

Eagle Lake Headlight

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EAGLE LAKE, TEXAS

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County Commissioners Reinstate Burning Ban

Colorado County commissioners, meeting Monday, reinstated a ban on outdoor burning for the county.

The action came after a lengthy discussion about the process used to enact and lift a burn ban.

Ford Stein, the president of the county association of fire departments, said his member departments would like to be involved in the process.

Stein said all of the departments in the county in were in favor of enacting a burn ban now except for Eagle Lake and Sheridan.

The burn ban was lifted in the first week of June after some rain in the area.

County Judge Al Jamison expressed some frustration with the process.

He said one possibility would be for the county to eliminate the designation of a burn ban entirely and have the local fire departments charge

\$250 a call.

"There go the fund-raisers," Stein replied, meaning people might be less inclined to support local fire departments.

"It's not an easy problem to solve," said Commissioner Doug Wessels said of enacting and rescinding bans on burning.

At one point, Jamison said flatly: "There will be no more executive burn ban orders."

The reference was emergency orders that he can issue as county judge.

Commissioner Tommy Hahn said he was not in favor of a ban on only parts of the county.

He said he felt partial bans were difficult to enforce.

County Attorney Ken Sparks said he felt it didn't need formal action to remove a burn ban. He said one should expire when the drought index

reaches a certain level.

Jamison and commissioners discussed a possibility of taking action to place a burn ban in effect or lift one only at commissioners' meetings, which occur twice a month.

In other action, commissioners: --Approved an outside audit for the last fiscal year.

--Adopted by a 4-1 vote an order prohibit the sale of skyrocket with sticks and missiles with fins during the sale of fireworks connected with Independence Day. The prohibition is because of dry weather.

At the same time, the commissioners designated "safe areas" where those type of fireworks could be used in connection with the July Fourth celebrations in Eagle Lake, Columbus and Splashway Water Park in Sheridan.

Commissioner Darrell Gertson

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Tax Appraisal Values Increase

Property values on the tax rolls in Colorado County increased 13.1 percent in the last year, with about half of increase due to increased oil and gas values and other half due to improvements and reappraisals.

That was the preliminary estimate released by Billy Youens, chief appraiser of the Colorado County Appraisal District.

Figures on increases were given to the taxing districts in the county this week.

The appraisal district also mailed

notices to approximately 30,000 property accounts, showing new property values.

Property values are subject to revision, with the final tax roll to be certified by July 25.

Owners of property have 30 days to protest the values.

Property values in the county are estimated at \$1.416 billion, an increase of \$164.6 million.

Approximately half of the increase, is due to oil and gas values, Youens said.

Based on the current county tax rate, the increase would generate approximately \$700,000 a year in additional revenue.

Overall, the Rice School District had the largest increase of the three school districts in the county, with a 17.8 percent increase in values, or \$83.6 million.

Youens said almost all of that figure was due to increases in oil and gas values. Total value in the Rice District is \$550.9 million.

Meanwhile, values in the city of

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Sales Tax Payments Off 9 Percent

Sales Tax payments to the City of Eagle Lake in June were \$19,231, a decrease of 9.69 percent from last June, figures from the state comptroller show.

So far this year in Eagle Lake, sales tax payments have totaled \$102,002, a decrease of 12.88 percent from the same period last year.

Texas Comptroller Carole Keeton Strayhorn announced that the state received \$1.54 billion in sales tax revenue in May, up 5.8 percent, compared to May 2005.

Strayhorn sent \$398.3 million in June sales tax allocations to cities, counties, transit systems and special purpose taxing districts, up 15.5 percent compared to last June. Since January, sales tax allocations to local governments are running 15.4 percent ahead of last year.

"State and local governments continue to benefit from economic growth, strong business activity and consumer optimism here in Texas," Strayhorn said.

Comptroller Strayhorn sent June sales tax allocations of \$270.2 million to Texas cities, up 15.8 percent compared to June 2005. Calendar year-to-date, city sales tax allocations are up 14.5 percent compared to the same period last year.

Texas counties received sales tax payments of \$24 million, up 17.7 percent compared to one year ago. Calendar year-to-date, county sales tax allocations are 16.3 percent higher than last year.

The half-cent sales tax rebate for Colorado County was up 7.22 percent from the month, with a payment of \$67,649.

For the year in Colorado County, the payments totaled \$428,546, an increase of 4.75 percent.

In Fayette County, the half-cent sales tax was up 15.63 percent, with a payment of \$86,448.

For the year in Fayette County, the payments totaled \$517,308, an increase of 9.93 percent.

Checks sent to area cities for June with changes to area cities for June with changes from last year were as follows:

Columbus - \$72,867, up 4.35 percent; for the year, \$487,933, up 1.58

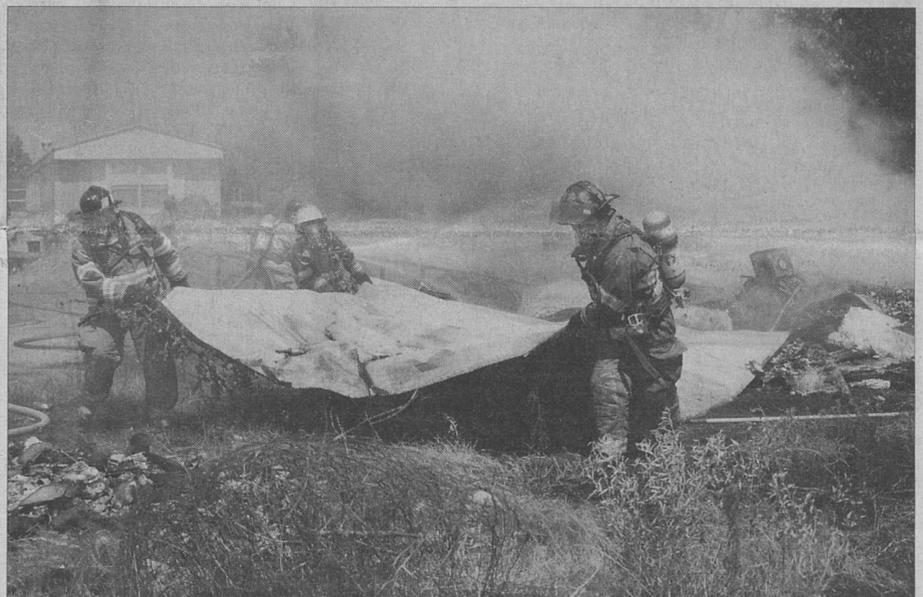
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Fire Department Had Busy Wednesday

The Eagle Lake Volunteer Fire Department responded to two calls last Wednesday, June 7. Fortunately no one was injured in the fires.

Pictured above, firefighters work to put out a fire that occurred in the 400 Block of W. Main St. at about 8 p.m. The house sustained heavy smoke damage as a result. The Lloyd and Barbara Middleton family lost all of their belongings in the fire and are accepting donations to help replace some of their possessions. They are especially in need of clothing, linens and kitchen items. If you would like to help call 979-234-6990.



Firefighters work at the scene of a small trailer fire on FM 1093 Wednesday afternoon at around 3 p.m. The trailer was destroyed and the fire also spread on the ground and caught the back end of a tractor trailer on fire.

Council Votes Yes On New Town Water

The Eagle Lake City Council approved taking over the New Town Water System at its regular meeting Tuesday night.

The action came after being voted down at the previous council meeting.

Some members of council were not satisfied with the proposal that had been made at the previous meeting.

That motion would have had the city take over the water system but still use their current meters, which

according to City Manager Ron Holland are out of date and need to be replaced with the same meters all the other city customers have.

The motion passed on Tuesday will pave the way for the city taking over the New Town water system and selling water directly to the customers there as it does to residents of Eagle Lake.

In order to get hooked into the city's system customers in New Town will have to have their meters

replaced, which will likely cost around \$200 and will have to put down the standard \$150 deposit that is required to initiate service.

The vote did not come until after a first motion died before it was amended and resubmitted.

The initial motion included a provision that would have allowed financing of the meters.

This motion died for a lack of a second.

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NEWSBRIEFS

Need a Juneteenth t-shirt?

Are you in need of a Juneteenth t-shirt? If so they are available by calling 979-234-2467.

ELES PTO taking yearbook orders

The Eagle Lake Elementary School (ELES) PTO is currently taking 2005-2006 year book orders. The price is \$16 each. The PTO is required to have a minimum order of 75 years books sold. Please contact Lydia Contreras at 234-3239 or Daryn Henderson at 979-232-0600 to get an order form. No extra yearbooks will be ordered. Purchase your yearbook and have memories of this school year.

Gadabouts to honor veterans

The Veterans of the Garwood-Nada area will be honored at a luncheon Thursday, June 15 at noon at the Nada Parish Hall. The Gadabouts invite all veterans of the area to come enjoy the celebration.

Chamber to hold garage sale

The Eagle Lake Chamber of Commerce and Pageant Committee will hold a multi-family garage sale Saturday, June 17 from 8 a.m. to noon at the new chamber building on Main Street. Items include bikes, play equipment, clothing, toys and lots, lots more.

Basketball camp set for June 20-22

The Jan Lahodny Basketball Camp will be held at Rice CISD June 20-22. Incoming 7th through 12th grade are eligible to attend. Fee is \$30 (7th-8th graders); \$45 (9th-12th). Make checks payable to: Jan Lahodny, P.O. Box 306, Schulenburg, TX 78956-0306. For more information on the camp or what you should bring to the camp call 979-561-6511.

GRSBC youth annual day is June 24

The youth of Greater Rising Star Baptist Church (GRSBC) invite the public to worship with them on their Youth Annual Day, June 24 at 6 p.m. God's messenger will be Pastor Dave Curry and the South Missionary Point BC family. Also there will be several musical guests and performers. If you or members of your youth department would like to help feel free to contact Rev. Mark Johnson at GRSBC, 979-234-2423.

20th Century conference is June 24

The 20th Century District Association of Texas Mission Society invites the public to their Women's Conference June 24 at 10 a.m. Host church will be Mt. Gilead in Egypt, TX. Rev. R. Jackson, Pastor, Sis. Joyce Banks District Mission President.

RIVFD BBQ is June 25

The Rock Island Volunteer Fire Department (RIVFD) will hold a BBQ chicken and sausage dinner with all the trimmings Sunday, June 25 at the RI fire station. Serving starts at 11 a.m. Plates are \$6 each.

VBS starts June 26 at UMC

The United Methodist Church (UMC) in Eagle Lake along with sponsors, First Baptist Church, UMC and Getsemani Iglesia Bautista will hold Vacation Bible School June 26-30 from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. at UMC (200 E. Prairie, Eagle Lake). Kids from kindergarten thru sixth grade are encouraged to attend.

Validations set for steer, lambs, goats and swine

State steer validation for major shows along with State Fair validation for lambs, goats and swine will be held Monday, June 26, from 7 to 9 a.m. and again from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Rice Consolidated Ag facilities. All exhibitors and a parent must be present at the time of validation.

Rice field day is June 27

The Rice Field Day will take place on Tuesday, June 27, at the Texas A&M Research Station located northwest of Eagle Lake on FM 102. The Field Day tours will begin at 4:00 p.m. followed by the evening meal and program at 6:00

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On Monday, June 12 Commissioner's Court presented a Resolution of Respect to the family of Domingo Sosa. Sosa had been an employee of Colorado County Precinct 4 from May 17, 1999 until May 30, 2006. Sosa's family was on hand for the presentation. Pictured from left to right are Commissioners Darrell Gertson and Tommy Hahn, Mikel Michele Sosa (Domingo's granddaughter), Judge Al Jamison, and Commissioners Herbie Helmeamp and Doug Wessels; in back, Domingo "D.J." Sosa Jr., Michelle Sosa (Domingo's daughter) and Domingo's wife, Margaret "Margie" Sosa.