Needville KCHall. Music will be provided by the Texas Gamblers Band. Door prizes will be given; admission is \$5. For more information, call 409-793-6557 or 793-4573.

CCA meeting tonight

Combined Community Action Inc. (CCA) will hold its Board of Directors meeting Thursday, Sept. 25, at 7 p.m. at the CCA Nutrition Center, 275 Ellinger Road, La Grange. The public is invited to attend the meeting.

ELMS school pictures are Friday

Eagle Lake Middle School (ELMS) school pictures are scheduled to be taken this Friday, Sept. 26. All students are reminded that these will be used in the annual. So, even if you don't plan to purchase any for yourself or your parents, be sure to dress neatly!

Senior Citizens' dance Oct. 3

A Senior Citizens dance will be held Friday, Oct. 3, at the Eagle Lake Community Center from 8 to 1:30 p.m. with music by The Country Playboys. Admission is \$5 per person; door prizes will be given. The public is invited.

Duplex information available

You have all seen and/or heard of the new duplexes nearing completion in Eagle Lake. If you need more information or would like to reserve a duplex, call 409-234-7892.

Last call for Class of 1976

Rice High School Class of 1976 is planning a group reunion for Sept. 27 at the Eagle Lake Community Center. Included in this reunion will be the classes of '77, '78 and '79. Anyone with information on '76 graduates (addresses, etc.) may contact Denise Austin Janow, 409-234-2418; or Carolyn Bowen Baird, 234-5864. The Class of '77 may call Cynthia Tomchesson Treybig at 281-343-1695, Class of '78, call Becky Gertson Moulder, 234-5551 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Class of '79, call Michael Thomas, 234-3251.

RMC Pink Ladies need volunteers

The Rice Medical Center (RMC) Ladies Auxiliary (Pink Ladies) needs volunteers. Talk to any Pink Lady or come by the hospital auxiliary room for more information. Barbara Pidgeon is their president this year.

TWONC meeting tonight

The Tom Waddell Outdoor Nature Club (TWONC) will meet on Thursday, Sept. 25, at 6 p.m. at the Prairie Edge Museum in Eagle Lake. There will be a short program on the status of the Attwater's Prairie Chicken by Terry Rossignol, APCNWR Manager. You don't have to be a member to come. As always, there is no charge or obligation to join. If you are interested in learning more about the most endangered bird the U.S., this would be a good start. Students, teachers and school administrators are encouraged to attend. Please come on time as there will be a lot of information covered.

Register for TAAS/TEAMS Oct. test

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.

RMC offers yoga classes

Rice Medical Center is offering yoga classes. Anyone interested may call 409-234-5571, ext. 5216.

(See Newsbriefs, Page 12)

County-Sheriff's Deputies stalemate is resolved

The stalemate between the Colorado County Commissioners' Court and sheriff's department personnel finally came to an end Tuesday morning when the Court reached a settlement in the long-running controversy. The matter had been brewing since March over compensatory time due to sheriff's department personnel in regard to their meal and court time.

Commissioners agreed to pay \$8,109.96, including \$4,906.27 from the General Fund, for compensatory time prior to Jan. 1 under former Sheriff Bill Esterling and \$2,922.08 from Sheriff R.H. "Curly" Wied's current budget, for the four members who are no longer employed by the department. The balance of the 15 employees

will be granted compensatory time, totaling nearly 1,200 hours minus the hours paid to the four employees who have left the department.

According to County Judge Vince Slominski, the employees will have to sign an affidavit which states the hours are due them and also that they will not pursue any litigation against the County.

"The deputies are in total agreement. They understand that they will not be able to go back and file any litigation (against the County)," said Wied.

The Court also accepted the resignation of Public Defender Jeffie Massey, effective Friday, and granted Slominski permission to appoint an interim public defender for a six-month period.

Slominski said that he has two candidates for the position.

The Court also received notification that the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs had awarded the County a \$350,000 grant to be used for additions to the Sheridan sewer project.

In other business, the Court:

- Received notification that Lt. Ron Holub and jailer Rebecca Kmiec had resigned their positions with the sheriff's department;

- Agreed to pay the balance of \$769.50 to Castillo Investigation Specialists of Spring for work authorized by the public defender's office;

- Adopted the Colorado County Criminal Justice Community Plan; and,

- Tabled action to adopt the second amendment to the acquisition contract with the Lower Colorado River Authority for the Alleyton Wastewater Plant.

City's sales tax rebates still ahead of '96

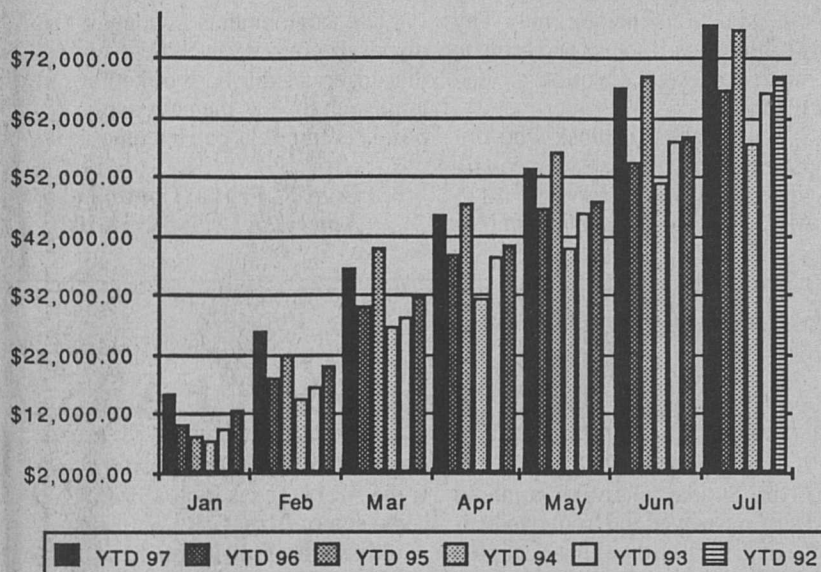
State Comptroller John Sharp last week delivered a total of \$172.7 million in monthly sales tax payments to 1,085 Texas cities and 117 counties.

"The Texas economy continues to sail along on a smooth course," Sharp said. "Sales tax rebates are running 6.1% over those for the first nine months of last year, showing steady consumer confidence with the growing job market."

Sharp delivered monthly sales tax rebates to Texas cities totaling \$157.6 million, 4.4% higher than last year's Sept. payments of \$150.8 million. Rebates of \$15.1 million to Texas counties were 1.2% higher than allocations of \$14.9 million in Sept. 1996.

Another \$4.7 million went to 26 special purpose districts in the state.

The City of Eagle Lake received \$10,523.99, 12.40% less than last (See Rebates, Page 12)



Year-to-date totals for sales tax rebates received by the City of Eagle Lake are charted against the month the tax was collected by businesses, not the month the Comptroller paid the City its share.

EAGLE LAKE POLICE REPORT

the report.

At 7:24 p.m., Sgt. Knox was dispatched to the rear of a business on Main Street in reference to a subject throwing rocks. The subject was located and transported to his residence. No other action was taken.

At 8:07 p.m., Sgt. Knox was dispatched to a residence on Prairie Street in reference to a suspicious vehicle. Upon Sgt. Knox's arrival, the vehicle was gone.

At 9 p.m., Sgt. Knox was contacted and requested to deliver an emergency message.

At 9:53 p.m., Sgt. Knox was contacted and requested by the sheriff's office to assist a deputy in serving a protective order. It was completed without incident.

On Sept. 17, at 5:17 p.m., Officer Ochoa was dispatched to Union Street in reference to a loose goat. Officer Ochoa arrived and had the City dog catcher pick up the animal.

On Sept. 18, at 1:52 a.m., Officer Tim Crume was dispatched to Maple Street in reference to an unwanted person on the property. The subject was advised to leave; he did.

At 9:03 a.m., a complainant came by the police department and reported a burglary of a residence to Lt. Clem Johnson. He went to the location on McCreary Street where an investigation of the scene was conducted.

While at the scene, Johnson was

met by another complainant who also reported a burglary of his residence. Reports were filed in both cases.

At 6:54 p.m., Officer Bill Lattimore met with a complainant in regards to a stolen bicycle. Information was gathered and a report filed.

On Sept. 19 at 10:08 a.m., Lt. Johnson received a call in reference to barking dogs on S. McCarty in the early morning hours. He met with the owner of the dogs and the problem was resolved.

At 11:35 a.m., Lt. Johnson received a report of a loose goat at Maple and State Streets. The humane officer was contacted and the goat picked up.

At 3:17 p.m., Officer Crume was dispatched to Murphy Street in reference to criminal mischief in which a car window had been broken with a rock. A report was filed and the case is under investigation.

At 5:41 p.m., Officer Crume was (See Police, Page 12)

New law has zero tolerance for 'minor under the influence'

By Colorado County Attorney Julian Moore

A major change in Texas law which took effect Sept. 1, is the new "zero tolerance" law on drinking and driving for minors.

I want to discuss this new law and its application at this time.

The new law, found in the Alcoholic Beverage Code Section 106.041 "Driving While Under the Influence of Alcohol by Minor", was mandated by federal government policy calling for states to do more to discourage driving while intoxicated and especially among young people.

The law in effect for some time now in Texas is that driving while intoxicated (DWI) is a Class B misdemeanor, punishable by up to six months in jail and a fine up to \$2,000 on the first offense.

Intoxication may be proven by either the loss of mental and physical faculties or a blood alcohol concentration of 0.10. This alcohol concentration level may be determined by blood test or the Intoxilyzer instrument used by our law enforcement agencies.

Two movements have been working for some years to make these laws more restrictive.

The first is the fact, that, as many of you will remember, during the Vietnam War the legal drinking age was lowered from 21 to 18; but over time it has been raised, first to 19 and eventually back to 21 years. This change in the law has taken some adjustment time.

The parents of many of today's teenagers could legally drink alcohol when they were 18, so it may be difficult for them to understand or accept a different discipline on their youngsters now.

The second movement has been to lower what we call the per-se definition of intoxication. The 0.10 presumption of intoxication has been lowered for instance for those with a commercial drivers license (CDL).

There are in fact many more restrictive rules for the CDL driver, which many of you are probably familiar with.

There was some effort in the Texas Legislature to lower the per se definition of intoxication this year from 0.10 to 0.08, which could, of course, mean that the average driver would have to drink even less than before not to be guilty of DWI. This did not happen. What the legislature DID do was to enact a law of zero tolerance for minors drinking and driving.

Here is what this new law does: a minor commits an offense if the minor operates a motor vehicle in a public place while having any detectable amount of alcohol in the minor's system.

The offense is a "Class C" misdemeanor and carries a driver's license suspension.

A third offense is punishable by a fine of \$500 to \$2,000 and up to six months in jail, which is roughly equivalent, but a bit harsher than, a Class B DWI.

Practically, how this ought to work is that if a peace officer smells alcohol on the breath of a minor driver the driver will be asked to take a breath test, and any alcohol at all will result in a conviction.

Any alcohol at all or a refusal to take a breath test would result in a suspension of the privilege to drive that the young person has worked so hard to earn.

Of course, if the minor is in fact "intoxicated" under our laws, they will still be prosecuted for that.

This new law is to get the attention of those who are in fact violating one law by underage drinking and another by driving under the influence of alcohol.

Few issues have been more troubling over recent years than the idea of our children drinking and driving.

(See Law, Page 9)



One of many

An accident on Hwy. 90-A involving two 18-wheelers late Monday afternoon was one of numerous accidents and losses of control by drivers during the heavy rain. Many slid into the median and/or ditches along Interstate 10.

With most being handled by the Colorado County Sheriff's Department and Troopers of the DPS, Deputy David Furrh and Trooper Sam Trammel worked this wreck on 90-A east of Altair.

Reportedly, the driver of the truck carrying sod, top photo, hit his brakes going around the curve just east of the rice dryer and went into a slide, colliding with a second 18-wheeler pictured at left.

Deputy Richard Frederickson had his hands full on I-10 with cars off the road around 12 and two injury accidents, a roll-over and another with children injured.

Headlight Photos by Jeannine Fearing