

# County Revisits Annex Plan

Continued from front page

Hahn also said he regretted that commissioners court did not give the annex committee a dollar figure for an annex to work with when the committee was appointed.

Travis Wegenhoft, one of the members of the annex committee, said he felt the county needed to look to the future. "It's a big mistake if you don't look ahead 15 to 20 years," he said.

Commissioner Herbie Helms said he was concerned about whether the size of proposed building was needed.

In his precinct operations, he said: "If we don't have to have it, we don't get it."

There was considerable discussion of whether the county could obtain a grant of about \$5 million from the state for courthouse restoration.

The county was turned down earlier this year, but Jamison and Wegenhoft said they were optimistic of getting one in the future.

Part of the discussion on the size of the annex centered on whether the county would be required to remove additions made

to the courthouse years ago if it got a grant.

Those additions currently house the tax assessor-collector and the county clerk.

It was noted removal of those additions would affect the size of an annex.

There was also discussion of whether to raze the existing agriculture building and the Farm Bureau building the county is in the process of acquiring.

Commissioner Wessels said he was interested in exploring keeping the existing buildings and reducing the size of the annex.

"If you use the farm bureau building and the ag building it would cut down a lot," Gertson said of the size of the annex.

At one point there was discussion of putting the plans for an annex up to a vote of the people.

"We could have a bond issue and let them decide," Gertson said.

Last week the county agreed to publish notice of intent to issue \$5 million in certificates of obligation for courthouse repairs of about \$3.5 million to \$4 million and \$1 million for road improve-

ments.

The certificates do not require a vote by citizens, but voters can petition to call for a vote.

Jamison noted that remodeling of the courthouse will require temporary moving of offices.

Architect Brad Cutright presented estimates of several options for a one or two story annex all with about 24,000 square feet.

He said that actual building cost would about \$4.5 million, but fees and related costs would put the estimate in the \$5.6 million range.

"Don't shoot me. I'm just the messenger," he said.

County Attorney Ken Sparks said he felt if the county got the restoration grant, it will need the annex to house the office that will have to be moved during the restoration.

"He also said he felt the size of the annex could be scaled back.

"If you're looking 30 years in advance, you can end up over-estimating," he said.

Commissioners said the annex committee, with the new members, would continue looking at the annex and the appropriate size.



Bobby Joe and Becky Marsalia's yard at 265 S. Austin Road is the Garden Club's Yard of the Month.

## Garden Club Yard Of Month

By Patty Holloway

Bobby Joe and Becky Marsalia's yard at 265 S. Austin Road is just a joyful burst of spring color. They have done a lot of work in this yard in the year and a half since they moved in.

Lining the walk up to the front door are red and white petunias and red dianthus. Across the front

of the house they have planted dwarf mandinas along with begonias. There are begonias planted in hanging pots on the front porch as well. There are also colorful plantings along the side of the house and driveway.

Bobby Joe is a retired rice farmer but is still working as a hunting guide. He spends all of

his spare time working in his vegetable garden and planning his next fishing trip.

Becky is retired from part time work in the school system. Her hobbies are painting and gardening. The Marsalia's are parents of seven children and grandparents to nine grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.



LCRA recently made a donation to the Eagle Lake Little League. Pictured, from left, are LCRA employees Tim Jones and Alex Ramirez presenting a check to Little League President DJ Sosa.

## LCRA Donates To Little League

Eagle Lake Little League has recently received a boost in upgrading its ballpark with a \$3,000 donation from LCRA employees to replace wooden bleachers at the Little League field.

The donation came from LCRA employees at Irrigation Opera-

tions in Bay City, Eagle Lake and Garwood, Fayette Power Project near La Grange, Rail Fleet Maintenance Facility at Smithville and the General Office Complex and Bergstrom Technology Center in Austin through LCRA Employees' United Charities program.

LCRA employees who participate in United Charities voluntarily donate up to two hours' pay monthly to support the program and then decide how the funds are spent.

United Charities contributes more than \$492,000 annually, supporting a variety of nonprofit organizations throughout LCRA's service area.

"Our employees want to ensure that the children who participate in the Eagle Lake Little League have a field that is safe and comfortable for their family members to come and enjoy their activities," said Tern McKinley, chairperson of the Irrigation Operations Chapter of United Charities. "We appreciate the community supporting this great way for kids to spend their time and we are happy to help."

## Rice Farmers Sue

Continued from front page grow non-genetically modified rice.

It states that Bayer has worked on genetically modified rice.

The suit alleges that Bayer disposed of five million pounds of unapproved genetically modified rice on Garrett's land and contaminated seed rice grown by

Garrett and sold to farmers.

As a result, the suit states, the farmers were forced in the spring of 2007 to plant other, less preferred varieties of rice and suffered damages.

The amount of the damages was not specified in the suits.

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### Annual Meeting

San Bernard Electric Cooperative Inc.'s Annual Meeting is on  
**Saturday, May 17, 2008**  
The location is at the  
**Austin County Fair Association Convention and Expo Building**  
in Bellville, Texas  
**Registration from 8:30 am to 10:00 am**  
**Business Meeting Starts at 10:00 am**

- ✦ Win Door Prizes!
- ✦ BBQ!
- ✦ Refreshments!

\* Each membership receives 1 BBQ ticket. Additional tickets will be available for \$5.00 each.

San Bernard Electric Cooperative, Inc.  
www.sbec.org