

Christmas holiday Operation Motorcade 1997

The Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) estimates that as many as 42 people could be fatally injured in motor vehicle traffic accidents this Christmas season.

"Operation Motorcade" will be effective from 6 p.m. Christmas Eve, Dec. 24, to midnight Dec. 28 (a total of 102 hours).

It is estimated that as many as 46 people could lose

their lives over the New Year's holiday; 6 p.m. Dec. 31 to midnight Jan. 4 (also 102 hours).

In 1996, the final count for the 32-hour Christmas holiday was 18 deaths. Of the 14 accidents, 74.1% involved alcohol or excess speed. Of the 18 fatalities, 17 were occupants of vehicles and one was a pedestrian. Of the vehicle occupants, 64.7% were reported not to be (See Motorcade, Page 2)

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Commissioners looking at jail's medical costs

Colorado County Commissioners asked for a workshop with Jail Administrator Debs Martin after reviewing accounts payable for Dec. during Monday morning's meeting.

The Court expressed its concern over the continued high medical expenses for inmates and the use of a local doctor in providing treatment.

It was the Court's understanding that an agreement had been reached with a local doctor.

But, as Precinct 3 Commissioner Tommy Hahn pointed out, there has been "no contract" brought before this Court.

According to County Auditor Raymie Kana, medical expenses are running \$3,000-\$4,000 per month.

\$38,000 (\$8,000 over-budget) had already been spent as of the end of Nov.

The 1997 budget allocated a total of \$30,000 for medical expenses and the extra expenses forced Commissioners to amend the budget to cover the overrun.

It is expected that the Court will meet with Martin during its next regular scheduled meeting to be held Jan. 12, 1998.

In other business, the Court: Reappointed Precinct 4 Commissioner Leon "Sonny" Spanihel as delegate and Richard Seifert, Precinct 1 Commissioner, as alternate to the Houston-Galveston Area Council's general assembly;

Tabled the approval of a contract for engineering services for the Sheridan water park and adoption of a resolution of support with Texas Capital

Fund for Sheridan until the proper paperwork is obtained;

Set the residential tap fee at \$400 per tap and made it mandatory that a licensed plumber is used to connect the water line from the property line to the main line in regard to the Alleyton Wastewater Plant;

Authorized payments in the amount of \$322,798.28 to Drymalla Construction Co. Inc. of Columbus and \$5,062.42 to Harry Golemon Architects Inc. of Houston for work completed at the juvenile boot camp facility in Eagle Lake, and announced that an April opening is still being planned;

Approved the purchase of two computers and cabling to run from the first to the third floor of the Courthouse to connect the offices of the county auditor and county treasurer at

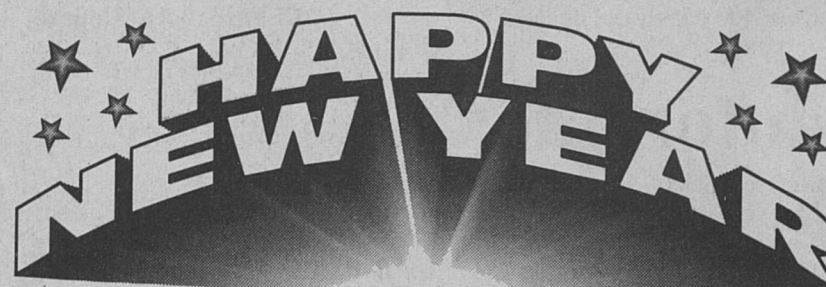
a cost of approximately \$9,000;

Approved an election box at the old Alleyton Post Office, with Shirley Kearbey as presiding judge and Nettie Phillips as alternate, for Precinct 16 after the retirement of election judges Mr. and Mrs. Gene Evans left that community without a site for an election box;

Acknowledged the receipt of \$471.75 in funds from Adobe Energy Inc. to repair road damage in Precinct 1;

Recognized the employment of Don Easton as the County's new septic system/floodplain coordinator on part-time basis; and

Tabled a decision on the awarding of bids for a motor grader for Precinct 3 and carpet replacement for the Courthouse.



*Before the old year slips away
We'd like to send our thanks your way,
And express to you with all sincerity...
Our wishes for your good health and prosperity.
It's been a privilege serving you
And one thing that we know is true...
Is that it really would be great
To see you all in '98!*

NEWSBRIEFS

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.

Offices, businesses closed for Christmas

The City of Eagle Lake Offices will close at noon on Wednesday, Dec. 24, and remain closed all day Thursday, Dec. 25. Thursday's garbage route will be picked up Friday, Dec. 26.

The Colorado County Courthouse and the Headlight office will be closed both Dec. 25 and 26.

The City Offices will also be closed at 12 noon on Wednesday, Dec. 31, and be closed all day, Thursday, Jan. 1. Garbage pickup for Thursday will be 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 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.

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, call the Bellville office, 1-800-364-3171 or 409-865-3171.

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.

Colorado SWCD, NRCS log another productive year

Reported By Colorado SWCD Personnel

As the 1997 year comes to a close, the Colorado Soil and Water Conservation District #333 Directors, Secretary and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) personnel hope each and every one of you had a Merry Christmas and send wishes for a Happy New Year.

We would like share with you a report of activities.

Began 50 Years Ago

The Colorado SWCD was organized by a vote of the landowners in 1947.

On Jan. 21, 1948, the State appointed C.H. Matthews of Eagle Lake (Area IV) and Arthur Koehn of Weimar (Area II) as original supervisors of the Colorado SWCD.

To complete the board, C.O. Heinsohn of Fayetteville (Area I), W.A. Hefner of Garwood (Area III) and E.F. Hennecke of Alleyton (Area V) were elected to serve on the first board in the District.

The five member board of directors supervised the operations of the District and were concerned with all aspects of the community environment in addition to the planning and application of conservation practices

on the farms, ranches and other lands in Colorado County.

Today

The District recognizes conservation needs in Colorado County and provides technical assistance to land users in the County through the personnel of the NRCS by addressing conservation problems on their land.

The joint effort resulted in the construction of 14 farm ponds; 13 acres of critical area planting; 4,412 acres of improved cropland; 3,255 acres of improved pastureland; 11,127 acres of improved rangeland; and 12,065 acres of improved wildlife land.

Project activities include Water Quality Management Plans, Prairie Wetlands Project, LCRA Riverside Erosion Project, Native Gulf Coast Prairie Restoration Project and Environmental Quality Incentive Plan (EQIP).

EQIP is a new, voluntary USDA conservation program for farmers and ranchers and provides technical, financial and educational assistance in priority areas.

A joint effort of the local Soil and Water District, NRCS and the Farm Service Agency, EQIP assisted local landowners with 40 applications, of which 28 were processed.

Of the 28 applications processed, 14 contracts were written. The 14 contracts resulted in \$61,921 worth of needed conservation work to Colorado County.

In 1997, 14 landowners and operators have become new conservation cooperators, bringing the total cooperators in the District to 896, reflecting a total of 1383 conservation plans prepared this year.

In addition, 41 conservation plans have been revised.

One hundred and fifty-five cooperators apply one or more conservation practices on their land. The conservation practices from the District cooperator's plans have been applied on more than 202,760 acres of agricultural land in Colorado County.

On a day to day basis, assistance was provided to 511 clients in the office and in the field.

District/NRCS Personnel

On Oct. 10 of this year, the District and the Texas Agricultural Extension Service sponsored the SWCD Director's Election and Colorado County Hay Show, held at St. Roch's Parish Hall in Mentz.

James Helfrich, representing Zone V (Columbus, Bernardo, Mentz, Alleyton area) was re-elected director

for a four-year term.

During the regular Oct. meeting of the board, James Helfrich, Zone V was re-elected chairman of the board.

Henry Sunderman, Zone IV (Eagle Lake), was re-elected vice-chairman and Theodore Schultz, Zone I (Frelsburg area), was re-elected secretary/treasurer.

Doris Albright, Zone II (New Bielau area); and Lawrence Shimek, Zone III (Garwood-Nada area), also serve as board members.

Beverly Tuck is employed as the District's secretary/technician.

Connie Fair, District Conservationist for NRCS, is the only personnel in the local field office.

However, part-time assistance from technical specialists from Bryan and Corpus Christi zone offices is available.

Awards Banquet

The annual conservation awards banquet was held March 20th at the Veterans Memorial Center in Weimar with 225 people attending.

Awards were presented to the district winners of the coloring, poster and essay contests.

Of the 1402 entries, 929 were coloring entries; 272, poster entries; and 201 essay contest entries, including

the poetry division.

Coloring contest winners were: Cassandra Gonzales, Columbus Elementary; Ray Guerrero Jr. and Karli Sembera, Weimar Elementary; Clint Anders, St. Michael's; Matthew Harris, Columbus Elem.; Alicia Marie Belman, Eagle Lake Primary; and Connie Denham, Weimar Jr. High.

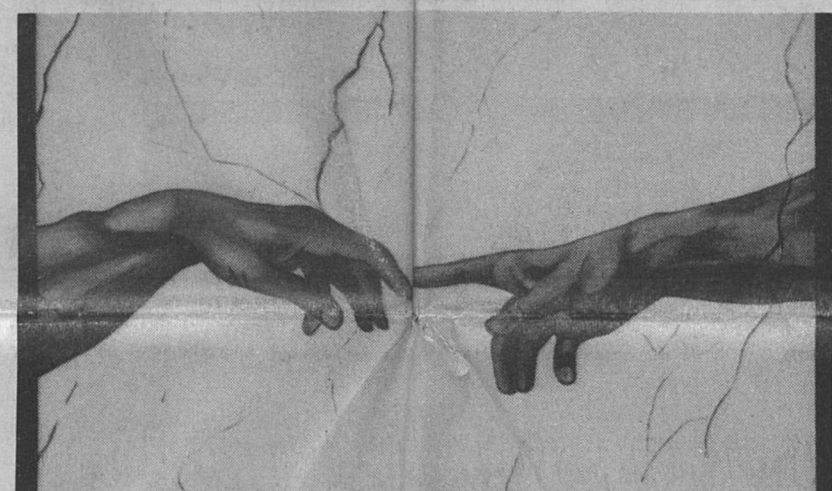
Poster winners were: Denise Arebalo, St. Anthony; Steven Moore, Sheridan School; David Peletz, Columbus Elem.; and Jenna Kubesch, St. Michael's.

Essay winners were: David Peletz, Columbus; April Seydler, Weimar Jr. High; Kody Dobecka, St. Michael's; Katie Schindler, Columbus Elementary; Jenna Hoffman and Lance Bittner, St. Mary's; Macy Ulbricht, St. Michael's; and Leo Peters, Weimar High School.

The presentation of other conservation awards included Resident Conservation Farmer/Rancher, Frank and Billy Gail Cash; Absentee Conservation Rancher, Scott and Carrie Sturges; Conservation Business, Varley Equipment; Conservation Homemakers, Barbara Helfrich and Alice Sunderman; Conservation Media, Chad Ferguson and The Banner Press; and Conservation Minister, Rev. George Clark.

Tyler's Studio adds a little 'class' to downtown

Open to the public and adding a bit Tony Tyler's Studio, located at 123 E. of "class" to downtown Eagle Lake is Main in the former Farm & Home



Supply location.

Pictured at right and below are two of Tony's latest oil paintings.

Pictured below is his latest a commissioned piece, "Genesis", which is owned by Monique Phillips of Houston.

At right is Tony's personal favorite, "Keeping Secrets".

Some limited edition prints of his work are available at his Eagle Lake Studio.

A reception, including an exhibit of his sculptures and paintings, will be held in Jan., but the studio is open to the public at the present time.

Tony's latest sculpture is an alabaster abstract design, "Tumesced", and is on exhibit at the Live Oak Art

Center in Columbus.

For more information, call 234-5706 or 713-327-4567.



Photos Courtesy of Tyler Studio

EAGLE LAKE POLICE REPORT

The Eagle Lake Police Department reported the following calls and cases for the week ending Dec. 22.

On Dec. 17 at 12:09 a.m., Officer Tim Crume observed some criminal mischief at the Eagle Lake Middle School. Evidence was gathered and a report was filed.

At 10:36 a.m., Officer Brian Ochoa conducted a traffic stop on S. McCarty which resulted in the arrest of James Hampton for an outstanding warrant.

Hampton was processed and transported to the county jail for confinement.

On Dec. 18 at 3:26 p.m., Officer Crume was dispatched to Seaholm Street in reference to loud music, but was unable to locate any.

On Dec. 19 at 12:19 a.m., Officer

Bill Lattimore was dispatched to a suspicious person at a residence on E. State Street. The subject was located and advised not to be hanging around the area late at night.

At 2:29 p.m., Lt. Clem Johnson was dispatched to a two-vehicle accident at the intersection of Boothe and Lake Avenue involving a 1993 Geo four door driven by Rolanda Nichelle Foster Bryant and a 1986 Plymouth station wagon driven by Chano Garza, both of Eagle Lake.

Apparently, Bryant failed to yield the right-of-way to Garza, causing Garza's vehicle to collide with the right side of Bryant's vehicle.

At 11:54 p.m., Officer Ochoa was dispatched to B Street in reference to a theft. Information was gathered and a report was filed.

On Dec. 20 at 12:06 a.m., Officer Ochoa was dispatched to E. Main where a theft report was taken.

At 2:39, Lt. Johnson was dispatched to S. McCarty Street in reference to an alarm activated. The building was checked and all was secure.

At 5:58 p.m., Sgt. Jack Knox met with a subject on Boothe Drive in reference to a civil matter.

At 8:31 p.m., Officer Lattimore, Sgt. Knox and Reserve Officer Tobin Thomas met with a subject in regard to a civil matter. No action was taken.

At 11:52 p.m., Officer Lattimore met with a bar owner on A Street in reference to a subject refusing to leave the premises, but the subject was gone upon Lattimore's arrival.

At 12:07 a.m. on Dec. 20, Officer Lattimore was called back to the same

location in reference to the same subject back at the bar and refusing to leave. But, once again, before the officer arrived, the subject left the area.

On Dec. 21 at 1:10 a.m., Officer Crume, along with other officers, was called back to the same bar. At this time, the subject was located and issued a citation for criminal trespass.

At 2:15 a.m., Officer Crume was contacted at the police department in reference to the unauthorized use of a vehicle. The vehicle was entered into TCIC (Texas Criminal Information Center) and later recovered in Pasadena.

At 1:23 p.m., Officers Ochoa and Brian Baklik responded to an activated alarm on Campa Rosa Road. The officers found the building to be (See Police, Page 10)

Teacher's Workshop

The Directors of the CSWCD sponsored the 6th Annual Natural Resources Seminar for teachers June 22nd and 23rd.

Cathedral Oaks Retreat, located seven miles southwest of Weimar in the New Bielau community, was the setting for the two-day workshop.

Conservation topics included Natural Resources and Historic Dilemmas, Prescribed Burns and Equipment, Soil Composition, Edible Soil Profile, Life of the Bison, Endangered Species, Eco-Tourism and Bird Watching.

Fellow teachers, Gaynelle Stein and Patsy Kopecky from Columbus ISD, presented a hands-on program about "Star Lab".

Teachers visited a rice field farmed by Bill Pavlicek where participants received information on cultural practices required in rice production and the management of irrigation water.

Soil Stewardship Week

Soil Stewardship Week was observed (See Review, Page 10)