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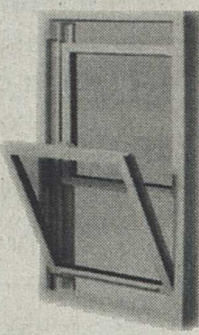
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THE TRUTH ABOUT DIP AND CHEW

Many professional and amateur athletes use dip and chewing tobacco, and get hooked before they know the facts about tobacco. Chewing tobacco and snuff can cause mouth and throat cancer. Up to a certain point, if you quit, your body can heal itself, but the longer you use tobacco, the bigger your risk of getting cancer. See your dentist right away if you have a sore that does not heal; a lump or thickening anywhere in our mouth or neck; a soreness or swelling that does not go away; a red or white patch that does not go away; or trouble chewing, swallowing, or moving your tongue or jaw. Even if you don't find a problem, see your dentist or doctor every 3 months. Chances for a cure are best if mouth cancer is found early.

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Save Some Green By Going Green

The fundamental reason behind the trend of all things "green" is to make recognizable progress toward halting further ecological devastation to the planet.

Setting debates on the causes of climate change aside, the majority of people realize the earth is changing and want to do something about it.

However, reaching out to the public to do the greater good may be one approach, but presenting going green as a way to save some green (i.e., cash in the pocket) may be a more effective means of motivation.

Running a household, business or car all takes money.

However, making some changes to your lifestyle and the way you view and use energy could mean savings in the long run.

With the cold-weather season on the horizon and the higher home-heating costs that typically come with it, now is the time to add a little green to your lifestyle.

—Install a programmable thermostat in your home.

A programmable thermostat will regulate temperatures in the home and negate the need to raise or lower the thermostat manually, which can waste energy.

Simply program the thermostat to the temperature you want during the day or night, or while you're not home, and it will do all the work.

Setting the temperature a little lower while you're out or sleeping (when the heat is in use) can save you hundreds on heating bills.

—Clean or change the filters in your HVAC system frequently.

Making sure the filters are free

of debris will enable the entire unit to operate more efficiently, which in turn saves energy and money.

—Adjust the temperature on your water heater.

Lowering the temperature on the water heater so your hot water isn't as hot can save on average \$25 to \$50, depending upon whether you have an electric or gas heater.

Plus, the temperature change isn't likely to be noticeable, and you have the added benefit of knowing young children or the elderly are less likely to be scalded when turning on the tap.

—Upgrade appliances.

Appliances certainly cost money, but the investment now will help you save later on.

Take for example an upgrade to a front-loader washer and dryer that will save on energy and water use.

Also, consistently washing clothes in cold water (there are special detergents that work exclusively on a cold-water setting) will save you money.

—Be refrigerator smart.

Consider changing the location of the fridge if it is next to the stove or dishwasher, or even in direct sunlight.

The added ambient heat will force the unit to work harder to keep foods cool.

—Make the sun work for you.

The sun often gets a bad rap due to the potential dangers for skin cancer from exposure to UV rays.

But the sun can be a way to harness energy, through solar panels, or even to just warm up a home without having to turn up

the heat.

During the day keep blinds and curtains open to allow sunlight to filter into the house.

It'll warm up a space and eliminate the need to turn on lamps while the rays are bright.

—Rethink driving habits.

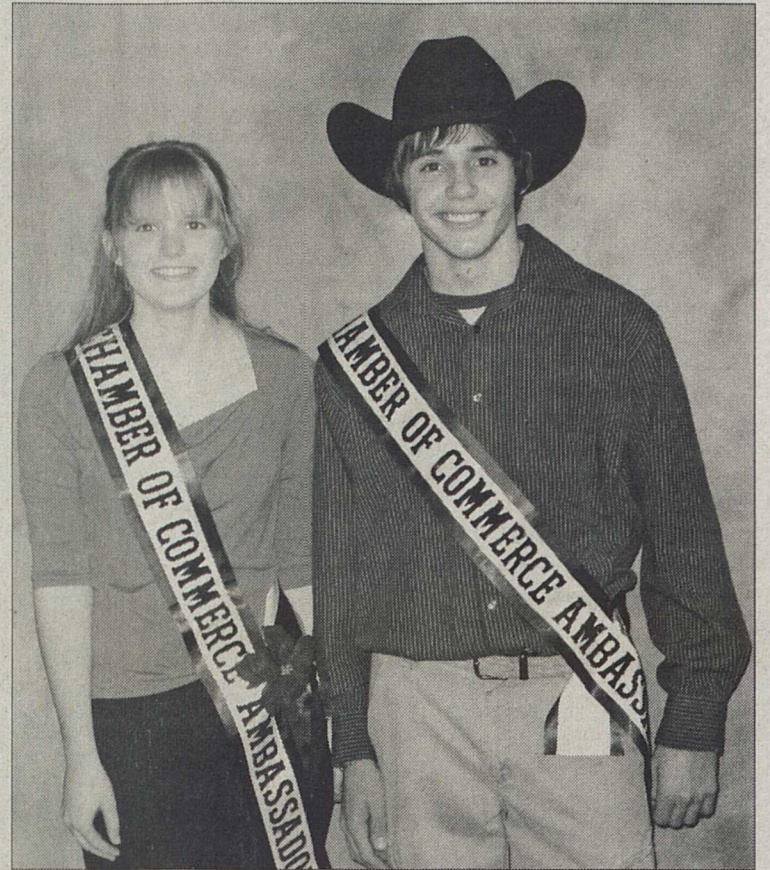
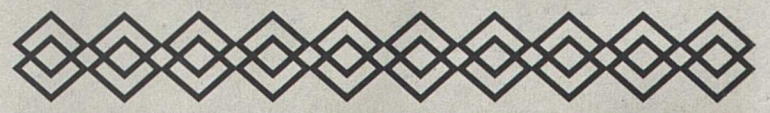
Vehicles are big contributors to greenhouse gases.

Cut down on pollution by walk-

ing or biking for errands near to your home.

Reducing aggressive driving while behind the wheel can also save on gas.

And when taking road trips or using a vehicle frequently, choose the one in the household that gets the best gas mileage as your primary vehicle.



Pictured above are Chamber of Commerce Ambassadors Shaina Bowen and Brian Kallina.

Sales Tax Payments Down Slightly Here

Continued from front page

—Schulenburg - \$53,383, up 0.83 percent; for the year, \$592,990, an increase of 4.03 percent;

—La Grange - \$116,191, up 22.70 percent; for the year, \$1,487,995, up 13.31 percent;

—Flatonia - \$14,072, up 6.93 percent; for the year, \$184,420, up 7.51 percent;

—Hallettsville - \$78,160, down 13.60 percent; for the year, \$894,852, down 2.32 percent.

Texas Comptroller Susan Combs reports the state collected \$1.98 billion in sales tax in November, up 4.7 percent compared to November 2007.

"For the first three months of the state's 2009 fiscal year, state sales tax collections have continued to grow," Combs said. "However, the increase is less than in the past three years, and collections from important sectors such as retail trade and construction have declined slightly."

The Comptroller sent cities, counties, special purpose districts and transit systems their final sales tax allocations of 2008 - \$488

million, up 9.2 percent compared to last December.

Despite the economic slowdown, Combs said local governments collected \$5.9 billion in sales tax this year, 6.3 percent more than in 2007.

Combs sent Texas cities December sales tax allocations of \$328.5 million, up 9.5 percent compared to December 2007.

City sales tax allocations during calendar year 2008 totaled \$4 billion, up 5.6 percent compared to 2007.

Counties' December sales tax allocations totaled \$30.8 million, up 11.8 percent compared to December 2007.

Counties received \$365.8 million in sales tax during calendar year 2008, up 7.9 percent compared to last year.

Ten local transit systems received December sales tax allocations of \$109.7 million, a 5.1 percent increase over December 2007.

Sales tax allocations to transit systems this year totaled \$1.3 billion, up 6.2 percent compared to the 2007 total.

December sales tax alloca-

tions of \$19.2 million went to 150 special purpose taxing districts, an increase of 26.4 percent compared to last December.

Special purpose districts received \$215.1 million during 2008, up 19.1 percent compared to 2007.

For details of December sales tax payments to individual cities,

counties, transit systems and special purpose districts, locate 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.

The next local sales tax allocation will be made on Friday, Jan. 9.

NEWSBRIEFS

Continued from front page

Eagle Lake. For more information call 979-256-7971 or 979-234-7124.

Little Dribblers Registration starts

Boys and girls in 3rd - 6th grades interested in participating in Raider Little Dribblers can find information and sign-up forms at all elementary schools. Cost to enroll is \$30 a child and includes a Rice Raider basketball, game jersey, a mini basketball camp on Jan. 10, 2009 at Rice High School (RHS) and Saturday games at the RHS gym during the month of January and the 1st Saturday in Feb. **Deadline for registration is Jan. 5, 2009.** Completed forms and money should be turned into your school office. If interested in coaching a team, please pick up and complete a form from the local school office or contact Coach Patton at 979-234-3531, ext. 1111. There will be a mandatory coaches meeting at the RHS gym on January 8, 2009 at 7 p.m. For questions, contact Patton at rpatt@riceisd.org or call the number listed above.

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Jessica Simpson Hair-U-Wear

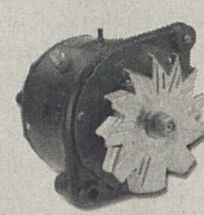
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