

Drug use increasing significantly

The use of illegal drugs by Texas students has increased significantly.

The Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse says that parents who want to discourage drug use should:

- Encourage your child to participate in extracurricular activities.

- Show up at your child's school events and demonstrate your support.

- Encourage your child to have healthy relationships with friends.

- Talk to your child. Make sure you say you disapprove of drug use.

(See Drugs, Page 8)

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APC numbers hold steady...

More Prairie Chickens to be released

Thirty-nine endangered Attwater's Prairie Chickens (APC) will be released at the APC National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) in Colorado County, and the Nature Conservancy of Texas' Galveston Bay Prairie Preserve in Galveston County during the latter part of Aug. and early Sept.

These captive-reared birds are part of an ongoing effort to bring this imperiled species back from the brink of extinction. An estimated 56 birds remain in the wild, down slightly from about 58 birds in 1997.

This event marks the fourth time in as many years that captive-reared APC have been released into the wild. Combined overall survival of previously re-

leased Attwater's as they entered the breeding season (Jan.-April) stands at about 36%.

Annual mortality of wild birds is about 50%. One of the important keys to this program is the release of large numbers of captive-reared birds each year to increase the wild populations.

Although 90 chicks were produced this year in captivity, biologists and breeding facility caretakers decided to hold more than half of the chicks back to supplement an aging captive breeding flock, buffer the effects of disease in captivity and add one more breeding facility within the next two years.

(See APC, Page 6)

Council stays with 63.5¢ tax rate

By Lynda Appelt, Contributing Writer

The Eagle Lake City Council adopted the tax rate that it set in March to fund the 1998-99 budget at its Aug. 11 meeting.

Council must set a budget and adopt a tax rate in March each year since the City's fiscal year begins April 1.

Council, however, must then await the year's property tax information from the Colorado County Central Appraisal District (CAD) which is delivered in late summer to ascertain if the tax rate will remain as adopted or if an amended one is necessary.

According to the information received from the CAD, the City's 1998 certified tax base is \$59,902,579, up \$1,468,457 from the 1997 value.

The effective tax rate to generate the same revenue as last year is 65.584¢ per \$100 of valuation and the rollback rate is 69.980¢ per \$100.

The City's 1998-99 budget, adopted in March, provided for a tax rate of 63.5¢ per \$100 valuation based on a March estimated property tax base of \$59 million.

Council voted to stay with the

63.5¢ tax rate. This rate will generate \$5,731.38 more than was estimated in the \$3,996,716.18 1998-99 budget.

It was noted that the 63.5¢ rate is a decrease for taxpayers from the 1997 rate of 65.1114¢ per \$100 valuation.

Council also adopted a resolution authorizing the transfer of the City's cable television franchise from Telecommunications Inc. (TCI) to Texas Cable Partners, L.P.

TCI and Time Warner became partners in June by creating Texas Cable Partners which is owned equally by the two. The new company will be managed by Time Warner.

In addition to the partnership, TCI entered into a merger agreement with AT&T in June, resulting in a change of control for TCI as the parent entity of TCI affiliates, but it does not affect the partnership transaction or the City's franchise agreement.

The adopted resolution transfers Eagle Lake's existing franchise agreement, scheduled to expire July 31, 2002, to the new company without any extension or change in services as outlined in the agreement.

A request by the Colorado County Fair Association Board of Directors, represented by member Richard Seifert, to provide pay for two of the City's off-duty police officers to assist with security each night of the 1998 Fair at an approximate cost of \$600 was approved.

Eagle Lake's officers will be joining law enforcement personnel from the sheriff's department, and cities of Columbus and Weimar, as well as National Guard and private security, to ensure maximum security at the Fair being held Sept. 10-13.

According to Eagle Lake Police Chief Keith Webb, the assistance is in the "spirit of the mutual aid agreement between the County's law enforcement agencies."

Columbus will provide \$1,200 in security assistance with an additional \$1,000 from the County.

According to Seifert, Fair security will amount to approximately \$4,000.

Eagle Lake's patrolmen will assist Columbus Police Chief Robert E. Connor Jr., who is overseeing Fair security.

In other business, Council:

- Discussed a second draft of a mobile home ordinance;

- Authorized the mayor to sign a contract with Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) for a source reduction and recycling grant in the amount of \$20,000 to purchase a chipper;

- Heard a review of the first draft of the Municipal Park Development Plan by City Manager Ron Holland;

- Heard a report by Councilman J.W. Shavers that plans for the baseball complex should be ready by Oct. and officers have been elected;

- Learned that the City will take possession of the Eagle Lake Community Center this week with new policies to be adopted for the facility's use, especially in the area of security; and
- Received word that Animal Control Officer Al North, a certified law officer who will double as a reserve officer, is on duty.

NEWSBRIEFS

Scrimmage in Boling changed

The Rice Raiders' scrimmage against Boling has been changed to Thursday, Aug. 27, and will include a third team. Joining Rice and Boling will be Palacios. Start time for the JV is 5 p.m. with the varsity playing at 6:30.

Resale extravaganza is Saturday

Rice Medical Center Employee Volunteers will hold their First Annual Resale Extravaganza Saturday, Aug. 22, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the Eagle Lake Community Center.

This event will offer a wide variety of arts and crafts booths along with a resale corner of bargains for everyone.

Anyone interested in renting booth space for this event or donating items may do so by calling Roxanne Walker or Sharon Sommer at 409-234-5571.

A \$25 fee will be collected for the booths which are still available on a first come, first serve basis.

CCFB schedules PD meeting

The Policy Development (PD) Committee is currently accepting suggestions for resolutions. The Colorado County PD meeting is scheduled for Aug. 25 at the Colorado County Farm Bureau (CCFB) office in Columbus at 7:30 p.m. You are encouraged to attend or submit your thoughts to the committee at this time. All recommendations received by this committee will be considered in drafting tentative resolutions to be voted on at the annual meeting.

E.H. Henry Alumni meeting is tonight

The E.H. Henry Alumni will hold a meeting on Thursday, Aug. 20, at 7:30 p.m. at the F.H. Henry site. All members are urged to attend.

NPSOT to meet Sept. 3

The Columbus Chapter of the Native Plant Society (NPSOT) will meet on Thursday, Sept. 3, at 6 p.m., at the Winedale Historical Center near Round Top. Bob Pickens will conduct a walk about of the remnant native prairie on the lake side of the property. Members and guests are asked to meet at the open air pavilion near the lake. For more information or directions, please contact Pickens at 409-732-5058.

Diocese new television program to air

The Diocese of Victoria would like to announce the presentation of a new television program "Living Our Faith" sponsored by the Catholic Diocese of Victoria. The show is scheduled to air on KAVU-TV Channel 25, Victoria, on Sunday, Aug. 23, from 11:30 a.m. to noon. There will be a special appearance by Bishop David Fellhauer.

Community buyers need your help

It's almost fair time again. Anyone wishing to donate to the Eagle Lake Community Buyers may call Barbara Roan at 234-7432.

Study Club Auction set for Oct. 24

This year's Study Club Auction to benefit the Eula and David Wintermann Library will be held Saturday, Oct. 24, at the Eagle Lake Community Center. This year's auctioneer will once again be Joe Herbert McCreary.

The Fire Department plans to hold its annual stew supper from 5 to 7 p.m. The Silent Auction will run from 4:30 until 6:45 p.m. with the Main Auction beginning at 7 p.m.

If you plan to donate an item for either auction, please contact Fair Wells at 234-3105 or Betty Wilcox at 234-3554 as soon as possible.

You can donate to educate

Wallis State Bank in Eagle Lake is asking for your help in their "Donate to Educate" project. Help them in supporting families who are unable to prepare their children for their return to school. Bring new supplies or donations to: Wallis State Bank, 111 N. McCarty, Eagle Lake, Texas 77434; or call 409-234-7303. All items and donations will be given to local schools.

Raider season tickets are on sale

Season tickets for Rice High School home football games went on sale at the Rice CISD Business Office Monday, Aug. 10, and will continue on sale through Friday, Aug. 21. Beginning Monday, Aug. 24, 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. 4. The cost for 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.

1998 County Fair Catalogues are available

The 1998 Colorado County Fair Catalogues with rules and regulations for the Livestock, Home Economics, Fine Arts and Special Events are now available along with entry forms for many of the events at the following locations: County Extension Office and Potter's Western Store in Columbus; First National Bank, Eagle Lake; Weimar City Hall; Heinsohn's Store, Frelsburg; Bernardo Farm & Ranch Supply; Sandy Creek Drive-In, Sheridan; Nada Grocery; Larry's Super Service, Garwood; and Schulz General Store, New Ulm.

County Go Texan competition is Aug. 29, 30

The Colorado County Go Texan committee will host its horseshoe, washer pitching and barbecue competitions Aug. 29-30 at Beason's Crossing Park in Columbus. Winners will represent Colorado County at the 1999 Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo.

(See Newsbriefs, Page 8)

A review of area school ratings

Sheridan School was the only campus in the Rice CISD receiving an exemplary rating for the 1998 year by the Texas Education Agency. The Garwood School received a recognized rating.

The ratings, ranging from exemplary to unacceptable, are based on student performance on the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) tests, dropout rate and attendance.

"This goal has been achieved through lots of hardwork by the students and faculty," said Sheridan Principal Larry Varley.

To be an exemplary school at least

90% of student must pass each subject area of the TAAS (all students and each student group: black, white, Hispanic, and economically disadvantaged); 1% or less dropout rate (all students and each student group); and at least 94% be in attendance (grades 1-12).

To gain recognized status at least 80% of students must pass each subject area of the TAAS (all students and each student group: black, white, Hispanic, and economically disadvantaged); 3.5% or less dropout rate (all students and each student group); and at least 94% be in attendance

(grades 1-12).

To be given an acceptable rating at least 40% of students must pass each subject area of the TAAS, 6% or less dropout rate and at least 94% be in attendance.

Anything less than the last rating is classified unacceptable.

Rice Consolidated: Rice High School, acceptable; Eagle Lake Middle School, acceptable; Eagle Lake Primary School, acceptable; Sheridan Elementary, exemplary; Garwood Elementary, recognized.

Columbus School District: Columbus High School, recognized; Columbus Junior High, acceptable; Columbus Elementary School, acceptable.

Weimar School District: Weimar High School, exemplary; Weimar Junior High, recognized; Weimar Elementary School, acceptable.

Sealy School District: Sealy High School, acceptable; Sealy Jr. High, acceptable; Selman Elementary School, acceptable; Selman Intermediate, acceptable.

Flaton School District: Flaton High School, recognized; Flaton Elementary, recognized.

(See Ratings, Page 6)

Community Center now owned by City

The title to the Eagle Lake Community Center was officially turned over to the City of Eagle Lake this week.

From now on, anyone wishing to rent the Center must contact City Hall at 234-2640, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Any questions concerning fees, usage, rules, etc. should also be directed to the City of Eagle Lake.

Colorado County Fair set for Sept. 10-13

The 20th annual Colorado County Fair and Rodeo will be held Sept. 10-13. All activities are being put in order and Fair Board Association members are meeting their deadlines.

Fair Queen Contestants will be out selling Season Passes at an advance sales price of \$10. This price gets you into all events for the four day fair full of fun and excitement.

The queen's pageants, Little Mr. & Miss, and Jr. Mr. & Miss will all be held Saturday, Sept. 5.

Freddie Prez Show will be back this year with a bigger stage and an all new show.

A new vehicle will stroll the grounds, and Mikey, a real live talking parrot, will be there to entertain.

Harmony and Pals will also be

back to fill your hearts with cheer. These are enjoyed by young and not so young.

The Bull Buck out will be held Thursday, Sept. 10, at 7:30 p.m. while the rodeo is scheduled for Friday and Saturday at 7:30.

On the main stage, musical sensation on Thursday will be Dale Nowak and the Young Country Band from 8 p.m. to 12 midnight.

Then Saturday night, Eagle Lake-raised Ryan Thomas heats up the stage at 7 p.m. for David Ball at 10. Thomas will return to the stage after Ball.

Sunday is Tejano Day featuring Grupo Vida and Alma Tejana from 2 to 6 p.m.

Friday morning is children's morning on the grounds. All the chil-

dren are invited to join morning activities which will include the Freddie Prez Show and Harmony and Pals for fun and games.

Friday evening from 5 to 8 p.m., Alpine America, Jason Keepers and Millard Kirby will perform in the Veterans Memorial Center. All senior adults will be admitted free for the evening with proof of their Medicare Card.

Saturday, the parade will be held in downtown Columbus starting at 11 a.m.

Saturday afternoon at 2, the Junior Sale will be held in the Livestock Arena.

All this adds up to fun for the entire family!

Livestock, home economics and collective hobbies will be on exhibit.

There are commercial exhibits, dizzying rides, food and drink and dancing under the stars.

The Colorado County Fair Association phone number 409-732-9266. Call for information.

Eagle Lake's 1998 sales tax rebates keep ahead of 1997

State Comptroller John Sharp last week delivered a total of \$255.8 million in monthly sales tax payments to 1,094 Texas cities and 118 counties, a 12.4% increase over the \$227.6 million allocated in Aug. 1997.

The City of Eagle Lake received a rebate in the amount of \$14,546.11, 6.36% above the \$13,675.39 received last Aug.

This month's sales tax rebates include local sales tax collected by monthly filers on June sales and by quarterly filers for April, May and June and reported to the Comptroller in July.

"The Texas job market and new businesses are still growing steadily and retail sales continue to soar, as consumers show confidence in a rosy outlook for the Texas economy," Sharp said. "Year-to-date, rebates to cities and counties are up 11.5% over last year."

Sharp delivered monthly sales tax rebates totaling \$235.6 million to Texas cities, 12.7% higher than Aug.

of last year's payments of \$209 million. Rebates of \$20.2 million to Texas counties were 8.6% higher than allocations of \$18.6 million in Aug. 1997. Another \$7.1 million went to 33 special purpose districts.

One of those special districts, Rice Hospital District, received a rebate in the amount of \$9,171.91, bring the year-to-date total for the District to \$58,267.32.

The City of Houston's economy continues its growth with a sales tax rebate of \$32.2 million in Aug., 12.4% above the previous year's \$28.6 million. Payments to Houston year-to-date are up by 12%.

The \$20.7 million local sales tax allocation to the City of Dallas for Aug. reflects a 13.4% increase from the \$18.2 million sales tax rebate for the same month last year. The year-to-date increase in payments to Dallas is 10.6%.

The San Antonio sales tax allocation for Aug. was \$12.3 million, up (See Tax, Page 8)

Soccer registration set for this Saturday

The Eagle Lake Soccer Club (ELSC) hosted its first registration this past Saturday at the Eagle Lake Dairy Delite.

More than 30 children signed up for soccer and several parents volunteered to become coaches and referees.

It is expected that 30-60 additional children will sign up this coming Saturday, Aug. 22, at the Dairy Delite from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Coach and referee training is being planned for the first week of Sept. Game schedules will be out that week also.

The ELSC elected officers at last Thursday's meeting at Rice Medical Center. Richard Saucedo, president; Carl Risk, vice president; Greg Fernald, treasurer and registrar; and David Keith, secretary.

"We are very excited to bring soccer to Eagle Lake and serve in these capacities," said Saucedo. Sept. 12 is opening game week and the schedule will be available prior to that date.

"We are attempting to schedule most games during the week to keep weekends free for children and parents," said Risk.

ELSC wants to remind sponsors that their donations will be used to

(See Soccer, Page 6)