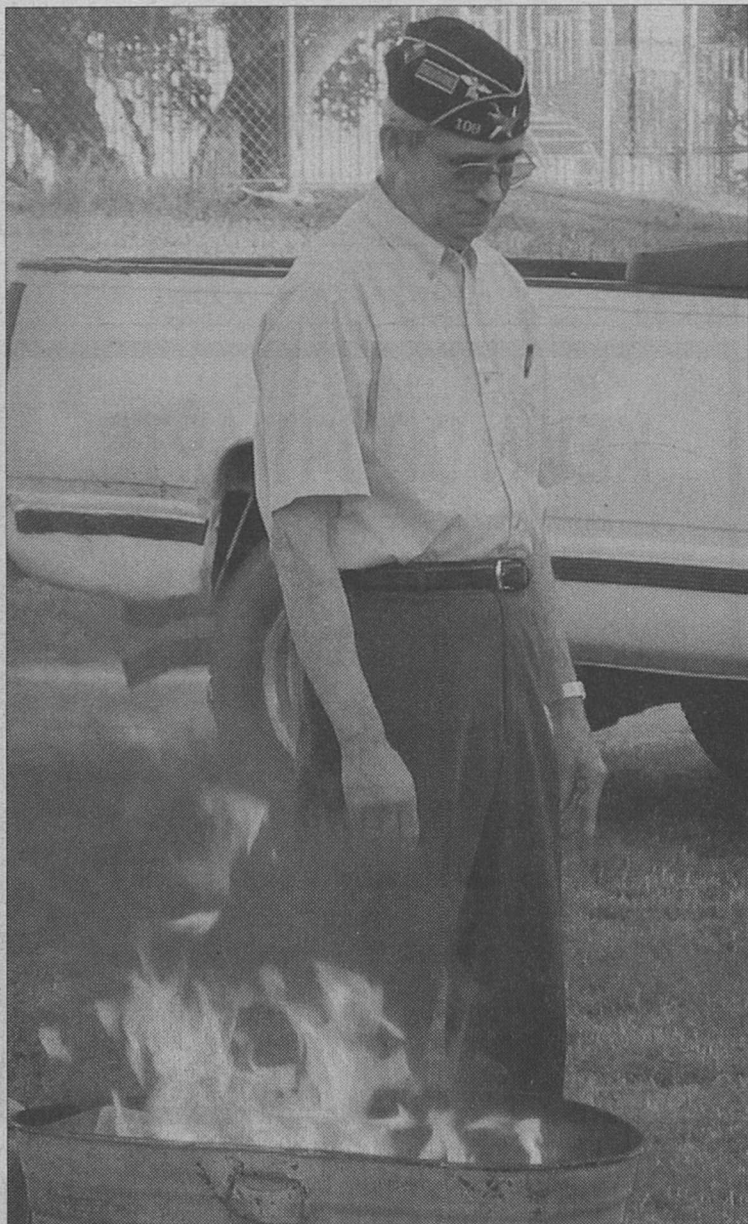




Marshall Holloway, Sergeant at Arms, tends the flames, which are used in the proper disposal of the American flag.

American Legion To Dispose Of Flags

The United States Flag Code states that when an American flag has served its useful purpose and is in such a condition that it is no longer a fitting emblem for display, it should be destroyed in a dignified way, preferably by burning. The W. Cherry - M. Perry American Legion Post #108 of Eagle Lake will hold its annual Flag Disposal Ceremony on Tuesday, October 24. The ceremony will be

held at the city park beginning at 6 p.m. and the public is encouraged to attend.

You are urged to check your flags and, if they are faded, worn or torn, let us dispose of them properly. You may turn them in at any time to Wallis State Bank, A.J. Struss Company, The Furniture Shoppe or the Prairie Edge Museum.



The Columbus Garden Club was recognized recently for its 70th Anniversary. Columbus Mayor Richard Heffley presented a proclamation from the City of Columbus to JoAnn Sebesta of the Columbus Garden Club.

Columbus Garden Club Celebrates 70th Year

In celebration of the 70th anniversary of the Columbus Garden Club, members attended a gala luncheon at the Live Oak Art Center.

On hand for the occasion were more than 80 women including twenty past presidents or their representatives and "Special Friends" of the Garden Club who have given assistance over the years.

Also attending were Freda Carpenter, Director of District 4 of Texas Garden Clubs, Inc., Roxanne Schindler, President of the Eagle Lake Garden Club and Darlene Neiser, president of the Weimar Garden Club.

JoAnn Sebesta, Columbus Garden Club President, welcomed those attending and thanked everyone for coming to commemorate this special occasion. Mayor Richard

Heffley expressed appreciation to the Club for their many community efforts and beautification programs over the years and read a proclamation from the city.

Following a blessing by Corresponding Secretary Fran Gilen, the group recognized those members having birthdays in October.

Special recognition was given to long-time members Leila Weh-

ner, 95, and Thelma Moore who is 98. Both were present for the event and continue to be active members.

Thelma Moore, a well-known local artist, was thanked for painting the lovely watercolor for the event program cover.

In closing, Mrs. Sebesta stated that the Garden Club is committed to continuing their long tradition of the many garden club programs that enhance the beauty of the community as well as providing scholarships and educational programs for the Columbus area.

The next meeting of the Columbus Garden Club will be held on November 8th at the Live Oak Art Center. Coffee will be served starting at 9 a.m. and the meeting will begin at 9:30. The program, "Gardening in Germany", will be presented by Marian Bruhn.

Following the meeting, Marian Schonenberg will lead a discussion of growing day lilies.

Guests are welcome to attend.

Deer Present Unique Challenge For Drivers

Each year, car collisions with deer account for more than 150 human and nearly one and a half million deer fatalities. October through December is the high season for the crashes, since it is a time for both wandering deer and shortened daylight hours.

Most collisions with a deer occur during this time of year when deer are mating and migrating. "Drivers need to be particularly cautious with the season's shortened daylight and deer foraging near roadsides. It's a very dangerous combination," cautioned

Ray Palermo, director of public relations for national car insurer, Response Insurance. "To compound it, more drivers are on the road at dawn and dusk, the very time of day when deer are most active."

An adult deer can weigh more than 200 pounds and a car striking one can not only result in the death of the deer, but also incur, on average, two thousand dollars in damage to the vehicle. Palermo suggested a few basic cautions for drivers:

- Scan a wide swath of the

roadside. Slow down when approaching a deer standing near the side of a road and be prepared. If startled, the deer can bolt onto the roadway and into your path. If necessary, honk your horn and flash your lights to try to scare it away.

- Be alert for more deer than you may see at that moment. Where there is one deer, there are often more nearby.

- In many instances, it is best not to swerve around the deer since the deer may move in the same direction. You may also inadvertently hit another vehicle, or go off onto a dangerous shoulder. Unless certain of those road factors, it is often best to simply brake and continue in your lane of traffic.

- Be particularly careful at dawn and dusk and when driving either over a hill or around a curve, where visibility is limited. Use your high beams to give you a greater area of visibility and allow you to see the deer's eyes sooner.

- Deer whistles or ultrasonic deer avoidance systems attached to vehicles have never been proven to work by independent studies and may give drivers a false sense of security.

- Take deer crossing signs seriously, particularly those installed specifically for this time of year. Be particularly cautious in wooded and agricultural areas where there is little distance between the road and the woods.

Christian Fellowship To Host Halloween Carnival

"All kids have heroes," says Pastor Rusty Griffin. "At our Heroes Unmasked event kids will meet heroes worth having—and have a ball at carnival games as well." Heroes Unmasked is an all-fun, no-fear Bible adventure. Children and their families will encounter costumed Bible Hero Actors, play more than a dozen carnival games, decorate cookies to take home, do crafts, and collect Bible Hero Cards to trade and treasure.

"Heroes Unmasked is an ex-

citing way for kids to learn more about God's love," says Pastor Rusty. "Meeting the costumed Bible Hero Actors and interacting with the themed games is huge fun. Heroes Unmasked is for kids of all ages, so I'm looking forward to being there myself!"

Heroes Unmasked is on October 31, and doors are open between 6 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. The church is located at 5243 Hwy. 36 North, Sealy. For information, call 979-885-3113.

Rural Innovators Launch Speaker Series

Ten state organizations and a national policy institute have announced the launch of a new program to promote improvement through innovation in Texas small cities and towns. The program, the Texas Rural Innovators Forum or "TRIF", is a series of forums featuring national speakers on the most innovative practices in rural America.

"We all know that if we keep doing the same things, we are likely to end up with the same results," says TRIF coordinator, Bobby Gierisch, "and for many rural regions, that just means continued, slow erosion of the economy and social institutions."

"Those who fail or refuse to innovate, may not die," Gierisch continued, "but we are fooling ourselves if we think we can sit on the sidelines and let things get better on their own."

The goal of TRIF is to bring the leaders of rural Texas into personal contact with the very best spokespeople from the most successful and innovative rural development projects and programs in America, and to bring leaders of rural Texas together with one another to share their own energy and ideas for improvement. Local elected and volunteer leaders in all fields are invited to participate in the Forums.

USDA Rural Development Director Bryan Daniel said, "This is a great opportunity for rural leaders from across Texas to hear real people talk about things that really work. Our small cities and towns truly need new ideas, and we need them now."

The initial Forum is October 19 in Austin. It will feature Vaughn Grisham, Director of the McLean Institute at Ole Miss discussing the "miraculous" economic development successes of Tupelo, Mississippi, over half a century; and Becky Anderson, Director of HandMade In America, an extraordinary example of community and regional development based on the "invisible industry" of arts and crafts in western North Carolina. U.S. News and World Report called Becky Anderson one of America's top 20 visionaries in 1999.

The kick-off Forum will be held at the Texas Municipal League Center in Northeast Austin. It will run from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm and include a box lunch. Details are available on the TRIF website, www.ruralex.org.

"TRIF speakers will present a mix of theory and practice, but this is all about action and improvement at home, on the ground – not pie-in-the-sky," according to Carlton Schwab, director of the Texas Economic Development Council, one of the program sponsors.

"And let me assure you, you won't be sleeping through these presentations," he continued, "these are not just good speakers, they are extremely interesting, even entertaining!"

A new Forum will be held every six to eight weeks. The second one is scheduled for December 11 in Bastrop.

Objection Raised To PureTex Plan

Dear Concerned Citizens:

Please accept this correspondence as an objection to the PureTex facility proposed for Eagle Lake.

The concentrated extraction of water near bottling plants has caused water shortages across America and the globe. Numerous problems like water shortages, dry wells, inability to replenish supply are erupting across the United States including Texas all the way to the Great Lakes region of North America. Farmers, fishers, and others just like Eagle Lake residents who depend on water for their livelihoods are suffering from concentrated water extraction as water tables drop quickly. The surge in these plants is beneficial y for the bottler. The effect on others is devastating, especially where drought conditions already exist. Clean, affordable drinking water is essential to the health of our community, but bottled water is not the answer. It is certainly not the answer for Eagle Lake farmers, ranchers, and sportsmen.

If damage in the United States is not enough, look overseas for a glimpse at where the expanding industry of bottled water is headed. Water extraction by Coca Cola for Dasani bottled water and other drinks has caused crisis water shortages for over 50 areas in Southern Indian states.

I too live in an agricultural region albeit farther west, outside of San Antonio, Texas. There is not enough water for the rapidly growing metropolitan region causing water shortages, ugly costly litigation such as that over the infamous Applewhite project, and legislation to protect the region's farmers who draw from the dropping aquifers.

Men like Boone Pickens are buying land over aquifers in West Texas just to sell water to ranchers, farmers and cities like El Paso who are without.

The negative effects are not simply in loss of water, but an unnecessary large amount of energy is used in the extraction, bottling and transport of the water. For small Eagle Lake, the effect on roads and transportation in your region will be overwhelming. The plant will do nothing to improve your roads, but will cause additional dangerous semi tractor trailers on small country roads. The clear negative effects of bottling on our increasingly scarce (and most sacred) natural resource has caused many states to seek legislation which would tax bottled water companies for water withdrawals as a way of compensating the public for use of a natural resource. Not only is PureTex taking the water, they are leaving nothing in exchange for this Eagle Lake community or for Texas.

I attach to my letter several articles on the internet about the risks of bottling plants like that proposed for Eagle Lake. Literally, "water wars are increasing everywhere, not just Eagle Lake, Texas or Hawkins, Texas. Another bottler, Ozarka, has been accused of draining several landowners' wells by boring excessively into Texas.

Several rural East Texas landowners had no choice but to file suit when Ozarka pumping for bottled water caused their wells to run dry. The landowners in that suit, Mr. Bail Sipriano and Mr. and Mrs. Harold Fain, said small neighboring landowners are powerless to stop the drainage of their wells, and can no longer sustain themselves on their land. Ozarka said it had a scientific monitoring system to ensure no depletion occurred, but the wells still went dry. Ozarka said it had no desire to hurt neighboring wells and pledged to "reassess" operations if negative effects on the source occurred but the end result was the same. Mayor Morales, Ozarka was only pumping 90,000 gallons from beneath that land I heard that this PureTex facility plans to pump over one million gallons per day. What will your landowners do when their wells run dry? Texas land owners rely on the longevity of aquifers to water their livestock and irrigate their lands. Can Eagle Lake residents or the county afford to sue a corporate bottling entity or will they simply be forced to sell their farms because they can no longer irrigate?

Of note, I would assume that the city municipal water supply comes from the same or similarly situated aquifer it too is in danger of depletion and water loss from concentrated pumping like PureTex wants.

The same articles that I read and cite are publicly available. I attached a few of them, but I encourage you to read for yourself and to fight PureTex and other bottlers. The aquifer or groundwater will not be the only water sucked dry and placed at risk. If the Great Lakes of North America and the multiple states on the Colorado River are fighting legal battles to protect their water from similar pumping, think of the effect of bottling on your section of the lower Colorado, or your own Eagle Lake or your surface water sources. What is left when they are gone?

Anna Whorton

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Citizens of Eagle Lake,

I am sending this PDF file drafted on October 12th to the Eagle Lake Headlight as a Guest Editorial from Anna Whorton, my youngest daughter who loves Eagle Lake, is an attorney in San Antonio and an owner of a horse and hay farm at Castroville. She is one of thousands who has suffered incredibly from drought for more than two years. Farmers west of San Antonio in that cattle growing and truck farming region near the Medina River have been trucking in horse hay to sustain their livestock for a long time now.

Anna has been buying fine horse hay from Sam Meitzen in Eagle Lake because there has not been a blade of grass on Medina County farms. Thank goodness,

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our area has had more rain than most of Texas, Oklahoma and the Southwest. The aquifer is critically low in Anna's region, and the wells are going dry. I thought you would be interested in this opinion from a landowner who has endured a drought of immense destruction. She knows how precious water is to agriculture and knows Colorado Countians need to conserve their precious water for such drought times as Medina County has had.

As an Eagle Lake resident, I agree with Anna. PureTex does not need to have tax abatements from the County nor from the consolidated school district or carte blanc license to remove this county's water when God only knows when the aquifer in our area will suffer severe drought conditions. Years hence, with greater demands and without better management and planning now, Colorado County will have little or no water, regardless of what PureTex or other quasi-governmental bodies might publicly declare. We citizens should not have turned back a groundwater conservation district option a few years ago; the wolves (and there will be more) are now at our door. Our County sorely needs professional and selected directors to manage our water resources on a county-wide basis.

To their business credit, the bottom line is that these water related companies with water proposals are here to make a huge profit, and there is absolutely nothing wrong with that. But remember! Eagle Lake might enjoy some jobs at the PureTex plant for the short term but there are sound reasons why PureTex and similar water companies have been turned away from nearby counties and a nearby city. Our neighbors appreciate their natural resources; They know the value of adequate groundwater, and they intend to keep their groundwater for their immediate agricultural and citizen uses.

I wonder if Sam Meitzen will get a tax abatement for his county hay making business? Or will the rice farmers get another some such subsidy 'not to plant' rice because there is no water? Yes, rice farmers do use a lot of water, and so do grass growers and cattle growers. And, it is vital water for the industry; it is used and goes back into the aquifer. PureTex water will go straight into human gullets and be lost. Will the county taxpayers have to pay again to keep FM 102, 90-A and other county roads in respectable condition with the additional company traffic from Ramsey Road? Even after this town meeting on this past Thursday, there are still too many unanswered questions for the Loessin and Whorton Family to sign off and easily give our water away, even with the compelling promises and tax benefits declared by the PureTex Water Corporation.

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