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Produced By:

Carol Nelson
Jeannine Fearing
Shirley Luedecke • Katherine Smith

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State signs reciprocal handgun license agreement

Texas has signed reciprocal agreements with Florida and Tennessee, allowing citizens with concealed handgun licenses issued by Florida or Tennessee to legally carry concealed handguns in Texas, and vice versa.

Col. Thomas A. Davis Jr., director of the Texas Department of Public Safety, signed reciprocity agreements with Florida and Tennessee through which their licenses can visit Texas

with their concealed handguns.

"This agreement will allow licensed Texans to travel freely in the states of Tennessee and Florida, while enjoying the same or similar privileges their licenses give them at home," Davis said.

Made possible by 1997 changes to Texas' concealed and handgun law, the reciprocity agreements with Tennessee and Florida are the fifth and

sixth Texas has signed. Texas has concealed handgun reciprocity agreements with Arkansas, Louisiana, Arizona and Oklahoma.

Texas should remember that weapons laws vary from state to state, and before traveling, license holders should educate themselves about laws in other states that govern where and when they can legally carry their concealed handguns, Davis said.

Grain Station Opens

Texas and Mexico officials last week announced the opening of a truck-to-truck transfer station in Rio Grande City.

Mexican transport trucks will be allowed to cross the border on privately maintained roads and proceed to the Rio Grande City transfer station, Texas Agriculture Commissioner Susan Combs said.

At Rio Grande City, Mexican trucks will pick up deliveries from U.S. trucks transporting Texas grain shipments from throughout the Rio Grande Valley and the Coastal Bend.

Mexico is the top market for Texas grain sorghum with about 1 million tons exported south each year.

Combs said she wants to develop more Texas-Mexico marketing partnerships such as the Rio Grande City project.

"I view our relationship with Mexico as a two-way street, and we must both work together in partnership to enhance each other's economies," she said.

Combs said she visits regularly with her counterparts in the four Mexican states that border Texas: Chihuahua, Coahuila, Tamaulipas and Nuevo Leon.

Food and agricultural trade between the U.S. and Mexico have more than doubled during the last 10 years and are expected to total \$10.9 billion in fiscal year 2000.

Drought Crumbles Foundations

Shifting soils from heat and lack of rainfall have cracked the foundations of homes across the state, the Texas Department of Insurance reported last week.

Foundations repair companies, insurance agents and lawmakers have been hearing from homeowners from Corpus Christi to Wichita Falls who describe how drought conditions have cracked foundations outside brick walls and interior walls.

An early sign of trouble is a door or window that will not open or close or a small crack that appears inside the house. As the drought continues, cracks in the soil widen and the prob-



State Capitol Highlights

By Ed Sterling
Texas Press Association

lems for homeowners multiply.

Sam Nelson, chief engineer at the Texas Department of Insurance, said homes built over fill dirt or clay soil are the ones most likely to develop problems.

"Visualizing what the bottom of a dry stock pond looks like with its huge cracks will give you an idea of what's happening around many concrete foundations," Nelson said.

After a period of drought, the soil shrinks, and once rains return, the soil swells, creating movement in the foundation of a home, Nelson said.

Nelson said homeowners can prevent foundations from cracking by maintaining a proper moisture level around the perimeter of the home. Watering the general area twice a week for 20 minutes is sufficient.

Nelson said barriers also may need to be dug near a home to prevent roots of large trees from pressing against foundations as they tend to rise during drought-like conditions.

Other Highlights

•Mark Cross of the Texas Department of Transportation said Texas will lose \$96 million in federal highway construction funds over the next two years because the state does not ban open containers of alcohol in vehicles or send repeat drunken-driving offenders to jail automatically.

From the office of State Rep. Robby Cook...

Affordable health insurance for teachers

State Rep. Robby Cook (D-28) reports that a top priority for the next session of the legislature will be funding a workable way to provide Texas teachers with quality, affordable health insurance.

"Teachers are a valuable asset to our children's future. In order to insure that our children are provided with the best educators, the state needs to provide health benefits that will keep teachers committed to their primary goals."

Currently, teachers across the state face a situation where they have inadequate health insurance or no insurance at all.

Many of the school districts that do provide insurance only offer plans with deductibles of thousands of dollars, leaving teachers with little more than catastrophic care. Rep. Cook said that this is a cause for great concern,

and that teachers should not have to worry about visiting the doctor or getting their prescriptions filled.

Rep. Cook said that any health insurance plan must be a coordinated effort between the state and local school districts.

"We need to focus our attention on the creation of a state and local partnership that will aid in providing educators that much-deserved health insurance they desire."

Last session, the legislature provided every public school teacher, counselor, and librarian with a \$3,000 across the board pay raise. This has helped improve teacher compensation dramatically; however, Rep. Cook says that this was a good first step, and that there is much left to do to recruit and retain quality teachers.

"Having worked in the legislature during the last session, I am extremely proud of the \$3,000 pay raise that teachers were entitled to, however, there is much work to be done to address the teacher shortages the state is experiencing."

Rep. Cook went on to say that teachers have one of the most challenging and important jobs in Texas, and that they must be rewarded for their hard work and dedication to our state's school children.

Let's Look Back...

24 & 48 YEARS AGO

Sept. 9, 1976

Eagle Lake City Council is expected to name a new Chief of Police for this community to succeed former Chief Roy Chisum who resigned in July...

Jerry D. Smith, president of Smith Taylor Ford Inc., Eagle Lake, received Ford Motor Company's highest honor for outstanding customer service...

In a candlelight ceremony, Miss Katherine Lynn Falysek exchanged double ring wedding vows with Joel Adams Cash at St. Philip's Catholic Church in El Campo, Aug. 21...

Mr. & Mrs. Doyle Waldrop spend the weekend at the Shamrock-Hilton in Houston where they attended the reunion of the 36th Infantry Division of the Army, of which Mr. Waldrop was a member in World War II...

In Las Vegas for a fantastic Labor Day weekend were Mr. & Mrs. Jack Shaver, Mr. & Mrs. Roy A. Van Nort and Mr. & Mrs. Fred R. Frnka from Eagle Lake and Mr. & Mrs. Mel Briggs of Houston...

Approximately 655 University of Texas engineering students have been recognized as honor students. Among them was Clifton Clay Hefner, son of Mr. & Mrs. W.A. Hefner of Garwood...

Mr. & Mrs. Richard Korenek of Garwood announced the engagement and approaching marriage of their daughter, Janice Marie, to Harold Charles Knight Jr., son of Mr. & Mrs. Harold Knight Sr. of El Campo. The

wedding is calendared for Nov. 6 at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Nada...

The Rice High School Junior Varsity Raiders football team opened its 1976 schedule last Thursday as they took on the Columbus JV's. Team members included Madison Smith, Keith Sommerlatte, Clarence Davis, Oscar Hurd, Lewis Tillman, David Henderson, Clayton Mahalitc, Allen Greack, David Lujan, Leonard Sims, Michael Thomas, Arthur Rhodes, Phillip Williams, Kevin Mackey, Larry Witte and Paul Vasut...

Mr. & Mrs. Edwin Schoeneberg of Louise announced the engagement and approaching marriage of their daughter, Patsy Ann, to Mitchell Reed Smith, son of Mrs. William C. Smith of Garwood and the late William C. Smith. The wedding is scheduled for Oct. 23 at Trinity Lutheran Church in El Campo...

Mr. & Mrs. Lester D. Euers proudly announced the engagement and approaching marriage of their daughter, Karen Kay, to Russell Alan Konesheck, son of Mrs. David O. Konesheck of this city and the late David Konesheck. The wedding is calendared for Oct. 16 at United Methodist Church in Eagle Lake...

Ernest Larmer, 42, a native of Eagle Lake passes away in Fort Worth...

The Sept. Grand Jury in Colorado County returned a total of 31 indictments. Included among them was one for theft against former Police Chief Roy Chisum...

Steve Epps, Rice High School senior and one of the key members of the Raider football team, is in the hospital where he was taken for surgery following injury to his spleen in practice last week and in the Raider and Columbus game Friday night.

Sept. 16, 1976

Firemen from eight departments in the area were called to a costly fire which destroyed a portion of the Altair Rice Dryer last Friday evening...

Wilburn Ash, 41, of Eagle Lake is in the intensive care unit in Ben Taub Hospital Houston in critical condition following injuries received in a two-car head-on collision at 1:10 a.m. Sunday...

On Sept. 3, Kathy Frazar of Eagle Lake was crowned Miss Texas Teen Queen in the State Pageant held in Grand Prairie...

Miss Margaret Dornak of Nada, bride-elect of Charles Briscoe of Eagle Lake, was honored with a Rice Bag Party, Sept. 12 at the home of her mother, Mrs. Adolph Dornak...

The sanctuary of Garwood United Methodist Church was the setting for the candlelight wedding of Miss Rebecca Sue Stienke and Kris Buren Kallina, Sept. 3 at seven o'clock in the evening...

Mr. & Mrs. J.T. Frnka were honored on their 40th wedding anniversary Sept. 11 at the home of Mr. & Mrs. Floyd Spenrath...

The lovely home of Mr. & Mrs. W.L. Bauer was the setting for a miscellaneous shower honoring Miss Susan Braden, bride-elect of Dwight L. (See 24 & 48, Page 3)

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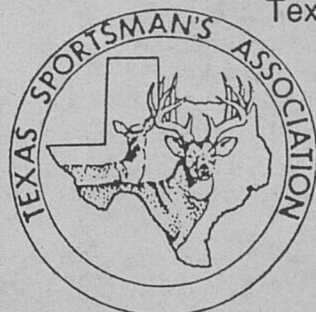
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Texas Sportsman's Association

Annual Fall
Fund Raiser
Sunday, Sept. 24

Mentz Fellowship Hall • Alleyton

Registration: 11 a.m.

No Admission Fee

Live Auction

Silent Auction

Drawings for Prizes

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The Board of Directors, the Junior Fair Board, and the Volunteers of the Colorado County Fair would like to say a big

THANK YOU
for supporting the Fair last weekend.

We hope you enjoyed our new facility.

Plans are already underway for our 2001 Fair. If you would like to be involved, call the Fair office at:

979-732-9266

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