



The home of Gina and Jerry Evoritts was named the Eagle Lake Garden Clubs' Yard of The Month for April. Their home is located at 120 West Stockbridge Lane.



By Patty Holloway
The front yard of Gina and Jerry Evoritts home located at 120 West Stockbridge looks like a big Easter basket. They have earned the Yard of the Month sign for April. They have spent a lot of time the past few years re-doing their yard - front, side and back but the front is a real eye catcher with all the colorful blue plumbago, pink pentas, yellow

sweetbroom, purple verbena and many other colorful plants along with the interesting yard décor. Drive by and enjoy this colorful display. Gina is a retired teacher of 27 years and Jerry takes care of the family farm and ranch. Taylor Gannon enjoys helping her aunt and uncle in

the yard of this modern day house that replaced a three story Victorian house that had housed many generations of Evoritts. Jerry's father planted the large live oak trees 50 years ago and Gina said that there has always been a member of the family living on this block.

Jobless Rate Totals 4.4 Percent

The unemployment rate for Colorado County for January 2006 was 4.4 percent, figures from the Texas Workforce Commission show. For January in Colorado County, 9,918 persons were employed and 453 seeking work. The figure compares to statewide unemployment in January, 5.3. For Fayette County, unemployment was 3.7 percent, with 11,508 employed and 438 looking for jobs. For Lavaca County, unemployment was 3.4 percent, with 10,192 persons employed and 360 looking for jobs. For Wharton County, unemployment was 5.1 percent, with 19,692 persons employed and 1,067 looking for jobs.

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Pictured from left to right are Kurt Sunderman, member of the Knights of Columbus Council 4843, DeMarcus Tillman and Ethel Shorter.

Tillman Shoots Way To State Contest

Congratulations are in order for young DeMarcus Tillman, son of Ethel Shorter and Douglas Tillman, Jr. DeMarcus participated in the Knights of Columbus Basketball Free Throw Contest held here in Eagle Lake in January. He was the first place winner of the boys 11 year old Free Throw contest held by Eagle Lake Knights of Columbus Council 4843. As the first place winner, he was then eligible to complete in the District contest held in East Bernard in February. Again DeMarcus was the first place winner in his age group. On March 5, DeMarcus participated in the Knights of Columbus Diocesan Free Throw contest held in Hallettsville. There are districts represented at the Diocesan level of competition from 32 Knights of Columbus councils in the Victoria Diocese. DeMarcus won first place in he Diocesan contest scoring on 21 of 25 free throws. He was then eligible to compete in the State Basketball Free Throw contest held on Saturday March 18 in San Antonio. In the State Free Throw competition held at University of Texas at San Antonio campus, DeMarcus had competition from 14 other boys in his age group. He did not win the contest but made a strong showing for his age group and for our area. Congratulations DeMarcus for making us all very proud.

IRS Has \$2 Billion In Unclaimed Returns

Unclaimed refunds totaling more than \$2 billion are awaiting about 1.7 million people who failed to file a federal income tax return for 2002, the Internal Revenue Service announced recently. However, in order to collect the money, a return for 2002 must be filed with an IRS office no later than April 17, 2006. The IRS estimates that half of those who could claim refunds would receive more than \$570. In some cases, individuals had taxes withheld from their wages, or made payments against their taxes out of self-employed earnings, but had too little income to require filing a tax return. Some taxpayers may also be eligible for the refundable Earned Income Tax Credit. "We want people to get the refunds they're entitled to," said IRS Commissioner Mark W. Everaon. "We urge taxpayers to double-check their records before the April 17th deadline. Taxpayers can't get a refund if they don't file a tax return." In cases where a return was not filed, the law provides most taxpayers with a three-year window of opportunity for claiming a refund. If no return is filed to claim the refund within three years, the money becomes property of the U.S. Treasury. For 2002 returns, the window closes on April 17, 2006. The law requires that the return be property addressed, postmarked and mailed by that date. There is no penalty assessed by the IRS for filing a late return qualifying for a refund. The IRS reminds taxpayers seeking a 2002 refund that their checks will be held if they have not filed tax returns for 2003 or 2004. In addition, the refund will be applied to any amounts still owed to the IRS and may be used to satisfy unpaid child support or past due federal debts such as student loans. By failing to file a return, individuals stand to lose more than refunds of taxes withheld or paid during 2002. Many low-income workers may not have claimed the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). Although eligible taxpayers may get a refund when their EITC is more than what they owe in tax, those who file returns more than three years late would be able only to apply it toward the taxes they owe (if any). They would not be able to receive a refund if the credit exceeded their tax. Generally, individuals qualified for the EITC if in 2002 they earned less than \$33,178 and had more than one qualifying child living with them, earned less than \$29,201 with one qualifying child, or earned less than \$11,060 and had no qualifying child. Current and prior year tax forms and instructions are available on the Forms and Publications page of this Web site or by calling 1-800-TAX-FORM (1-800-829-3676). Taxpayers who need help also can call the IRS help line at 1-800-829-1040.

USDA Dir. Announces \$10.5 Million In Preservation Funds

Bryan Daniel, USDA Rural Development State Director announced today the availability of \$10.5 million in Housing Preservation Grant funds. The program provides financial assistance to sponsoring organizations to assist in the repair or rehabilitation of single-family and rental residences located in rural communities. "USDA Rural Development is very pleased to be able to provide housing rehabilitation funding for rural Texans," said Daniel. "It is our goal to ensure rural residents are afforded an opportunity to live in decent housing that meets health and safety standards and provides the benefits of energy efficient features." Eligible sponsors who would administer the grant funds can include state agencies, units of local government, Native American tribes, and nonprofit organizations. The Agency's Housing Preservation Grant Program can also provide assistance to rental property owners to repair and rehabilitate their units providing the owners agree to make the units available to very low- and low-income families. The USDA Rural Development Housing Preservation Grant Program provides assistance to residential projects located in communities with a maximum population of 20,000. Applications must be submitted no later than 5 p.m. on May 19, 2006 to USDA Rural Development, Federal Building, Suite 102, 101 South Main, Temple, Texas 76501. For more information on the Housing Preservation Grant Program, please contact Gayle Ledyard, Housing Programs Director, (254)742-9765 or visit the website at http://rurdev.usda.gov/rhs/mfh/brief_mfh_hpg.htm.

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