

# Eagle Lake Headlight

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EAGLE LAKE, TEXAS

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The marquee at Rice High School announces the impending start of coming school year. The first day of school is August 27.

## Wreck Claims Life Of Eagle Lake Teen

A car wreck about four miles north of El Campo on Highway 71 in the early hours of Sunday, August 12 claimed the life of soon to be senior football player at Rice High School Raul Esquivel, Jr., 18.

Also killed in the accident that occurred about 3:45 a.m. was 25-year old Mariela Andrade Padilla of Sealy.

She was a passenger in the back seat of the 1998 Toyota Corolla driven by Esquivel.

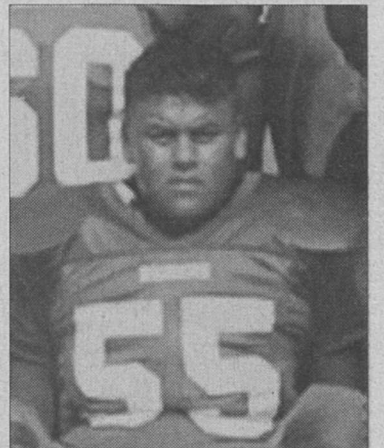
The driver of the other vehicle, a 1997 Dodge Pickup, 19-year old Clayton Layne Nielsen of El Campo, was being held Wharton County Jail where he will face two charges of intoxicated manslaughter and two charges of intoxicated assault as well as a felony charge of failure to render aid. Officers said Nielsen fled the scene of the accident and was found in a nearby field several hours later and was arrested. His bond was set at \$350,000.

Reports indicate that Esquivel was heading north on Hwy. 71 when Nielsen's southbound pickup veered into the northbound lane and struck on the left-front of the vehicle.

Two other passengers in Esquivel's vehicle were transported to Memorial Hermann Hospital where they were in stable condition with broken bones.

They were Sergio Esquivel, 19, of Eagle Lake and Ariana Karen Engbrock, 18, of Egypt.

Reports indicate that Engbrock was wearing a seatbelt, while it is inconclusive whether the other occupants were or not.



Raul Esquivel, Jr.

Nielsen did not suffer any major injuries as a result of the collision.

Intoxicated manslaughter is a second degree felony and punishable by up to 20 years in prison while intoxicated assault is a third degree felony punishable by up to 10 years in prison.

Esquivel and Padilla were both pronounced dead on the scene by Wharton County Peace Justice No. 3, Dennis Korenek at 4:50 a.m. on August 12.

The accident was investigated by DPS Trooper Jose Luis Mena with the assistance of Sgt. Daniel Terronez, Trooper Michael Hubenak, Trooper David Hill, the Wharton County Sheriff's Department, the El Campo Police Department, El Campo Volunteer Fire Department and EMS and Game Warden Scott Blackburn.

Funeral services have been set for Thursday at 10 a.m. at Parish of the Nativity with burial following in the Nativity Cemetery.

## Commissioners Propose Tax Increase

Colorado County commissioners, meeting Monday, proposed a tax increase of 2.58 percent for the coming year to fund the proposed budget for 2008.

The increase would put the tax rate at 43 cents per \$100 valuation, an increase of 1.11 cents per \$100 valuation.

Because of increased valuations, the proposed tax rate will raise more property taxes than last year by \$674,000 or 11.9 percent.

Two public hearings on the increase are scheduled for Aug. 27 at 9:15 a.m. and Aug. 31 at 9 a.m. at the Colorado County Courthouse.

The average taxable value of a homestead residence in the county is currently \$86,236, according to county figures.

If the proposed increase is approved, taxes on that residence would increase by \$27.08 a year, compared to the previous year. Total spending for the general

fund is projected at \$8.5 million.

Commissioners also agreed to propose three recent pay raises for county employees, including elected officials.

In other action, commissioners agreed to appoint a citizens advisory committee to make recommendations on construction of a courthouse annex.

County Judge Al Jamison had suggested the committee and said their primary purpose would be to make recommendations to commissioners on an annex building.

Named to the committee were: Travis Wegenhoft, chairman, and members Maybelle Barnett Laura Ann Rau, H.O. (Butch) Strunk and Larry Uhlig.

Jamison said the committee would get input from all of the county officeholders.

County Attorney Ken Sparks said he felt that the annex should be built before courthouse renovations start.

Commissioners said earlier they felt the courthouse would have to be vacated during renovations.

They voted earlier to apply for a \$6 million for courthouse renovations and estimated it would cost another \$3 million for an annex and other costs associated with renovation.

Some estimates of square footage needed for an annex have been 8,000 to 10,000.

There was considerable discussion about whether the county should proceed on repairs to

the courthouse roof or wait for a grant.

Jamison noted that if a state grant is obtained, the state has stringent requirements on how repairs must be done.

There was also discussion of whether some funds should be taken out of reserves to pay for part of the county's expected \$3 million.

To raise funds, commissioners had previously discussed a tax increase of 2 to 4 cents per \$100 valuation.

At times the discussion grew fairly heated.

Commissioners also:

--Approved a request by the Colorado County Groundwater District temporary directors for the county to pay the costs of a special election on whether to create a permanent district.

--Approved an agreement to participate in a regional auto theft task force. One officer of the task force is stationed in Colorado County.

--Agreed to participate in a energy cooperative purchasing program through the Houston Galveston Area Council.

--Approved a plat for a subdivision, Powell Estates in Precinct 3.

--Approved a slight increase in lot rentals at Robert R. Wells Airport.

--Ok'd allowing the city of Eagle Lake to place an 8-inch sewer line under Calhoun Road in Precinct 4.

## NEWSBRIEFS

### Reading logs available

Children who were involved with the reading program at the Wintermann Library need to come by and pick up their reading log, certificate and book if they met their goals and check to see if they get to go shopping in the "store".

### RHS Students schedules ready

Rice High School (RHS) students began picking up their class schedules for the upcoming school year after 9 a.m., Monday, August 13. Freshmen and their parents/guardians may visit the school after this date to become familiar with the campus. Students who will be new RHS may plan on registering for the upcoming school year during this time period, also. If you would like to register, please have the following paperwork with you at registration: proof of residence within Rice CISD, birth certificate, social security card, immunization records and last report card from your previous school. Please call Rice High School if you have any questions about the 2007-2008 school year which will begin August 27.

### Season tickets now on sale

Season tickets for Rice High School (RHS) home football games are on sale at the Rice CISD Administration office through Friday, Aug. 17. Beginning Monday, Aug. 20 those who have not held season tickets may purchase them on a first-come, first serve basis through Aug. 24. Cost for season tickets for all home games is \$30 per set (we have 5 home games this year). Cost at the gate will be \$6 per game. No refunds will be honored for any of the games. Reserved seats for individual games will cost \$7 at the gate. Call 234-3531 for more information. Adult pre-game admission tickets will also be sold at \$6 each and will be available at RHS Thursday and Friday until 3 p.m. Also, this year All-Sports Pass for all sports EXCEPT varsity football will be available for \$75.

### WCBC holding revival

Community Revival Services at White Cloud Baptist Church (WCBC) run through August 17 at 7:30 p.m. The speaker will be Rev. C.L. Wallace from Mother Zion Baptist Church. Sponsors are Rev. O. Rhodes from White Cloud Baptist Church and Rev. T. Scott, Sr. from Greater Rising Star Baptist Church.

### Celebration scheduled for Friday

The WIC Program will celebrate National Breastfeeding month Aug. 17 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Columbus WIC Clinic at 520 Washington St. Classes to motivate mothers as to the benefits of breastfeeding will be provided. Volunteers who make baby quilts, clothes and toys will be honored. These items are given to breastfeeding mothers as an incentive to continue breastfeeding.

### Booster hamburger supper Saturday

The Rice Raider football team will host the Needville Bluejays in a scrimmage on Saturday, Aug. 18 at 5:30 p.m. The Booster Club will be selling hamburgers, chips, drinks and candy. Athletes wishing to be eligible for the Booster Club scholarships, along with their parents are reminded that working this event and future ones gets the athlete closer to qualifying for a college scholarship.

### Groundbreaking services are Saturday

20<sup>th</sup> Century District Association will hold a groundbreaking service Saturday, Aug. 18 at 1 p.m. off Hwy. FM 102 South in Egypt. The location is behind Sandridge Baptist Church. They plan to build a new tabernacle. 20<sup>th</sup> Century District Association is made up of 30 churches.

### FFA meeting is Monday

There will be an FFA meeting Monday, Aug. 20 at 6 p.m. in the Rice High School commons. All county fair participants are to bring their entry cards, entry fees and 3 buyer letters (invitations). Follow-

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## Nineteen Indicted By Grand Jury

The Colorado County grand jury, meeting on Aug. 9, returned indictments against 19 individuals. They included:

--Keitten Armstrong, 19, of Weimar, burglary of a building on May 22.

--Travis D. Brown, 26, of Weimar, sexual assault on June 9.

--Jermaine Thomas Collins, 29, of Eagle Lake, credit card abuse on June 12.

--Luis A. Escalante, 25, of Houston, felony DWI on July 7.

--Laroy Lee Ezeb, 30, of Oakland, Calif., possession of a controlled substance, codeine on July 6.

--Dwayne A. Gallaher, 34, of Weimar, charges of burglary on May 13, 19, 20, 22 and 24.

--Charlie Lee Gordon, 48, of Gonzales, aggravated assault with a deadly weapon on July 12.

--Chelsea M. Hollywood, 17, of Columbus, credit card abuse on June 8.

--Edith C. Howard, 33, of Weimar, charges of burglary on May 13, 20, 22 and 24.

--Stralecia A. Johnson, 27, of Eagle Lake, fraudulent use of social security card on April 30.

--Brian L. Jones, 32, of LaVernia, impersonating a public

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The Rice Cheerleaders pose with the trophy they won at The University Of Texas Cheerleading Camp. Back row, left to right, Kacie Smith, Kari Beth Mahalich, Kaydi Gold, Kristyna Lobpries, Katlyn Thomas, Kourtney Korenek, Jessica Godley and Falin Braden; in front, left to right, April Pagel and Tori Rathburn.