



THE EAGLE LAKE HEADLIGHT

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 CITY OF EAGLE LAKE, TEXAS 77434-0067
 979-234-5521 • Fax: 979-234-5522
 email: headlight@elc.net
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Carol Cardenas • Jeannine Fearing
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 Katherine Smith • Cathy Fearing

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Big issues facing Texas lawmakers in next session

The state budget, insurance reform and school finance are the big issues facing lawmakers in the coming legislative session, but there are other hot topics, including several measures aimed at reducing drinking and driving.

Among the proposals is a bill authorizing sobriety checkpoints, a measure sure to generate some spirited discussion among Texans.

Advocates say checkpoints are a good tool in getting drunks off the road before they can hurt or kill someone with their impaired driving.

Others see checkpoints as another step toward a police state.

The issue is not new. Twelve years ago, the U.S. Supreme Court held that limited sobriety checkpoints were constitutional. Thirty-nine states have laws allowing them, but not Texas.

In 1994, the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals said DWI checkpoints were not constitutional in this state unless Texas developed guidelines covering their usage.

The legislation proposed in the House by Rep. Todd Smith, R-Eules and in the Senate by Judith Zaffirini, D-Laredo would authorize Texas law enforcement agencies to run sobriety checkpoints if they were advertised in the media in advance (but not by location) and if the checkpoints didn't delay traffic by more than 10 minutes.

In addition, police could only ask a driver to take an alcohol test if they have probable cause that the person is drunk. Finally, police could ask to see a driver's license and proof of liability insurance at a checkpoint, but not inspect the vehicle.

The statistics that make any DWI-related proposal important are sobering: Up to half of all fatal car crashes are alcohol-related.

More troopers out soon

With the two booziest holiday periods of the year at hand, the Department of Public Safety routinely puts all available troopers on the highways.

State Capitol Highlights
 By Mike Cox
 Texas Press Association

This year, even more will be out and about: The DPS just graduated 201 new troopers, the largest graduation in the

history of the 67-year-old agency. Most of the new troopers are going into the highway patrol, but others will be license and weight, driver license and Capitol troopers. Once they complete a one-year probation, the troopers will earn \$35,000 a year.

Despite the size of this class, with the approaching retirement of more Baby Boomers generation troopers, more recruits are being sought. Any-

one interested in applying can check the nearest DPS office, visit the department's web site at www.txdps.state.tx.us or call 1-866-TXTROOP.

Don't forget the child support

The Attorney General's Office has received \$27.6 million in federal incentive payments based on the office's Child Support Division's performance (See Highlights, Page 3)

Let's Look Back...

24 & 48 YEARS AGO

Nov. 16, 1978

L.J. (Sonny) Spanihel and James Cash, members of the V.F.W. Post 8783, unveiled the new monument placed by the VFW Post in the foyer of the Municipal Building...

Mr. & Mrs. Harry D. Larson passed a significant and memorable milestone in their lives as they celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary Nov. 11 in their home with a reception...

Mr. & Mrs. Arnold Cardenas announced the birth of a daughter born Nov. 5 at Caney Valley Memorial Hospital in Wharton. She has been named **Natalie Marie**...

Mrs. C.R. (Nell) Martin of Mercedes, mother **Mrs. Harry Engstrom** of Garwood, closed her eyes to a peaceful rest on Nov. 8...

Sgt. Bryan Toucheck, who has been associated with the Colorado County Sheriff's Department for the past five years, tendered his resignation effective Nov. 30...

The home of the **Sylvester Stovall** family was destroyed by fire Tuesday afternoon...

Mr. & Mrs. Henry Schmidt of Eagle Lake are the proud parents of a son born Nov. 10 at Caney Valley Memorial Hospital in Wharton. He has been named **Jared Henry**...

Mrs. Isidor Ramirez won \$1,000 in a sales promotion at Wilcox Mini-max...

Nominees for Powder Puff King are **Dale Popp, Michael Thomas, Greg Ellis, John Grammer and Keith Sommerlatte**...

Mr. & Mrs. Steve Almanza were pleased to announce the birth of a daughter born Nov. 12 at Eagle Lake Community Hospital. At birth **Kelly Marie** weighed eight pounds, five ounces. She was welcomed home by a brother, **Stevie**, age 11, and a sister, **Becky Ann**, age eight...

Mr. & Mrs. George W. Matthys and daughter, **Rachel**, are now residing in their pretty new home at 712 Partridge Lane in the Ridgelea Addition. They moved into their new home Oct. 27th.

Dec. 16, 1954

Dairy Mart on East Main is to open under new owners, **Mr. & Mrs. Erneal Tomlinson**, formerly of Waller...

A Christmas Cantata is planned at Lissie Church Sunday night...

Five were hospitalized as a tractor and two cars collided near Lissie: **Mrs. Muri Thornton and S.L. Guthrie**. In the East Bernard hospital are **Joe Fojtik, Vince Gollia Sr. and Jr.**...

The City's churches are planning special Christmas trees, services and celebrations...

The Cub Scouts' mitten tree for Korean War orphans was put up Monday; the public is asked to continue decorating...

The Corvin Frenzels welcomed the birth of a daughter, **Debra Ruth**, born Dec. 11th at Laughlin Hospital...

Local hunters bagged nine big bucks at Cotulla: 10-pointers by **Bennie Blair (2), Joe Luna, George Cason Sr., George Cason Jr., and Herbert Loessin; Bruce Waddell** a nine-pointer; **Raymond Waddell**, an eight-pointer; and **A.H. Seaholm**, a seven-pointer. **George Causey** wounded a deer but was unable to locate it...

ELHS girl cagers won in Sealy with **Bonnie Kohleffel** the high scorer with 19 points...

The Eagles bowed to Columbus 63 to 41 with **Wayne Brasher** netting 26 points...

Miss Elda Smith became the bride of **Harold Lloyd Williams** in nuptials held in Cameron Church Nov. 20th...

High school choral club members entertained at the annual Rotary Christmas party catered by **Mrs. Arthur Behrens**. Club president **Lee Briscoe** (See 24 & 48, Page 4)

A Toast To Our CUSTOMERS

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STRIKE UP THE BAND

... It's A New Year!

Here's hoping they're playing your song this holiday and all year long!

Thank you for visiting us this past year.



Heritage House

Administrator **Ann Chenault**
 Residents & Staff

CAPITOL COMMENT



U.S. SENATOR **KAY BAILEY HUTCHISON**



Texans on the Military

"God grants liberty only to those who love it and are always ready to guard and defend it." I was reminded of that famous Daniel Webster quote by an insightful Texan who responded to my annual survey.

As the United States takes up the mantle of freedom around the globe, those words ring as true today as when they were uttered nearly two centuries ago. With 1.37 million active duty military personnel serving around the world and 1.28 million more waiting in the wings on standby and ready reserve, it is clear that our nation is poised to defend the liberty we love.

National defense has always been one of my top priorities. Not only because I believe our democratic system is the best in the world, but also because I understand the need to bolster diplomacy with military might.

As we are engaged in a global war on terror and tensions spark around the world, it is important for the United

States military to maintain a strong, capable force. Four times in the past 15 years we have attempted to streamline our military through the appointment of a Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) commission, chartered to recommend the elimination or realignment of unneeded bases.

To gauge your opinion on base closures, I posed the following question in my survey: "The Pentagon has announced another round of military closures in 2005. Because a round of base closures riddled with mistakes could be more costly than no closures at all, I believe we need to have a good idea of force structure for the future before closing bases. What are your views?"

I received many pointed replies to that question from civilians and military personnel alike. A full 40% of the responses I received agreed that the Pentagon should be required to outline a 20-year military strategy before closure decisions are made. Twenty-seven percent of respondents felt the decision

must consider the impact of closures on homeland security and local economies. The remainder were split evenly between closing no bases at all and going forward with the process.

One Texan from Winnie said, "Too much politics has been involved in closures; bases that are set up to do a job should not be closed and money then used to get another base ready to do the same job." I couldn't agree more. It has been my experience that there can be unintended consequences when we miscalculate future needs for military bases. First, I have seen bases closed and dismantled, only to later realize their missions have again become relevant to U.S. military operations. Second, I have not seen estimates ever come close to the true cost of closing a base. How can we best avoid the missteps of the last round of base closures?

The fate of Reese Air Force Base in Texas is an excellent example of a base closure that the commission said

looked good on paper, but it turned out to be a costly mistake. Reese was one of the Air Force's premier sites for entry-level pilot training, but an Air Force analyst decided there were adequate training facilities available elsewhere. Reese was closed. Today, the Air Force is experiencing a serious shortfall in training spaces for new pilots and is desperately trying to reestablish training sites on other bases. Everyone involved now agrees that Reese never should have been closed.

Another egregious example can be found in the 1995 BRAC decision to convey Fort Chaffee to the local community. The small, rural town of Barling, Arkansas was charged with the impossible task of turning Fort Chaffee, pockmarked with more than 700 lead paint and asbestos-laden World War II-era buildings, into an economic asset for the community. It couldn't be done. The Pentagon may have saved money with the closure, but it saddled a small town with an expensive, environmentally hazardous burden. Similar closures have resulted in the same devastating impact all over the country.

As incoming chair of the Senate Military Construction Appropriations Subcommittee, I believe we must operate not only with our national security interests in mind but also with good business sense.

Rather than waste millions of dollars on ill-fated closures, we should spend that money building better housing and more facilities for the men and women of the military, purchasing better technology and equipment, and paying our personnel for the difficult job we are asking them to do.

As we begin the 108th Congress, I will make it a top priority to ensure that we carefully and thoughtfully assess troop strength and future military needs before closing bases. When the time is right, we must have a well-defined, transparent process that is conducted fairly and in the open.

As we wage this war on terrorism we must heed the words of Daniel Webster because our liberty is at stake. We must support the President and give him the resources he needs to ensure victory in this great battle. And we must make sure that our men and women who proudly serve in the U.S. military have every tool and resource they need to win this war. Before we make any decisions to close another base, we must keep these objectives in mind.

WITH GRATITUDE & PRIDE



We're proud to be a part of this fine community and renew our pledge to serve you to the best of our ability in the year ahead. Happy New Year and thank you for your vote of confidence.

YOUR COLORADO COUNTY OFFICIALS...

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 Constable, Pct. 1
Larry Dulany
 Justice of the Peace, Pct. 4
Darrell Gertson
 Commissioner, Pct. 4
Darlene Hayek
 Colorado County Clerk

Ivan Menke
 Constable, Pct. 3
Mary Jane Poenitzsch
 Tax Assessor-Collector
Joyce Stancik
 County Treasurer

Darrell Stancik
 Constable, Pct. 4
Harvey Vornsand
 District Clerk
Doug Wessels
 Commissioner, Pct. 1
R.H. "Curly" Wied
 Colorado County Sheriff

TO OUR CUSTOMERS AT THE NEW YEAR



Just a note of thanks in the final hours — When it comes to serving you, the pleasure's been ours!

Happy New Year!

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