

Exceptional Turnout Seen For Juneteenth Celebration Held In Altair

Turn out exceeded expectation at Juneteenth festivities in Altair, where it has become an institutionalized part of the cultural life of Black community as it is in many other cities around the United States.

The Garwood Fire Department lead the 20 parade entries along with a group of cowboys and cowgirls on horses that was carrying the Texas flag that flew over the state capitol for one week and donated by Mary Axel to the people of Altair for the Juneteenth celebration.

for their support and participations in the Juneteenth celebration. We are looking forward to next year's Juneteenth celebration. Patrons

who deserve a special appreciation include Ben Davis and staff, Mr. David Polister and staff, the Garwood Fire Department and Mr. Jeff Kimble, the

Eagle Lake Fire Department and Mr. Billy Alley and all the local churches and congregations. Grand Marshal, Mary Axel; As-

istant Marshal, Cynthia Crowder, Park Managers, Gwen Knight, Mary Nightingale. Altair United!!!

Fireworks

Continued from front page

Road and proceed about a half-mile to the site.

The fireworks will be easy to see from anywhere in the area and for those unable to hear the music over the sound system, just tune your radio to station 89.9 FM. Ralph and Connie Gertson at ELC Internet Services, Inc. provide the equipment necessary to simulcast the music on the radio.

The Eagle Lake Fireworks Display invites everyone to attend this annual celebration. As always, the show is free thanks to the generosity of individuals, businesses and organizations throughout this community and all proceeds go directly toward the purchase of fireworks. Also, over 100 volunteers will invest time, equipment and supplies to help with the success of this event.

Anyone looking for more information or interested in making a donation can stop by the Eagle Lake Post Office or call 979-234-2627 during regular business hours. Checks should be made payable to Eagle Lake Fireworks.

It was estimated about 150 people attended the Sunday event, which exceeded organizers expectations as it included people from surrounding towns and even out-of-state visitors. There was plenty of food, water, and soda water for everyone with games for the kids to play, domino tables for the adults and door prizes for Father's Day.

Gene Glover and Finest Axel provided words of encouragement for the future. Mr. Billy Hefner was present to do the swearing in of officers that were elected in the April meeting. Marie Gover, an Altair native was crowned Queen of Juneteenth Celebration with Mrs. Odie Lee Glover of Altair capturing honors as the oldest female present and Mr. Jimmie Carter of Garwood, Texas for oldest male.

Thanks to the community at large

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Serial Killer Resendiz Executed In Huntsville

Confessed serial killer Angel Maturo Resendiz was executed Tuesday evening in Huntsville, bringing to a close for many Colorado County residents a dark chapter in the county's history.

Resendiz, 46, confessed to the killing of three Weimar area residents during a murder-spree in 1999.

On May 2, 1999, Rev. Norman "Skip" Sirmic, 46, and his wife Karen, 47, were found bludgeoned to death in the parsonage of the Weimar United Church of Christ.

Within weeks Resendiz was connected to a string of other murders across the country and became known as the "Railroad Killer" because he often rode freight trains to the scenes of his attacks and most of his murder victims were killed in their homes, located near railroad tracks.

After a manhunt had been launched for him, he returned to the Weimar area and killed Josephine Konvicka, a 73-year-old widow, who lived on U.S. 90 about four miles west of Weimar. Her body was found on June 4.

The next day, June 5, the body of a Noemi Dominguez, 26, a school teacher, was found beaten to death in Houston.

Despite the launching of a nationwide manhunt, Resendiz struck again. The bodies of an 80-year-old man and his 51-year-old daughter were found in Illinois on June 15.

Eventually a relative contacted authorities and a sister of Resendiz's in New Mexico convinced him to surrender.

He gave himself up to Texas Rangers on July 13 on the International Bridge between El Paso and Juarez.

He was tried and convicted for the Dec. 17, 1998 slaying of Dr. Claudia Benton, 39, who was attacked in her Houston home, located near railroad tracks.

Resendiz eventually confessed or was connected to at least 15 other murders, dating back to 1986.

Weimar Police Chief Bill Livingston, who spent countless hours working on the case, said he felt that the execution will bring a measure of closure for many residents affected by the crimes.

"For me personally, when he was captured it brought closure for what I was doing, but I understand a lot of people want the closure that the execution will bring," Livingston said.

He said he felt the town has largely

recovered from the tragic events of that year.

"It affected us dramatically as a town, but I think we've rebounded. We're still a cordial, friendly town where people watch out for each other and help each other."

Although seven years have passed, Livingston said he again wanted to thank everyone who helped and supported the department during those

trying days.

One of the sons of Mrs. Konvicka, Thomas Konvicka, who is a Houston police officer, was planning to witness the execution.

He told the Victoria Advocate: "It has taken way too long for this day to arrive based on the considerable pain that he inflicted on the victims and their families. But I welcome seeing his death so that it can bring the family some closure."

NEWSBRIEFS

Continued from front page

a medically accurate babysitting preparation program designed for boys and girls ages 11 to 13. This nationally recognized program teaches sitters how to have fun with children, recognize a medical emergency and know the appropriate action to take, how to handle specific ages, injury prevention techniques, safety for the sitter and the children, care of the choking child, preventing problem behavior and the business of babysitting. For more information or to sign up for the class please call Vicky Pavlu or Shara Sunderman at 979-234-5571 x 5216 by July 9.

July Fest is July 9

July Fest at the Parish of the Nativity is set for July 9 at the pavilion on 545 S. Austin Road. Come and enjoy a plate of BBQ chicken, baked beans and buttered potatoes, \$7 per plate. Serving is from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Take out or eat under the pavilion. A drawing will be held at 2 p.m. under the pavilion.

GMOBC Homecoming set for July 9

The Greater Mt. Olive Baptist Church (GMOBC) officers and members will celebrate their 120th Homecoming, Family and Friends, and Church anniversary Sunday, July 9 at 3 p.m. They are inviting the public to come and join them in this joyous celebration of praise and thanks.

TAKS testing scheduled for July

TAKS Exit summer testing will be held Tuesday July 11 through Friday July 14 at the Eagle Lake Jr. High campus (Formerly Eagle Lake Primary School), 600 N. Johnny Hutchins in Eagle Lake. Students who are planning to test should arrive at 8:15 a.m. so that testing can begin at 8:30 a.m. Testing will be administered according to the following schedule: July 11 - English/Language Arts; July 12 - Mathematics; July 13 - Science; July 14 - Social Studies. Tests will be given to those students who have taken the TAKS Exit, but who have not yet met the state standard.

CDA retreat is Sept. 22-24

The Texas State Court of the Catholic Daughters of the Americas is inviting its members to a Texas State Retreat at the Christ the King Retreat Center in San Angelo, Texas, September 22-24. The retreat will begin on Friday at 5 p.m. and end with Mass on Sunday at 11 a.m. The theme for the state retreat is Staying Attached to the Vine: Life in the Eucharist. The presenter will be Father Chuck Gunti, OFM, of the San Jose Mission Friar Community, San Antonio. Registration is limited and information can be obtained from each court regent.

County Commissioners Start Work On Budget

Continued from front page

\$64,622, while another is scheduled for a pay increase of 10 percent for a salary of \$62,900.

County Judge Al Jamison noted that the county pays only a portion of salaries (13.8 percent) and said the district judges set the salaries of court reporters.

By law, the district judges can grant court reporters pay increases of up to 10 percent without approval by commissioners.

Commissioners noted they would not address salaries for county officials and employees until later in the budget process.

At the same time, commissioners indicated they did not plan to reconvene a salary committee, made up of county officials, that had advised the

commissioners last year.

They also discussed budgeting \$160,000 for courthouse building maintenance next year. Jamison noted that \$130,000 was budgeted for the current year.

So far through June only \$18,000 had been spent.

But Jamison noted that repairs to the ceiling in the district courtroom will come out of that fund.

Commissioners also noted that there is no prohibition preventing veterans service officer also holding the position of justice of the peace.

The current pay for the veterans service office is \$13,500.

Richard Luhrs, the county's veteran service officer, is a candidate for Justice of the Peace in Precinct 2 in

the November election.

The current salary for peace justice is \$22,080.

Jamison noted that the Department of Public Safety has requested a new radar unit for \$2,000.

Commissioners also discussed a budget request by County Clerk for \$53,000 a year for five years to make electronic copies of all records in her office.

Funds will come from a record preservation fund that comes from fees individuals pay when they file records with the clerk's office.

When the project is completed, Hayek said, individuals could order copies of records she has in her files over the Internet.

Commissioners said they wanted

to go over the proposed budgets for the sheriff's office, Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and Emergency Management at another budget session.

Commissioners also indicated they wanted to get more information on a proposed increase in the budget for the Appraisal District by \$125,439 for a total of \$773,904.

The county pays only a portion of the budget, which is shared by other taxing jurisdictions.

An appraisal district employee said part of the increase is proposed to pay for an additional employee in the area of collections and about \$42,000 is budgeted for the start of a new computerized mapping system.

A public hearing on the appraisal district budget is set for July 11.

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