

THE EAGLE LAKE HEADLIGHT

Division of Beal Publications, LLC • (USPS 163-760)
 P.O. Box 67 - 220 East Main
 CITY OF EAGLE LAKE, TEXAS 77434-0067
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 Published Weekly-Every Thursday

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Advertising and News Deadline: 5 P.M. Monday

Subscription Rates

Colorado County (including Lissie & Egypt)	\$17.00
Fayette, Lavaca, Wharton & Austin Counties	\$19.50
Other Texas Residents	\$20.00
Outside of Texas; Inside U.S.	\$21.50

Single Copy Price : 50¢

Second class postage paid at Eagle Lake, Texas

Address Corrections should be sent to P.O. Box 67 Eagle Lake, Texas 77434-0067

Office Hours: Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri-8-5 Wed-10-3



The Eagle Lake Headlight reserves the right to reject, edit or omit editorial content and/or advertisement for any reason in order to conform to the paper's policy.

State Publishes New Franchise Tax Regulations

AUSTIN Businesses can get a clearer idea of how much franchise tax they are going to pay because of tax law revisions, and the state is welcoming feedback on the new rules.

The rules implementing changes mandated by the state Legislature were published in the Sept. 14 edition of the Texas Register, and a 30-day public comment period started.

The 79th Legislature in 2006 and the 80th Legislature in 2007 devised changes to the franchise tax to help pay for a sweeping property tax cut.

"It is important for all franchise taxpayers, especially those who will be required to report franchise tax for the first time, to review these proposed rules," Texas Comptroller Susan Combs said.

The Legislature revised the franchise tax by changing the tax base and the tax rate and extending coverage to most legal entities. About 200,000 new entities will have to file franchise tax reports in 2008.

The rules are expected to be adopted in December, according to the Comptroller's office.

Taxable entities with total revenue of \$434,782 or less and entities that calculate they owe less than \$1,000 in franchise tax will not be required to pay the tax, but will still have to file a report, Combs said.

How to pay for it is the question

Texas transportation officials announced plans to form a working group to figure out how to pay for the Ports-to-Plains Corridor road-building project.

Ports-to-Plains is a proposed divided highway running from Laredo through West Texas to Denver, Colo. Designated as a High Priority Corridor by Congress in 1998, planners intend Ports-to-Plains to expand economic opportunity and serve international trade from Mexico to Canada.

Despite the congressional designation, adequate federal

funding has not been provided to cover the cost of the project, officials said.

In addition to economic development and job creation, officials said the corridor could provide a way to transfer energy generated by wind turbines in West Texas to other parts of Texas and the Southwest.

Amnesty program brings in bucks

Comptroller Combs' tax amnesty program, Project Fresh Start, brought in more than \$100 million in unpaid taxes from June 15 through Aug. 16.

The amount included more than \$90 million in state taxes and more than \$10 million owed to local governments, Combs said.

A total of 1,258 businesses reported and paid delinquent taxes. Between 3 percent and 5 percent of those were new taxpayers operating businesses without required tax permits and without paying state taxes.

In exchange for their cooperation and payment, the comptroller waived penalty and interest charges normally added to delinquent taxes.

Land board rejects all proposals

The School Land Board,

chaired by Land Commissioner Jerry Patterson, on Sept. 18 rejected all six bids for the purchase of the 9,200-acre Christmas Mountains ranch tract in Big Bend.

Patterson said a mistake in the map of the tract in the original bid specifications was the reason.

The Land Board, which will meet again in November, is expected to consider bids again.

"Moving this land out of government hands is in the best interest of the land and those who want to preserve it," he added.

Language certifications approved

If a Texas public school teacher wants to be state certified to teach a foreign language, the choices are Spanish, French, German or Latin at the secondary school level.

But beginning in October, they can become certified to teach Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Russian and Vietnamese in pre-kindergarten through 12th grade classes.

Karen Loonam, director of educator standards at the Texas Education Agency, said "These five new certificates were created to be responsive to the needs of multicultural communities and to prepare students for increasing

TEXAS PRESS ASSOCIATION

State Capital



HIGHLIGHTS
By Ed Sterling

globalization of the economy."

Institute releases traffic report

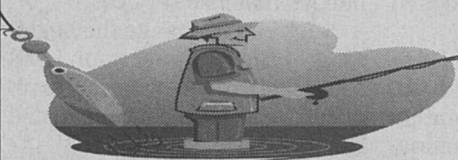
Austin is considered a high-congestion city, traffic-wise, and a new report has numbers (mobility data) to prove it.

Texas Transportation Institute, a division of the Texas A&M University System, published its 2007 Annual Urban Mobility Report for cities across the nation, including Austin, Beaumont, Brownsville, Corpus Christi, Dallas/Fort Worth, El Paso, Houston, Dallas/Fort Worth, El Paso, Laredo and San Antonio.

To read the report, go to <http://mobility.tamu.edu/ums/>.

Mount Sinai Evangelical Ministries Will Host a Fish Fry Sat., Sept. 29

Serving starts at 10:30 a.m. Plates are \$6 each (Plates include catfish, potatoes, green beans, bread and cake)



To place an order Call 234-3259 or stop by 317 E. Union St.

Taco Tony's Mexican Restaurant

20 Calhoun Road • Eagle Lake
979-234-3984

Breakfast Specials: Mon.-Fri., 8 to 11:30 a.m.

Lunch and Dinner Specials
Mon.-Fri. Beginning at 11 a.m. and 5 p.m.

Buffet Tuesdays and Thursdays
11 a.m. to 1:45 p.m.

Hours:
Mon.-Thurs.: 8 a.m. to 1:45 p.m. and 5 p.m. to 8:45 p.m.
Fri. and Sat.: 8 a.m. to 9:15 p.m.
Sunday: 7:30 a.m. to 1:45 p.m.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Temp. Water Board Stresses Need For District

Dear Editor,
 We will all be hearing a lot of information about groundwater conservation districts in the coming weeks. Establishing a groundwater conservation district in Colorado County will give us the means to protect our aquifer and water supply and do so according

to the laws of Texas.

During 2006, the city councils of Columbus, Eagle Lake and Weimar recognized the need for a groundwater conservation district in our county. Each city passed a resolution (unanimously) calling for the formation of a groundwater conservation district. Those resolutions were presented to commissioner's court for consideration. The Colorado County Commissioners Court also passed a resolution (unanimously) calling for the formation of a planning group to establish a Groundwater Conservation District (GCD).

All four precincts and all three cities were represented by a member on the planning committee. The planning group was charged with writing the enabling legislation that would allow for the formation of the Colorado County Groundwater Conservation District.

The group held meetings inviting community input, and

addressed concerns brought to committee. Three major concerns were brought to the planning group. The group listened, and wrote our enabling legislation to assure the concerns of local landowners would be addressed. Our legislation: 1) Limits taxation, with a cap of three cents per \$100 of valuation; 2) The use of "eminent domain" will not be allowed; and 3) Meters will not be required on domestic or livestock wells jumping less than 25,000 gallons per day.

The Colorado County Commissioner's Court appointed seven members to the temporary board of directors of the Colorado County groundwater conservation district. A special election has been called for November 6 by the temporary board. The purpose of the election is the confirmation of the district, and the election of a board of directors.

Members of the temporary board are available to answer

your questions, or to meet with your organization. The board members are Vivian Spanihel, Precinct 1 (979-533-0849); Bill Briscoe, Precinct 2 (979-240-9713); Clayton Wallin, Precinct 3 (979-732-6367); Tom Kelley, Precinct 4 (713-557-2239); Marian Schonenberg, Columbus (979-732-2362); Jim Wiese, Eagle Lake (979-732-1041); David Kahlich, Weimar (979-725-8322).

Please feel free to call any of the board members if you would like to learn more, or schedule a presentation for your club. Visit the Colorado County Groundwater Conservation District website at www.coloradocountygcd.com.

Learn all that you can about this issue in the coming weeks. Please take time to attend one or more of the upcoming educational meetings and take time to vote. Thank you.

The Temporary Board Colorado County GCD

FIRST National BANK

Member FDIC

Enter First National Bank's Friday Give Away!

The winner will receive a Rice Raider stadium seat.

One winner every Friday Entries Now Being Accepted Drawings will be held weekly during the Rice Raider football season.

Drawing will be held at 3:00 p.m. Ask your friendly teller for an entry ballot. (need not be present to win; no transaction necessary to enter) FNB employees and immediate family are not eligible to enter.

COLORADO COUNTY COURTHOUSE REPORT

The following individuals were sentenced in County Court on Wednesday, Sept. 19.

Reginald Keith Bailey, assault causing bodily injury. Sentenced to 60 days in jail, credit for 32.

Mitchel R. Castillo, failure to identify giving false/fictitious information. Sentenced to 90 days in jail.

Mitchell R. Castillo, bail jumping and failure to appear. Sentenced to 90 days in jail.

Kyle David Clark, count 1, driving while intoxicated. Count 2, possession of marijuana, dismissed, sentenced to one-year probation, fined \$500, interlock device.

Juan Herrera, assault/family violence. Sentenced to three days in jail, credit for two served, fined \$500.

Samantha Coronado, criminal mischief. Sentenced to three days in jail, credit for two served, fined \$350.

Iris Cumpian Fajkus, driving while license invalid. Sentenced to three days in jail, credit for two served, fined \$200.

Joshua Evan Gatschet, pos-

session of marijuana. Sentenced to 30 days in jail, credit for 30 served.

Kirk Douglas Glenn, criminal trespass. Sentenced to 10 days in jail, credit for 29 served.

Raymond Guerra, II, driving while license invalid. Sentenced to three days in jail, credit for two served, fined \$200.

Albert Lee Hall, Jr., reckless driving. Sentenced to three days in jail, credit for two served, fined \$200.

Karen Hinson, theft of stolen property. Sentenced to two years deferred adjudication, fined \$100, \$735.27 restitution.

Shawn Richard Lujan, terroristic threat. Sentenced to 180 days in jail.

Jose Luis Andrade Pineda, disorderly conduct, discharge/display firearm. Sentenced to three days in jail, credit for two served, fined \$500, forfeit weapon.

John G. Pruneda, terroristic threat of family/household. Sentenced to 10 days in jail, credit for 13 served.

Rafael Rangel, count 1 possession of marijuana-dismissed;

count 2, possession of a controlled substance, sentenced to one year deferred adjudication, fined \$500, drug program.

Carlos L. Rivas, driving while intoxicated-2nd offense. Sentenced to 30 days in jail, fined \$500, 12 month driver's license suspension.

Luther Lowery Broadus, possession of marijuana. Sentenced to three days in jail credit for two served, fined \$350.

Mark E. Egerton, theft. Sentenced to two years deferred adjudication, fined \$250.

Antonio Felan, driving while license invalid. Sentenced to three days in jail, fined \$350.

Carlos Alberto Hernandez, JP Appeal. Fined \$155.

Leonard Earl King, harassment. Sentenced to 30 days in jail.

Mitchell Lee, assault causing bodily injury to a family member. Sentenced to 20 days in jail (weekends).

Bunghorn Mason, accident involving damage to vehicle. Sentenced to three days in jail, credit for two served, \$1,165 restitution.

Aaron Wayne Oppermann, possession of marijuana. Sentenced to three days in jail credit for two served, fined \$350.

Jeffrey J. Osmon, possession of marijuana. Sentenced to six months deferred adjudication, fined \$250.

Tomás Rubinos, JP Appeal. Fined \$100.

Gabriel Talavera, JP Appeal. Fined \$150.

Dagoberto Torres, JP Appeal. Fined \$150.

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