

The Eagle Lake Headlight has a NEW EMAIL: eaglelakeheadlight@sbcglobal.net



Eagle Hill seen here covered in snow, has the look of the White House in the winter. Definitely not a house in southern Texas. Hope you all got to be here and enjoy this rare occurrence.

Photo courtesy of Phillip Ferguson

WCJC CISCO networking academy courses now apply to Networking Academy degree

According to the Texas Workforce Commission, employment for network and computer systems administrators is expected to increase by 77% in the 10-year period ending 2010. With that in mind, students can now apply their Wharton County Junior College (WCJC) Cisco Networking Academy courses towards the college's Associate in Applied Science (AAS) degree in Network Administration. The Cisco courses are offered at the WCJC Fort Bend Technical Center.

"We've streamlined that process where students can apply their CISCO Networking Academy courses to the associate's degree," said Donna Schilling, WCJC's Cisco Networking Academy instructor and director.

Oftentimes, students enroll in WCJC to take the four Cisco classes, but realize that by taking just two additional computer courses they can earn the Cisco Router Networking Certificate. Upon completion of this 22-credit hour program, they are eligible to take the Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA) Certification test and the Network + Certification test.

All six courses that lead to the Cisco Router Networking Certificate now apply towards the requirements for the college's two-year, 64-credit hour AAS degree in Networking Administration, which Schilling said further prepares students to take the CompTIA certification exam in A+ programming, another important industry certification. These six courses in the certificate program also fulfill the college's requirements for an AAS in Microcomputer Support Technician.

"A lot of students are already working in the [information technology] industry and they realize how valuable that certification is so they're coming in for additional training," said

Schilling.

Len Vickery is one graduate of the WCJC Cisco Networking Academy who already had information technology (IT) skills. He enrolled in the program following a spinal cord injury that left him unable to return to his work as an environmental engineer.

A resident of Richmond, Vickery knew of the Cisco program at the WCJC Fort Bend Technical Center and was "impressed with the new facilities and knowledgeable staff." With assistance from the Texas Workforce Commission, he enrolled in the Cisco Networking Academy and considered it "very helpful in honing my skills and stair stepping toward getting more involved in the networking side." In fact, while taking the classes, he was hired as a part-time consultant by TransTech LLC. Today he is the company's information technology manager.

Schilling said individuals with certifications are better prepared to work in information technology, an opinion that is echoed in the 2000 report, "Bridging the Gap: Information Technology Skills for the New Millennium." Commissioned by the International Technology Association of America, the research project surveyed 700 IT managers and found that 50% of them ranked certification as important or very important. The same report found that the greatest need for IT workers is in smaller non-IT firms with 50-99 employees.

The coursework for the Cisco Router Networking Certificate teaches students how to design, build, and maintain computer networks. Instruction is delivered through classroom teachings, online simulations, hands-on exercises using actual computer networks, and optional internships. Students learn basic network design

and construction so they can install, configure and operate routers in local area networks, simple wide area networks, and LAN switched environments.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the median annual earnings of network and computer administrators in 2002 were \$54,810.

For additional information on the WCJC Cisco Networking Academy and the Associate in Applied Science degree in Network Administration, contact Donna Schilling at 281-239-1567 or dschilling@wcjc.edu.

WCJC Technology and business division host high school students

The Wharton County Junior College (WCJC) Division of Technology and Business recently hosted two day-long seminars for high school students to increase their awareness of specific programs and the job opportunities available in each.

Students identified by their high school counselors began the day with an overview of the various courses of study in the college's technology and business division. Small group sessions with department faculty followed, giving students an opportunity to observe classroom instruction and ask questions. Industry representatives were also on hand to discuss career options in the various fields.

The seminars were held on the Wharton and Fort Bend Technical Cen-

ter campuses. The programs highlighted on both campuses were Computer Science, Engineering Design, and Legal Assisting/Office Administration. Also highlighted were Automotive Technology and Electronics Technology on the Wharton campus and Early Childhood at the Fort Bend Technical Center.

Patricia Rehak, WCJC division chair for technology and business, said this is the first time the division has hosted its own event. Although WCJC hosts an Education Fair each spring and Senior Days in January, Rehak feels the smaller numbers at these seminars provided more than the typical walk-through experience.

"This event allowed students with particular interests to see our programs

more in-depth and to ask questions, but also to speak with industry representatives about the outlook for specific careers," she said.

At both seminars, students heard from representatives from UH-Victoria's School of Arts and Sciences about the ease of transferring their credits earned in WCJC's associate in applied science degree programs to UH's bachelor's degrees. Dean Dan Jaeckle and Recruiting Coordinator Sarah Welch spoke at Wharton and in Fort Bend, respectively.

The seminars ended with gift drawings that included CAD software, Barnes & Noble Bookstore gift certificates, an automotive tool set, an outlet voltage tester, and Flash Drive ScanDisk.



The best students name the best teachers

A select group of America's teachers are being honored by their toughest critics — their former students — in the eighth edition of *Who's Who Among America's Teachers*.

Students were requested to nominate the one teacher from their entire academic experience who made a difference in their lives by helping to shape their values, inspire interest in a particular subject and challenge them to strive for excellence. Students also mentioned enthusiasm about their subject and the knowledge their nominated teachers demonstrated in the classroom.

All of the 156,000 teachers honored in *Who's Who Among America's Teachers* were nominated by former students who themselves are currently in *Who's Who Among American High School Students*, *Who's Who Among American High School Students-Sports Edition* or *The National Dean's List*. Parke E. Davis, Chairman, National

Academic Affairs, has said, "There is no greater honor teachers can receive than to be recognized by former students for their excellence and dedication. In this publication, we clearly have the best teachers in America selected by the best students."

Among those selected from the surrounding areas include: Glenda Beall, Cynthia Boenisch, Jewell Coreathers, Melody Grigar, Houston Cummings, Michael Lanier, Veronica Curry, Karl Karvonen, Tommie Lynn Holden; Columbus: Traci Edman, Jenny Evridge, Diane Hanus, Shari Hedstrom, David Johnson, Sharon Johnson, Sharon Martinek, Robin Moeller, Lorraine Novosad, Kathy Rutledge, Shirley Schobel, Donna Solansky, Stuart Taylor, Tracey Wegenhoft; East Bernard: Suzie Hudgins, Debra Mahlmann, Yvonne Naiser, Adela Parnell, Norma Robinson, Jamie Ward, and Frances Young.

4-H Rifle Project To Get Underway

The Colorado County 4-H rifle project will get underway on Tuesday, Jan. 11, 2005 and Tuesday, January 18, 2005. These two meetings will begin at 7:00 p.m. at the Columbus High School Cafeteria.

The rifle project is open to boys and girls, ages third grade through eighteen years, throughout Colorado County.

Interested individuals may stop by the County Extension Office at 316 Spring Street, Columbus to secure enrollment forms beginning Jan. 3. Forms may also be obtained at the Jan. 11 meeting and must be completed and turned in at that time.

Attendance at the first two meetings is mandatory. Both the participants and parents should attend. The aspects of rifle safety will be discussed along with equipment, targets and shooting positions.

A shooting schedule will be determined as well. Participants will shoot once each week under the supervision and instruction of certified rifle coaches serving as volunteer 4-H leaders.

For additional information, contact the County Extension office at 979-732-2530 or 732-2082.



A few of the Ferguson clan braved the freezing temperatures to have a little fun. Max is seen having a taste test of the snow, just to make sure its safe for mom, Kim (on the left) and aunt Elizabeth (on the right).

Photo Courtesy of Phillip Ferguson

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