

Legion to distribute toys Tuesday

American Legion members and wives will be distributing toys for Christmas to children of needy families from 9 a.m. to 12 noon Tuesday, Dec. 23.

Toys will be given to children infant through nine years of age only.

Only parents or guardians may apply for the toys at The Depot (former Santa Fe Depot) on E. Main Street

during the appointed hours next Tuesday. There will be no house deliveries.

The toy gifts are made possible through generous donations of toys and cash from many citizens and businesses in the community.

"Thank you all," said the Legionnaires to all who contributed to this year's drive.

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Canaris selected 1997 'Fireman of Year'

By Lynda Appelt, Contributing Writer

Pete Canaris was named Eagle Lake's Volunteer Fireman of the Year at the Department's annual Christmas Dinner and Dance Saturday, Dec. 13. The event was held at the Eagle Lake Community Center.

Canaris, the fifth to receive the award, joins previously honored firemen, Billy Cook, Joe Lee Perez, Todd Mascheck and Greg Contreras.

Canaris, a 21-year volunteer fireman, had 100% attendance at drills and business meetings in 1997 and was third in answering fire calls with 49. "Dedicated" was one word used to describe Canaris in his role as a volunteer with the department.

Joining Canaris with 100% attendance at drills and meetings were Sam Castro, Buddy Mascheck and Kurt Sunderman.

Jonathan Contreras, son of Greg and Lydia Contreras, was named Mascot for 1998, while Shaina Bowen, daughter of Wayne and Jonna Bowen, was selected as the 1998 Miss Sparkle.

Sylvia Rucka, president of the VFD Ladies Auxiliary, presented a Pro Pack multi purpose phone system and a 35mm camera as the Auxiliary's Christmas gift to the fire department.

Carolyn Baird presented a plaque of appreciation to the Department for its cooperation with and service to the Ambulance Corps Unit 803.

The Eagle Lake volunteers answered 63 fire calls in 1997; 23 in town and 40 out of town; requiring 1012 man hours.

Gary Glaisher answered the most fire calls with 55; Peter Canaris had 53; Pete Canaris, 49; and tied for fourth place were Greg Contreras and

Buddy Mascheck with 46.

David Baird was presented a life membership plaque for his 20 years of service to the department.

It was noted that, over the past 10 years, the Eagle Lake Department has produced five professional firefighters now employed in other areas of the state: Temple Thomas, Chad Miller, Mitchell Miller, Shane Glaisher and Todd Mascheck.

State Representative Robby Cook expressed appreciation to the group and encouraged them to keep up their lobbying efforts statewide. "Your fire association has a strong voice in Austin," stated Cook.

Eagle Lake Mayor Michael Cooper also expressed the appreciation of the Council and City government for the Department's service and dedica-

tion.

"We in Eagle Lake are extremely privileged to have so many volunteers in many areas, but you put yourself in harm's way and still handle your job with tact, efficiency and courage. We thank you. You're one of the reasons Eagle Lake is a good place to live," Cooper told those attending.

Retired firemen Gene Jones, Mickey Kochwelp, Bobby Joe Marsalia, Thurston Webb, Melvin Stanick, Henry Kretschmar, Wilford Wick, Sonny Spanihel, Ronnie Miller, Louis Muzny and Oscar Miller were recognized.

Fire Chief Gary Glaisher, 1st Assistant Chief Buddy Mascheck and 2nd Assistant Chuck Stephens handled the presentations.



Eagle Lake Volunteer Fire Department Chief Gary Glaisher, right, presented Pete Canaris the plaque distinguishing him as the 1997 Fireman of the Year at Saturday night's gathering. Headlight Photo by Lynda Appelt

NEWSBRIEFS

Singles dance is this Friday

The Ft. Bend Singles will sponsor a public dance on Friday, Dec. 19, at 8 p.m. at the Needville KC Hall. Music will be provided by Bobby Jones. Door prizes will be given and admission is \$5 per person. Call 409-793-6557 or 793-4573 for more information.

Want to go to Washington, D.C.?

Attention students in the 6th, 7th and 8th grades from Eagle Lake, Garwood, Sheridan and Nada area schools. The Washington, D.C., trip coordinated by Ray Sykowski is still scheduled for the first week of June 1998. Several seats are still available for the trip. Students and parents of students who have not registered and are still interested, need to call 234-3447 for more details.

Elite Club Christmas party is Saturday

The Elite Club will hold their annual Christmas Party Saturday, Dec. 20, at the Eagle Lake Community Center from 8 p.m. until ?? You're invited to come celebrate.

E.H. Alumni meeting is tonight

The E.H. Henry Alumni will hold their monthly meeting on Thursday, Dec. 18, at 7:30 p.m. at the E.H. Henry site.

City offices closed for Christmas

The City Offices in Eagle Lake will close at 12 noon Wednesday, Dec. 24, and be closed all day Thursday, Dec. 25. Thursday's garbage will be picked up Friday, Dec. 26. Also, The Headlight office will be closed Thursday and Friday.

Notice given to sewer customers

In order to calculate residential sewer rates for the upcoming year, the City of Eagle Lake will be considering water consumptions of each customer from approximately Dec. 15 through March 15. Customers are encouraged to fix any water leaks as soon as possible, in an effort to keep water consumptions at a minimum during this time. Each residential sewer rate is based on the actual water consumed at that particular location. If you have any questions, please call City Hall at 234-2640.

Museum now open every day for visitors

The Prairie Edge Museum is now open for visitors every day, Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday, 2 to 5.

RMC Pink Ladies need volunteers

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

SBE seeking high school seniors to compete

San Bernard Electric Cooperative (SBE) is sponsoring a Safety Poster Scholarship Contest. The first place winner will receive a \$500 scholarship, second place, \$200 scholarship; and third place, \$100 scholarship. To be eligible, you must be a high school senior for the 1997-98 school year. The deadline for the contest is Jan. 1998. All interested seniors may acquire detailed information and an entry form from your high school counselor or principal or at any SBE office. To acquire by phone, please call the Bellville office, 1-800-364-3171 or 409-865-3171.

East Bernard EMS schedule blood drive

The East Bernard EMS will hold a blood drive Sunday, Dec. 21, at the high school cafeteria on Fitzgerald from 7:30 to 1 p.m. Contact Fate Breedlove at 409-335-6174, Gloria Buxkemper, 335-7318 (platelets and plasma); or Betty Webb at The Blood Center, 1-888-GV-BLOOD, ext 234. Whole blood, plasma and platelets will be collected. All donors will receive a "Holiday Hero" t-shirt. The Blood Center will offer their 1998 calendar, "All Walks of Life", as an appreciation gift to all donors in Dec. The holiday season is a very critical time for those in need of blood. Usage is typically up, while donations, nationwide, go down. Please give the gift of life.

Concert at First Baptist Church is Dec. 21

The children and grandchildren of Maxine and Bob Griffith, including Bob and Denise Griffith, will lead a concert of special music Sunday, Dec. 21, at 7 p.m. at First Baptist Church in Eagle Lake. The public is invited to attend.

Legion still collecting toys, cash

Members of the American Legion Post #108 are still collecting new toys and cash with which to buy new toys for the distribution to children of needy families Tuesday, Dec. 23. The toys will be distributed to parents or guardians of youngsters from infant through nine years of age from 9 a.m. to 12 noon at The Depot on E. Main Street Dec. 23 only. More toys are needed for the 200 plus children. If you can help, leave toys at Struss Auto Supply, B&B Food or Laker Printing before Dec. 23. If you want to have toys picked up, call Fred Frnka, 234-2065; or W.L. Bauer, 234-2478.

Would you attend non-denominational services?

Rev. J.V. Hamman B. Min. of Columbus is interested in holding non-denominational Full Gospel Church services in Eagle Lake. But, there has to be enough interest throughout the community for him to hold these services. If you are interested, call him a 409-732-9170.

City's sales tax rebates year-to-date highest in 10 years

State Comptroller John Sharp delivered the final sales tax rebates for 1997 last week, a total of \$164.7 million in payments to 1,087 Texas cities and 118 counties.

"Total city and county sales tax rebates for calendar year 1997 topped \$2.1 billion and were 6.8% higher than total rebates for 1996, as the growth outlook for the Texas econ-

omy continues to outshine that for the nation as a whole," Sharp said.

Sharp delivered Dec. sales tax rebates to Texas cities totalling \$150.6 million, 3.9% higher than the monthly payments of \$144.9 million one year ago. Rebates of \$14 million to Texas counties were 1% higher than allocations of \$13.9 million in Dec. 1996.

The Dec. payments include local sales taxes collected by monthly filings on Oct. sales and reported to the Comptroller in Nov.

The City of Houston received a Dec. sales tax rebate of \$19.5 million, 2.8% more than the \$19 million delivered to Houston last Dec. Total payments for 1997 were 6.2% more than total payments last year.

The City of Dallas received a sales tax rebate of \$13.2 million in Dec., 4.3% higher than last year's \$12.7 million payment for the same month. Dallas received 3.8% increase in total sales tax payments in 1997 over 1996.

The San Antonio allocation for Dec. totaled \$8.3 million, virtually unchanged from the payment for Dec.

1996. This year, San Antonio received 5.3% more in local sales tax payments than the total for last year.

Austin's sales tax allocation for Dec. was \$6.7 million, 11.7% higher than the Dec. 1996 payment. In 1997, Austin's total sales tax payments were 5.4% more than those for 1996.

Ft. Worth's \$4.12 million sales tax allocation was 1.6% less than the rebate for Dec. of last year; however, total rebates to Ft. Worth in 1997 were 5.5% above those for 1996.

The City of Arlington's \$3.1 million allocation was down 14.6% from the \$3.6 million in sales tax rebates for the same month last year. However, their total rebates for 1997 were 4.3% above those for 1996.

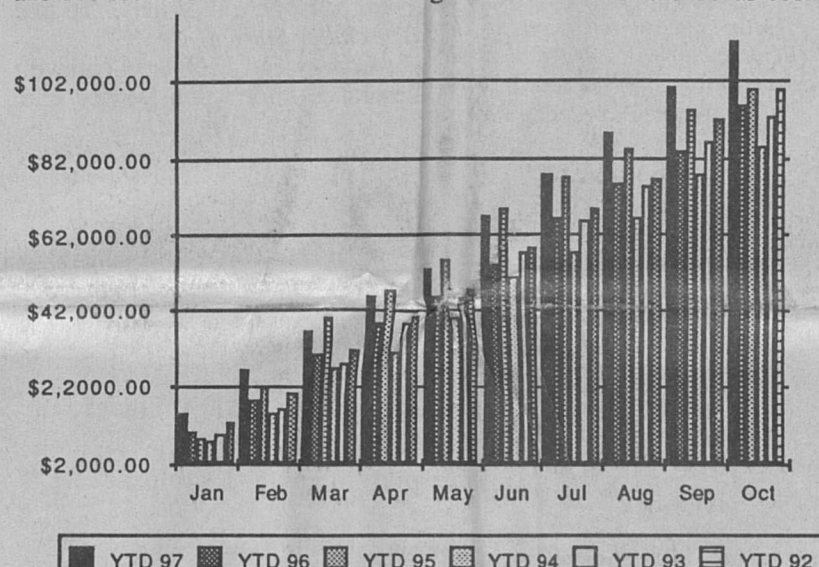
El Paso's sales tax rebate of \$3 million was 2.9% above the \$2.9 million payment delivered in Dec. 1996. El Paso's total sales tax payments for 1997 reflect an increase of just under 1% from those for 1996.

Dec. sales tax rebates to several other Texas cities were:

Plano, with a rebate of \$2.4 million, up 2.3% year-to-date;
Irving, \$2.3 million, up 8.1%;
Corpus Christi, \$2 million, 1.1% increase year-to-date;
Lubbock, \$1.8 million, increase of 4%; and,
Beaumont, \$1.6 million, up 3.5% year-to-date.

Twenty-nine special purpose districts around the state received payments totaling \$4.4 million. Included in the 29 special districts is Rice Hospital District which received its first rebate. The rebate was for \$7,863.43

The Comptroller's next sales tax allocation will be Friday, Jan. 9. (See Sales tax, Page 8)



Year-to-date totals for the City of Eagle Lake's sales tax rebates are charted against the month the tax was collected by local businesses, not received from the Comptroller.

City Council backs Attwater Fest

By Lynda Appelt, Contributing Writer

The Eagle Lake City Council pledged its support for the Attwater's Prairie Chicken Festival at its Dec. 9 meeting by approving the use of City facilities and closing of Commerce and No Name Streets from 3 p.m. Friday, March 27, to 6 p.m. Saturday, March 28.

In addition, Council instructed City Manager Ron Holland to formulate a letter to the Texas Department of Transportation supporting the request of the Festival Committee to close Main Street from the area of Simple Simon's Pizza to the intersection of Main and McCarty, with McCarty remaining open throughout the festival.

Council discussed and set a policy, at the request of Eagle Lake Chief of Police Keith Webb, to follow in providing security for the festival. Off-duty officers, who are called upon to work the festival, will be paid overtime.

"We must guarantee the safety of those in attendance," said Webb.

According to Webb, the number of officers required will hinge on the Festival Committee's decision on the sale of alcoholic beverage.

Webb told Council that if more officers are needed, in addition to Eagle Lake's seven officers and its reserve force, the Colorado County Sheriff's Department will be called upon.

Council approved the ordinance adopted at the Nov. 25 meeting establishing a new economic development rider, allowing Center Power and Light to offer new business customers a lower rate for electrical service.

The former rider expired in Dec. 1996.

Council adopted a resolution authorizing exemption from inscription requirements for vehicles owned by the City and operated by the ELPD.

Council had previously adopted a resolution to allow Webb to drive an unmarked vehicle. However, to com-

ply with the law, the City must remove the exempt license plates and replace them with regular plates. A vehicle that does not carry the name of the municipality visibly can not carry an exempt status.

Council authorized Holland to sign documents for the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department grant for the construction of Eagle Lake's park.

The grant, approved Aug. 28,

states "that the City will acquire 83.8 acres and further expand/develop 7.9-acre municipal park to include a three-acre open space dedication .6-mile trail, 21 picnic tables, nature study, platform, pavilion, playground, tennis court, fishing area, volleyball court, soccer field, renovation of a swimming pool and signs.

Council heard the eight-month (See Council, Page 8)

EAGLE LAKE POLICE REPORT

The Eagle Lake Police Department reported the following calls and cases for the week ending Dec. 15.

On Dec. 9, at 11:27 p.m., Officer Tim Crume was dispatched to the 300 block of W. Main in reference to a suspicious person. None was located.

At 3:35 p.m., Sgt. Jack Knox was dispatched to the corner of Boothe and Main Street for a two-vehicle accident. Apparently, a 1994 Chevy pickup, driven by Louis Edward Grigar of Eagle Lake, stopped to make a left turn across the west-bound lanes of traffic and failed to yield right-of-way to David Lugo Mancias of Eagle Lake, driving a 1983 Chevy pickup, causing Mancias to collide with Grigar's vehicle. There were no injuries sustained in the accident.

On Dec. 11 at 12:05 a.m., Officer Crume was dispatched to E. State Street in reference to a fight. As a result of the call, Edward Demont Holloway was arrested for assault family violence, processed at the police department and transported to the county jail for confinement.

At 4:32 p.m., Officer Crume was dispatched to 807 E. Main Street in reference to a shoplifter. A description of the subject was obtained and the area searched. The suspect, Jose Socorro Rodriguez, was located with the merchandise, arrested for theft, processed at the police department and transported to the county jail.

Dec. 12, Officer Crume conducted

a traffic stop in the parking lot of 600 E. Main which resulted in the driver, Rodney Allen Gustus of Altair, being arrested for driving while intoxicated, processed at the police department and transported to the county jail.

On Dec. 13 at 12:16 a.m., Officer Carl Risk received a call of an assault on Fourth Street. Risk located the complainant and suspect who stated they had gotten into an argument. The suspect was issued a criminal trespass warning for the complainant's residence.

At 12:26 a.m., Officer Bill Lattimore and Reserve Officer Tobin Tho-

mas were flagged down by a complainant who reported she had been "jumped on" in some type of disturbance. The complainant was advised to come to the police department and give a statement and file a report.

At 4:02 a.m., Officer Risk received a 9-1-1 call to Davitt Street and discovered the complainant wanted him to stand by while she packed her belongings and left the residence. No other action was taken.

At 8:34 a.m., Officer Brian Ochoa was advised the 25th Judicial Task Force needed assistance in stopping a (See Police, Page 8)

New voter cards mailed

On Dec. 3, 1997, new Voter Registration Certificates were sent out from the office of the Voter Registrar. These new cards are blue in color and are effective from Jan. 1, 1998, until Dec. 31, 1999.

Voter Registration Certificates are mailed with a non-forwardable postmark, "return service requested", which means that if an individual's address has changed, the post office may not forward the certificate. It must be returned to the Registrar's office. Once a certificate has been returned, the voter is placed on a suspended list until such time as their address is corrected.

The Registrar's office is currently

contacting those individuals whose certificates have been returned.

If you have not received a blue voter certificate in the mail, look for a letter from the Registrar's office with a Voter Registration Address Correction card. These cards are postage paid and should be completed and returned. Keep in mind that for voter registration purposes a "residence address" is a county road, state highway or specific street name. A "mailing address" is where your mail is delivered.

The Registrar appreciates your assistance in updating the registration lists for the March 1998 primary. (See Voters, Page 8)