

Eagle Lake Headlight

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EAGLE LAKE, TEXAS

OCTOBER 30, 2008



The Eagle Lake Residential Treatment Facility closed on October 23 before it ever really even opened. The sign out front was never even changed from when a portion of the facility housed Health and Human Services Offices prior to the new contract to once again house juveniles.

Eagle Lake Juvenile Facility Closes, Again

Approximately 100 people were left without jobs when the newly opened youth correctional facility at Eagle Lake abruptly closed Thursday, Oct. 23.

Colorado County Judge Al Jamison said he was notified of the closing Thursday morning in separate telephone calls from Jim Slattery, chief executive officer of Youth Services International (YSI), the private company operating the facility, and the head of the Texas Youth Commission, Cherie Townsend.

"It is just heartrending," Jamison said of the loss of jobs.

He said he was told that cancellation of the contract and closing the center, called the Eagle Lake Residential Treatment Center, was by mutual agreement between the company and state representatives.

Jamison said he was told by Slattery that the company would honor its contract with the county for lease of the building, which the county owns.

The judge said the county is due to be paid \$20,000 a month under the lease for 24 months.

He said the county has received \$13,000 as a partial payment for October.

Jamison said that he was told that the company had spent about \$400,000 in renovating the facility for occupancy.

The company was paid \$1.26 million before the facility starting taking any juveniles, according to some news reports, a situation

that drew angered reactions from some state lawmakers who called for a review of the contract.

Jamison said he understood 18 juveniles had been sent to the facility on Oct. 17.

He said he was told by Townsend that it was unlikely the Youth Commission would use the facility.

"We don't think we'll ever use it again," he quoted Townsend as saying.

Jamison said Townsend told him that the Eagle Lake facility was designed with dormitories, and he said Townsend indicated the youth commission was looking

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Voters Head To Polls Next Tuesday

Voters will go to the polls on Tuesday, Nov. 4, and a high voter turnout is expected, mainly because of interest in the presidential race.

In Colorado County, a total of 2,127 persons had cast ballots in early voting through Monday.

That surpasses the 1,910 individuals who cast early ballots in 2004, the last presidential voting

year. There are 13,708 voters registered in the county.

Early voting continues through Friday, Oct. 31 at the Colorado County Courthouse, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

On Tuesday, Nov. 4, polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Voters going to the polls will have a slightly different and hope-

fully quicker sign-in system.

They will give their card to the poll worker, who will ask if they still live at the address on the card and their date of birth.

The workers will be able to check the list electronically, and the voter will be given a slip to sign as a record.

The new system eliminates the manual and more time-consuming checking of names from voter lists.

County Clerk Darlene Hayek said also there is some misinformation going around about

straight party voting.

The correct information is as following: Individuals can check the straight party box at the top of the ballot, but can also vote for candidates of the other party in one or more races.

In those cases, the ballots will be counted for the straight party, except for those cast in the individual races.

Also, the candidates in the water district election are not listed by party and they must be voted on separately. Their names are at the end of the ballot.

NEWSBRIEFS

Town meeting to be held Oct. 29

A Town Hall Meeting will be held Wednesday, Oct. 29 at 6 p.m. at the Rice High School Library in Altair. The public is invited to attend.

WCBC fish fry is Oct. 31

White Cloud Baptist Church (WCBC) will hold a fish fry on Friday, Oct. 31 starting at 11 a.m. Plates are \$7. For delivery call 979-234-3800 or pick your plate(s) up at the church at 1493 Old Altair Road. Thank you in advance for your donation.

Haunted House Oct. 31

A Haunted House will be held Friday, October 31 at 223 Waverly St. Eagle Lake. Starts at dark. Free admission! Be prepared to be scared!

Spirit items available Friday

At the Homecoming game this Friday, Oct. 31, the Rice Booster Club will be selling various spirit items. Since the Raiders have clinched a playoff spot, order forms will be available for playoff football t-shirts. New Raider car flags will be sold for \$10 each. Only 100 of these were ordered so first come, first serve! Also, to clean out our previous stock, the price on the 2007 Raider playoff caps and the Dream Season video have been reduced. Each of these 2007 items have now been priced at \$10 each. Stop by our table and pick up some goodies, maybe even start your Christmas shopping!

Election Night Party Nov. 4

The Colorado County Democratic Party will have an Election Night Party on Tuesday, November 4 at 7:30 pm. It will be held at the Democratic Headquarters in downtown Columbus. Refreshments will be served. Feel free to BYOB. All county Democrats welcome.

Komensky school reunion is Nov. 2

The 16th Komensky School reunion will be held Sunday, November 2 at the Moravia Dining Hall. All former students teachers, trustees, residents and their spouses, and also anyone interested in the Komensky Community are invited to attend. Registration starts at 10 a.m. followed by a catered noon meal consisting of fried chicken and trimmings (\$5 adults). Bring sweets. Also bring an item for the silent auction. After the noon meal, a short meeting will be held followed by door prizes and social. Do come for a great time! Rely only if attending (361-596-4930, Martha Pavicek); (361-596-7001 or 361-772-6409 Barbara Janak).

ELJH to hold Book Fair!

The Eagle Lake Junior High (ELJH) will hold their Scholastic Book Fair the week of November 3-7 in the library at 7:45 a.m. until 3:45 p.m. This will be a great time to buy early Christmas presents and support the ELJH library. So, come to the ELJH School and check out our book fair!

Wintermann to have Book Sale!!

The Eula & David Wintermann Library will be having their annual Book Sale on Friday, Nov. 7 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and again on Saturday, Nov. 8 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Books available will range from adult fiction, self-help books, children's books, audio books and much, much more. Come by and support your local library.

Fire Department needs your support

The Eagle Lake Fire Department will hold their annual stew supper and silent auction on Tuesday, Nov. 4. They'd love for you to dine-in and visit with the firemen and look at the equipment. A drive thru will be available as well. You may purchase your tickets from any fireman. If you'd like to donate a much needed item to their silent auction, you can contact Kurt Sunderman at 979-234-7175. The fire department truly appreciates everyone's support.

Attention all photographers!!!

The Live Oak Camera Club will have its' Nov. meeting on Thursday, Nov. 6 at 7 p.m. at the Live Oak Art Center (LOAC) in Columbus. Continued on page 8

Party Photos Draw Citizen Concerns

Photos of a private costume party near Garwood that depicted African-Americans in a derogatory fashion have drawn expressions of concern from members of the black community.

The photos were apparently posted on a Myspace webpage and then copied and circulated on the internet.

A teacher from the Rice School District is in one of the photos, standing next to a person in "black face" makeup and holding a

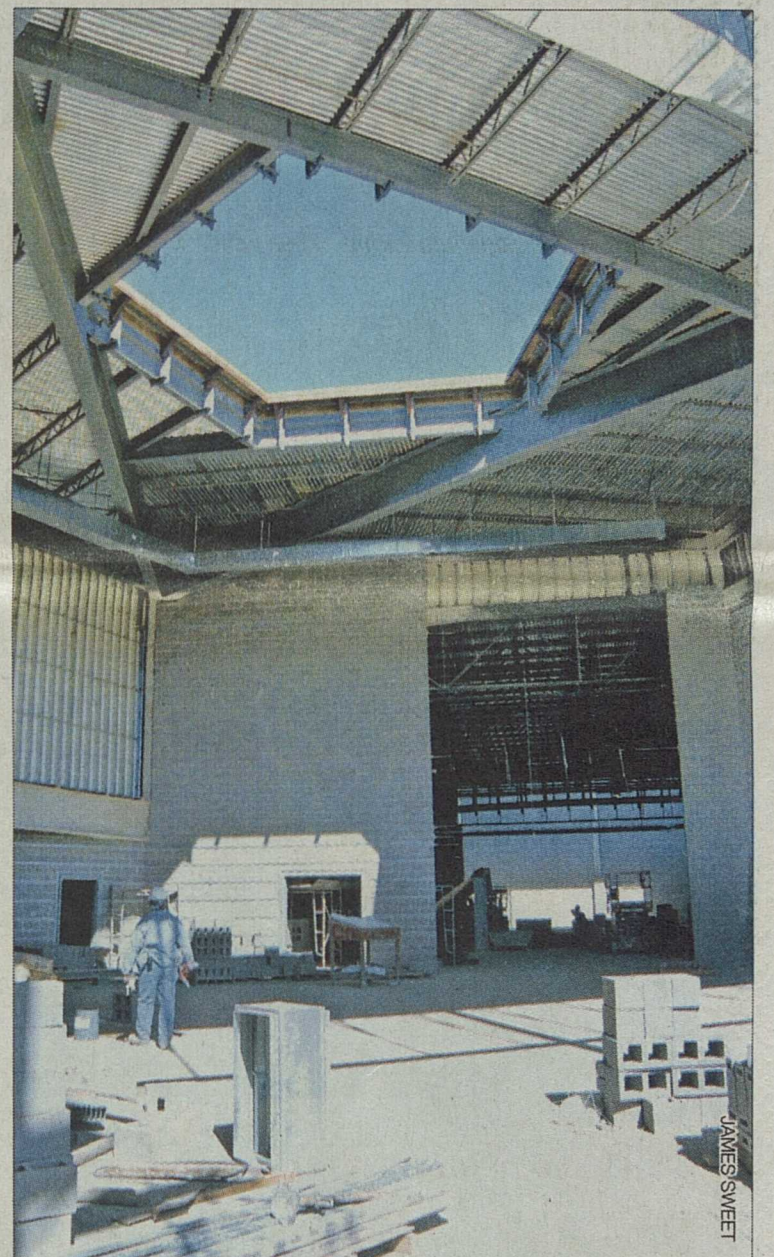
bucket labeled fried chicken.

The teacher was not in costume.

When contacted by the Headlight, Rice School District Superintendent Michael Lanier said that only one teacher was involved.

He said that the party in question was at a home outside of Garwood and that the host of the party was in no way associated with

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The Rice Junior High in Altair is coming along. This is a shot inside of what will be the cafeteria. Completion is set for July '09.

Polling Places Listed For Election

Following are the Colorado County Polling Places for the Nov. 4 election.

101 - Columbus/Glidden, Colorado County Services Facility, 305 Radio Lane, Columbus.

102 - Rock Island, Rock Island Community Center, 2710 Niles Street, Rock Island.

103 - Garwood/Nada, Lehrer Interest, 7836 Hwy. 71, Garwood.

201 - Oakland/Weimar, Weimar City Hall, 106 E. Main, Weimar.

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County Tables Action On Repair Bid

Colorado County commissioners agreed Monday to table for further study the only bid they received for repair and restoration of the courthouse roof and dome.

The bid was \$2.6 million from Drymalla Construction Co.

The county's architect, Chris Hutson, with Volz & Associates, noted that the original estimate was in the range of \$1.8 million.

He suggested one option would be to discuss with Drymalla possible engineering options that might result in a lower cost.

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The Rice Raiders defeated Schulenburg 42-14 last Friday to move to 7-0 on the season. This win also clinched a spot in the Division 1-AA Playoffs. The first playoff game will be Nov. 14 at 7:30 in Seguin against Salado. See page B1 for story on the Schulenburg game. Rice has two more regular season games. This week they host Hempstead for Homecoming on Halloween night.