

Eagle Lake Headlight

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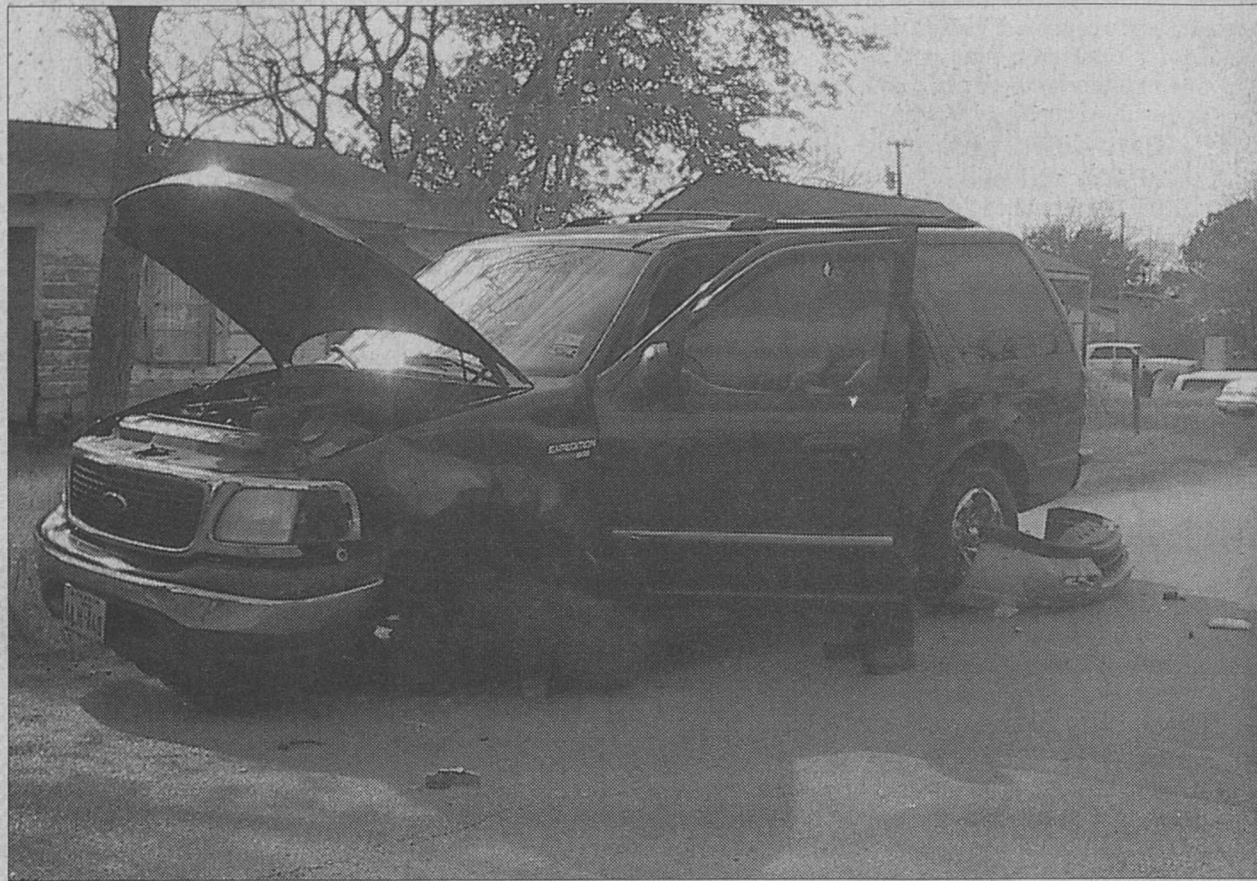
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VOLUME 102 NUMBER 52

EAGLE LAKE, TEXAS

MARCH 16, 2006



Pictured above is a vehicle that was involved in an accident on Sunday, March 12 at approximately 3 p.m. Eagle Lake Police Department Officer Tomas Gonzalez investigated the two-vehicle accident in which one of the vehicles fled the scene. After an investigation Noel Macias was arrested for no driver's license and leaving the scene of an accident. Macias was processed at the police department and transported to the Colorado County Detention Center for confinement.

Headlight photo by Carol Cardenas

City To Purchase Two Police Vehicles

The Eagle Lake City Council voted Tuesday night to purchase two new police vehicles.

Council had been informed at recent council meetings that at least one new police vehicle would need to be purchased.

Council voted to lease/purchase two new vehicles.

The vehicles will be Ford Explorers and council expects the cost of the two vehicles to be around \$28,000 each. This cost includes the necessary equipment such as lights, cages,

radios, and other police equipment.

This will be the first time the city has purchased a sport utility vehicle for the police department and they are hoping that these vehicles may last longer on the bumpy roads in town.

Continued on back page

County Commissioners Adopt Fraud Investigation Policy

Colorado County commissioners, meeting on Monday, adopted a written fraud prevention and detention policy for the county.

County Auditor Raymie Kana said the policy is not required, but is recommended.

"You can blame it on Enron," Kana said, referring to the corporate fraud case.

It outlines procedures to follow in reporting and investigating suspected fraud.

Commissioner Darrell Gertson said he felt the policy outlined in writing, much of what the county was doing already.

But County Judge Al Jamison said he did not feel the policy was necessary and indicated he was offended that state officials were suggesting the policy.

He said he felt one of the most effective ways to combat fraud was to report it to the newspapers.

"Go to the press," he said.

Jamison voted against the policy when it was approved 4-1.

Commissioners created a position of deputy director for Emergency Medical Services and approved a budget amendment of \$700 a month or \$8,400 annually to fund the position.

The deputy director is Chris LaCourse. He will make \$700 per month above his normal pay, which is not a set amount, but is based on the number of shifts he works.

County Auditor Raymie Kana noted that EMS Director Chuck Rogers is considered part-time and is paid

80 percent of his authorized salary of \$40,950.

She said that the difference of \$8,190, along with money the county saves by not paying insurance for Rogers had been used to supplement other salaries in his department.

She said that a vehicle maintenance officer was budgeted for an additional \$200 a month, a logistics officer for \$200 a month, a continuing education coordinator for an additional \$200 a month and the deputy director for an additional \$400 a month.

She said that Rogers asked in February for his deputy director to be paid an additional \$300 a month for a total of \$700, but she said that a budget amendment was necessary to do that.

Commissioners also amended the county's salary schedule to include paramedics, which were included in the budget, but had not been put in the salary schedule. Beginning pay for paramedics is \$24,292, with maximum of \$36,439.

Pay for three paramedics was included in the budget for this year.

Other EMS technicians are paid on the basis of shifts worked.

In other matters commissioners: --Took no action on restoring a ban on outdoor burning.

The four commissioners, representing various areas of the county, indicated they did not feel one was needed at this time.

--Agreed to renaming Berger Ranch Road as Hunnicutt Lane.

--Agreed to name a private road

owned by Charles Bauman, located off FM 2434, as Hibiscus Lane.

--Awarded bids for paving and road materials.

--Agreed to advertise for asphalt stabilizer.

--Accepted an agreement with Union Pacific Railroad to allow cross arms to be placed on Thomas Dryer Road where it crosses the railroad tracks.

--Authorized County Judge Al Jamison, County Auditor Raymie Kana and Diane Matus, county treasurer, to sign documents for a \$250,000 grant from the state for septic tank upgrades in the area of Rock Island, Sheridan, Garwood and Nada.

--Adopted a calendar for developing of the county budget. The calendar calls for commissioners to review a budget draft in June, with departmental hearings in July and adoption of the budget from August to September. Kana said that is basically the same process commissioners have used in the past.

In other action, Commissioner Tommy Hahn said he had purchased a new tractor for use at Beason's Park for \$14,255.

The county had originally budgeted \$20,000 for the tractor.

Commissioners also discussed assignments of county vehicles to personnel.

After commissioners expressed some confusion about where some vehicles were assigned, Jamison asked the county auditor to come up with a list for commissioners to review.

NEWSBRIEFS

4-H Dog Club to Meet

PHYDO, the 4-H Dog Club, will meet every Wednesday at 7 p.m. at the Four Oaks Puppy Club, 4268 I-10 Service Road in Columbus. Youth will work with their dogs and learn obedience and agility skills while preparing for the State 4-H Dog Show in July. For more information contact the club manager, Kaylee Kovar, at 979-732-2787.

GUBC Spring revival underway

The Greater Union Baptist Church (GUBC) Youth Department will hold their Spring Revival through Friday, March 17 at 7 p.m. nightly. Rev. David Everson will be the guest evangelist for the week. For more information call 234-5033.

CCHC meeting is Thursday

The Colorado County Historical Commission will hold their monthly meeting Thursday, March 16 at 7 p.m. at the Colorado County Services Facility, 305 Radio Lane in Columbus. Carolyn Hastedt will present the program, "Historical Homes of Colorado County". Please bring a covered dish meal.

CSWCD banquet ticket deadline is March 17

The Colorado Soil and Water Conservation District (CSWCD) #333 will host its 57th Annual Awards banquet Friday, March 31 at the Veteran's Memorial Hall in Weimar. Deadline to purchase tickets is March 17. Tickets may be purchased at the District office, 316 Spring St. in Columbus. A fried fish meal will be served. For more information call 979-732-9665.

Thrift Shop open Saturday

Prairie Edge Museum Thrift Shop will be open Saturday, March 18 from 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. New items are arriving every week. Sofa and chair, 10 speed bike and to get ready for Easter we have Easter baskets and decorations.

WCBC Men's Day program is March 19

White Cloud Baptist Church (WCBC) invites the public to come and celebrate in their men's day program, Sunday, March 19 at 3 p.m. Guest speaker will be Rev. Thomas Kuykendall. Prayer breakfast will be held Saturday, March 18 at WCBC at 9 a.m. Speaker will be Rev. Dave Curry.

UMC Hosting Lenten Luncheons

The Eagle Lake United Methodist Church (UMC) will host the 10th annual Lenten Luncheons each Monday, through Monday, April 10 from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. with special music and guest speakers. A love offering will be taken and net proceeds go to the Eagle Lake Community Food Pantry. The next luncheon, March 20 will feature Rev. Chris Thacker of the First Baptist Church as guest speaker. Eagle Lake First Baptist Church will provide an array of soups and desserts. A sliced meat and cheese tray, crackers, sandwich bread, hot cornbread, iced tea and coffee will be furnished by the UMC. Everyone is cordially invited...bring a friend!

UHV Offers first-ever intrasession

Registration for the first-ever spring intrasession is currently underway at the University of Houston-Victoria (UHV). Stemming from its commitment to making higher education accessible to students in the Coastal Bend region, UHV introduced the 8-week intrasession this spring in an effort to provide students with an alternate schedule to that of regular semesters. Students can visit www.uhv.edu/bus/special to view a complete list of intrasession course offerings and to register. The deadline for priority registration is Thursday, March 16. Classes will begin on Monday, March 20. For more information, call the Office of Admissions and Records at 361-570-4110.

Library to hold book discussion groups

The Eula and David Wintermann Library will be forming a book discussion group. The organizational meeting will be held March 20 at 1:30 p.m. in the library meeting room. The group will meet to decide what book they will be reading and discussing and decide on a regular meeting time. For more information call the library at 979-234-5411.

Rabies vaccination clinic is March 21

The City of Eagle Lake will sponsor a rabies clinic Tuesday, March 21 from

Continued on back page



Agriculture Week Proclaimed

Colorado County Commissioners proclaimed March 19 to 25 as National Agriculture Week in the county. The proclamation recognizes the contributions of agriculture to the public welfare. Representatives of the Colorado Soil and Water Conservation District, the Extension Service, Farm Bureau and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department were present.

From left: Jerry Hudec, Beverly Tuck, Sally Garrett, Sylvia Huebel, Larry Poenitzsch, Gerald Heintschel, Ted Schultz, (front) Royce Jurries, W.J. Kleimann and Brian Koch.

Seated are Commissioners Darrell Gertson, Tommy Hahn, County Judge Al Jamison, Commissioners Herbie Helmcamp and Doug Wessels.

County Still Looking For Use For Juvenile Facility

Colorado County Judge Al Jamison said Tuesday that the county is still looking for a way to use the Eagle Lake Juvenile Facility.

Initially, the county thought that Wharton County Junior College was interested in possibly using the juvenile center as an educational facility.

Apparently that option has gone by the wayside.

"W.C.J.C. seemed enthusiastic, but they seem to have fallen off the face of the earth, communication with them has ceased," said Jamison.

"I presume this means they are no longer interested," he said.

A call to W.C.J.C. was not returned.

Jamison advised that the county is seeking some other options.

He declined to comment on what those other options might be, saying that he would know more in a few weeks.

The county closed the facility at the beginning of March citing financial losses as the prime reason.

Rice School District will continue to use the facility for its alternative program through the end of the school year.

Commissioners voted to close the facility February 7 citing declining revenues due to low student numbers and a tenuous staffing situation caused by uncertainty about the facility's future.

Jamison advised that since taking over operations of the facility in September the county had lost around \$135,000.

"It takes about 65 kids to break-even," said Jamison. "We saw no likelihood of getting more," he added.

The county took over control of the facility in September after the company that had been running it,

Continued on back page



Lance Morales slides into home safely to score a run for the Raiders Tuesday night against Luling.