



Thaddeus "Opie" Davidson, of Shoppa's Farm Supply, achieved the level of Advanced Service Technician through the John Deere Technician's Program. Davidson was presented his award during a company luncheon following the completion of 278 hours of continuing education credits through the John Deere University training program. Presenting the award is Brad Crist, Sales Manager, Davidson, Bryce Stephens-Service Manager, and Draper Stephens-Store Manager. Davidson is employed by Shoppa's Farm Supply in Eagle Lake.

Sept. Sales Tax Payments Off 5.61 Percent

Sales tax payments to the City of Eagle Lake in September were \$15,709.97, a decrease of 5.61 percent from last September, figures from the state comptroller show. For the year, payments total \$161,995, a decrease of 1.43 percent.

For September in Colorado County, payments totaled \$69,709, a decrease of 8.54 percent.

For the year, payments totaled \$774,437, an increase of 1.03 percent.

For September in Fayette County, payments totaled \$96,591, an increase of 11.62 percent.

For the year in Fayette County, payments totaled \$983,568, an increase of 6.95 percent.

Checks sent to area cities for August, with changes from last year, are as follows:

--Columbus - \$77,543, down 3.59; for the year, \$877,567, up 0.76 percent;

--Weimar - \$24,785, up 8.36 percent; for the year, \$267,945, up 4.25 percent;

--Schulenburg - \$46,121, down 0.83 percent; for the year, \$477,889, up 2.78 percent;

--La Grange - \$114,687, up 4.23 percent; for the year, \$1,251,847, up 13.46 percent;

--Flatonia - \$15,546, up 10.59 percent; for the year, \$151,181, up 5.83 percent;

--Hallettsville - \$69,473.29, up 0.74 percent; for the year, \$741,327, down 0.63 percent.

Texas Comptroller Susan Combs reports the state took in \$1.68 billion in sales tax in September, a 3.7 percent increase over September 2007.

"Growth in sales tax collections continued at a modest pace in the first month of fiscal 2009," Combs said.

"While growth remains positive overall, sectors such as construction, retail trade and restaurants are showing signs of slowing down."

Combs sent \$452.7 million in monthly sales tax payments to Texas cities, counties, transit systems and special purpose taxing districts, up 2 percent compared to last October.

So far in calendar year 2008, local sales tax allocations average 6.2 percent higher than last year.

Combs sent sales tax allocations of \$305.1 million to Texas cities, 1.4 percent more than October 2007.

Calendar year-to-date, city sales tax allocations are up 5.4

percent. Texas counties received October sales tax payments of \$28.6 million, up 2.6 percent compared to a year ago.

Calendar year-to-date, county sales tax allocations are 7.4 percent higher than last year.

The 138 special purpose taxing districts throughout Texas received \$16.9 million in sales tax, up 15.3 percent compared to last October. So far this year, sales tax allocations to special purpose districts are up 17.9 percent compared to 2007.

Ten local transit systems received \$102 million in October sales tax allocations, up 1.8 percent compared to a year ago.

Year-to-date, transit sales tax revenues are up 6.9 percent.

September state sales tax collections and October allocations of local tax revenue represent sales that occurred in August and were reported to the Comptroller in September.

For details of October sales tax payments to individual cities, counties, transit systems and special purpose districts, see the Monthly Sales and Use Tax Allocation Comparison Summary Reports on the Comptroller's Web site at www.window.state.tx.us/taxinfo/allocsum/compsum.html.

Rodriguez Finishes Basic At Fort Sill

Private First Class, Sergio Omar Rodriguez graduated from basic training from Fort Sill, Oklahoma on October 10.

Proud parents are David and Maria Cardenas and proud brothers are Brian and Zachary Cardenas.

Pfc. Rodriguez was given the leadership position Assistant Platoon Guide (APG). Being APG he helped march and lead a platoon of 53 soldiers for nine vigorous weeks.

He was an honor graduate, graduating in the top 10% of the Class of 207 soldiers, and now moves on to Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio to study to be a pharmacy specialist.

A message from his parents: Your graduation is a special time to enjoy all that you've done, all that you are. We look forward to everything you have yet to experience everything you have yet to become. Congratulations we love you Sergio. God bless you always.



Pfc. Sergio Rodriguez

Whooping Cranes Making A Comeback

Mention great Texas comeback stories and some people will think of Staubach and Pearson and the Hail Mary pass that gave the Cowboys a victory over Minnesota in the 1975 play-offs.

But this fall Texans everywhere have a chance to be a part of what may be the most remarkable comeback story of all time.

In 1944 there were only 21 whooping cranes left in the world, with 18 of those spending that winter on the Texas coast.

This fall, wildlife officials are hoping that as many as 285 whoopers will winter in Texas, bringing the worldwide population, including captive and experimental populations, to around 540.

The Texas population, which winters in the coastal wetlands of Calhoun and Aransas counties near Aransas National Wildlife Refuge, should show an increase this year over the 266 whoopers wintering in 2007-08, thanks to a

record 66 whooping crane nests in Canada this summer.

Rarely has any species experienced such a dramatic recovery, according to Lee Ann Linam, biologist in Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's Wildlife Diversity Program.

"The outlook is often discouraging when any species reaches such a low population point, but whooping cranes had several things going for them," Linam says.

Linam notes that whooping cranes have a long life span, up to 25 years, and, though they don't produce many young, the parental care that the adults provide ensures a fairly high survival of young.

"These life history traits, combined with remote breeding grounds, protection from over harvest, and efforts by public and private landowners to conserve coastal wetlands in Texas have

helped this magnificent bird to make a slow, but steady comeback," she says.

Texans can continue to play an important role in the return of the whooping crane.

Starting in late October, whooping cranes will begin passing through Texas en route to their wintering grounds.

The primary migratory path runs from north-central Texas southeast to the mid-coast region, often passing over areas such as Wichita Falls, Dallas-Fort Worth, Waco, Austin, Victoria, El Campo, Port Lavaca, and Rockport.

Texans are asked to be on the lookout for whoopers and report their sightings.

Whooping cranes are the tallest birds in North America, standing over 4 feet tall.

They are solid white in color except for black wing-tips that are visible only in flight and a small marking of black feathers and red

skin on the head.

They fly with necks and legs outstretched.

During migration they often pause overnight to use wetlands for roosting and agricultural fields for feeding, but seldom remain more than one night.

They nearly always migrate in small groups of less than six birds, but they may be seen roosting and feeding with large flocks of the smaller and grayer Sandhill Crane.

Whooping cranes are protected by federal and state endangered species laws, and Texans can help safeguard this national treasure by helping to prevent harm or harassment to whooping cranes.

Anyone sighting a whooping crane is asked to report it to Texas Parks and Wildlife Department at 1-800-792-1112 ext. 4644 or 1-512-847-9480.

The Eagle Lake Headlight Hunting Guide 2008 is coming soon!

We want to include YOU!

Submit photos from your hunts last year and we will select several to include in this year's guide.

Email high resolution photos, or bring prints to the office. Please include names and hometowns of individuals in pictures and location of hunt. eaglelakeheadlight@sbcglobal.net Deadline for submission is October 24.

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Note: By submitting photos you are giving The Headlight permission to publish them. Not all submissions will be published.

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