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Produced By:
Carol Cardenas • Leslie Risk
Jeannine Fearing
Shirley Luedecke • Betty Drymalla

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Must be something in the water...

By Jeannine Fearing, Publisher

The only explanation I can come up with for all the "winners" in our area is that old saying, "It's something in the water that causes it."

Not only are there two teams in the Greater Gulf Coast Region who have taken their respective state championships, but there are two more who will play for the championship of their divisions and classifications this weekend.

The two championship teams come from Katy and Texas City (ugh!) I guess I should be nice since TC is Dr. Curtis Miles' alma mater... Go? Stingarees!

Contributing to the awesome defense displayed by the Katy Tigers was #30, Michael Konesheck, formerly of Eagle Lake. We can claim him, because he spent the first years of his life here with his family.

The son of Karen (Euers) and Russell Konesheck, he is the grandson of Les and Mary Euers of Eagle Lake and has aunts, uncles and cousins still living here (see related article for a list of relatives).

Michael not only came up with

timely interceptions in the previous game, but was mentioned in an article about Katy's defense in *The Houston Chronicle's* Sunday, Dec. 14, edition.

Uncle "Rip" Ripper was the first to bring my attention to the fact that Michael was a member of the championship team. I then saw the Sunday article; Aunt Kathleen Konesheck brought in a writeup about Michael and the team; then Aunt Carol Ripper came by to make sure we had all heard about the great job Michael was doing.

Carol told us her son, Scott, had called Saturday when he saw the Katy game on television. That call was followed by one from her brother, David Konesheck, who lives in Arkansas... he was watching the game, too!

Even though Carol and "Rip" didn't attend the game at the Dome (didn't want to jinx the team by going to the game when they hadn't been to any others), they were glued to the television screen keeping tabs on their nephew.

The other teams going for the top this weekend are La Marque and Sealy. The La Marque Cougars have

local connections. Even though the mascot was a Tiger when I attended, Leslie Fanning McDowell, teacher at Eagle Lake Middle School, is a LMHS grad from the Cougar days... somewhere around 20 years following my stint there.

We're pulling for our team to win their third state title in a row... go, Cougars!

Then, bright and early Tuesday morning, Robbi Cerny called to let us know that Clay had been named Calf Roping Rookie of the Year at the National Rodeo Finals in Las Vegas!

Clay is the son of Robbi and Bonnie Cerny of Garwood.

Even though he couldn't compete due to an earlier knee injury, Clay was in Vegas to accept the award and a beautiful gold and silver belt buckle.

His mom also told us that he now is being sponsored by Wrangler and will be doing tours and public relations work for the company.

Even though he'd rather just ride his horse and rope, he knows the Wrangler sponsorship is important and will make the circuit with a smile. Way to go, Clay!

Now, you explain why all these winners come from the same general vicinity... it has to be the water! Congratulations to all these young people.

They can tell you what comes from working hard and believing in your abilities.

Bible Verse of the Week

"Many are the afflictions of the righteous; but the Lord delivereth him out of them all." - Psalms 34:19
Submitted by Neddy Phillips

To The Editor & You

Chamber sends 'thanks'

The Eagle Lake Chamber of Commerce would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to all the local businesses in Eagle Lake who helped by making donations for the 1997 Santa Bags.

Contributors were: Austin's Gro-

cery, B&B Food, Canaris Nursery, The Cupboard, Dairy Delite, Dan's Minute Stop, Dollar General, Eagle Lake Drugstore, Furniture Shoppe, J&K's Corner, LW's, Laker Printing and Wallis State Bank.

Acting as Santa's Helpers were

Melvin and Debbie Schmitt, Donna Coldeway, Jackie Schmitt, Tim Teague, Dean Hengst, Beverly Mason, Brent Mathis and Stacie Soto.

**Thanks again,
Eagle Lake
Chamber of Commerce**

'Thanks' to all who helped

A drawing was held recently to bring Willie Lee Johnson back to Eagle Lake.

The family would like to thank the community for their support in this

effort. The winners of the prize of a half a calf were Isaac Howard and Sonny Cloud.

A special thank you goes to Bea

Kuykendall for the use of the Long Branch.

**Thanks,
From the Family
by Clem Johnson**

Senator wants information on 'redlining' by insurance companies



By Lyndell Williams
and Ed Sterling
Texas Press Association

however, that sharing the information "would be the same as the Dallas Cowboys sharing their game plan with the Carolina Panthers."

In Aug., insurance companies sued the Texas Department of Insurance to prevent the release of information showing where companies are selling their policies. A court order to keep the information confidential was issued and remains in effect, the *Morning News* reported.

The confidential data shows sales practices by individual companies in ZIP codes across the state.

Panel Probes Bingo Conflict

A special panel of legislators, prosecutors, gambling opponents, Texas Department of Public Safety personnel and state lottery officials are investigating whether Las Vegas-style gambling machines are cutting into charitable bingo proceeds. The panel will report to Gov. George W. Bush by May 1.

At a public hearing last week, Mike Pitcock, chief of enforcement for the Texas Lottery Commission, said bingo hall operators are flouting state law by installing Las Vegas "eight liner" gambling machines in special rooms inside or near the halls to attract bingo players.

As a result, bingo proceeds have fallen 20 to 30%, prompting some charities - which rent the halls but get none of the money from the gambling machines - to consider giving up charitable bingo. If charitable groups complain, Pitcock said, they are told to take their games elsewhere.

Bullock Names Panel

Lt. Gov. Bob Bullock last week said the U.S. Supreme Court's decision not to reconsider a California ban on affirmative action programs means Texas and other states must solve the issue on their own.

"We need to find a solution that fits Texas and its philosophy of fair

play and equal opportunity over strict preference guidelines," Bullock said.

To move toward that goal, Bullock asked outgoing Houston Mayor Bob Lanier and state Sens. Gonzalo Barrientos, D-Austin; Teel Bivins, R-Amarillo; Robert Duncan, R-Lubbock; Rodney Ellis, D-Houston; Frank Madla, D-San Antonio; and Bill Ratliff, R-Mount Pleasant to review affirmative action policies and programs.

Meanwhile, Lanier, who had been mentioned as a possible candidate for Texas attorney general, said he will not run for the office.

Lanier's third and final term as mayor of Houston expires in January.

Grand Jury Indicts Estes

Bill Sol Estes of Brady and Mei Kwong of Houston have been indicted by a Brown County grand jury in Brownwood on felony tax evasion charges.

They are accused of using a not-for-profit alcoholism treatment center in Abilene as a corporate shell to evade state taxes on a motel and check-cashing business they own.

In April, after an investigation by the Texas Rangers and the Texas Comptroller's office, the financial, computer and business records of the companies were seized.

A one-time confidant of President Lyndon Johnson, Estes was sentenced to 15 years in prison in 1965 for swindling millions of dollars in agricultural loans involving non-existent fertilizer tanks.

Other Capital Highlights

State Rep. Hugo Berlanga, D-Corpus Christi, announced he will not seek re-election in 1998. Berlanga, 49, a businessman and real estate broker, did not specify why he will leave the office he's held for 21 years. In a later statement, Berlanga said he wants to return to private life because he's accomplished much of what he wanted.

The Independent Bankers Association of Texas is supporting the state banking commissioner's attempt to block NationsBank from introducing interstate branch banking in Texas. NationsBank has asked federal regulators for permission to branch into Texas directly from its N. Carolina (See Highlights, Page 8)



I said I'd sure try to make it

home. But with 1200 miles of

turnpike to cover, I couldn't

promise. Well, once I was

sure, I just had to pull over

and give her a call.

"So, anybody open presents

yet?" I asked, playing it real

straight. "No," she said,

"but pretty soon, I guess."

"Suppose you couldn't stall

things for an hour," I said,

"so I could get in on the fun?"

She got so excited, she

dropped the phone.

Yeah, I love Christmas...

Our holiday wish:

May the season bring you

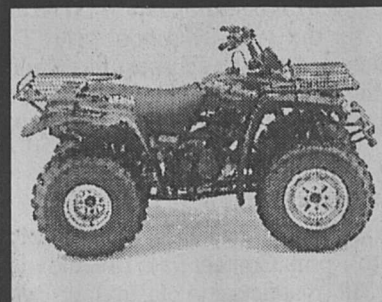
joy, peace—and most of all—

may it bring you home.

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