

# Views Around The Lake

by Cindy Klopsteck

## Don't Mess With Texas

We all know that slogan, but here in Eagle Lake we take it a little more personally:

"Don't mess with the City of Eagle Lake."

"Don't mess with the Fire Department."

"Don't mess with the Civic Garden Club" or, for that matter, the Chamber of Commerce, Revitalize Eagle Lake, Rotary Club, Lions Club and Old Skool Organization.

These and other groups, along with a number of individuals, ganged together early this past Saturday morning, April 4, to participate in the 2009 Texas Trash-Off Day, combing the ditches and gutters of our city to clean areas of trash and litter.

Forty-two individuals signed up for trash detail that morning, some representing the above organizations and some just concerned citizens wanting to help.

It was great to see representation from city employees, as well as the mayor, police chief, fire chief, JP and at least one city councilman.

Old Skool was ably represented by five young ladies eager to work. Unfortunately not every volunteer

worker can be named here, but everyone deserves recognition for the hard work performed.

Jean Wiese, President of Revitalize Eagle Lake, greeted the volunteers and divided everyone into groups of five people, each group representing a particular area of Eagle Lake along Hwy 90 that required clean-up.

Everyone was offered a pair of gloves, an orange reflective vest and two garbage bags. When I saw an ambitious volunteer grab three bags, I accepted the challenge and took three bags also. ("Hey, I can clean at LEAST that much!" Later, my tired legs would argue otherwise.)

As I gathered with the Garden Club group, though dressed to work and walk the ditches, we of course had to comment on the fashion statement of the morning: trendy bright orange vest, trimmed with black piping, with that proportionate, charming touch of bling – the yellow reflective, contrasting stripe on either side of the vest.

Yeah, we were definitely dressed, not for the next garden club meeting, but for the dirty work ahead of us.

This special day of community trash collection was conducted under the auspices of the Keep America Beautiful / Keep Texas Beautiful campaign, held March 1 through May 31.

This particular date was the largest one-day clean-up event in the state and served as Texas' signature event for the Great American Cleanup. Keep America Beautiful, Inc. is the nation's largest volunteer-based community action and educational organization.

Revitalize Eagle Lake was proud to organize the local volunteer community effort, hoping it will be the first of many more to come.

Meanwhile, my garden club group consisting of Becky Anderson, Michelle Donnelly, Julie Gannon, Mary Ann Kaluza and myself were driving, orange vests on back and garbage bags in hand, to our Clean-up destination.

We were assigned to the litter-prone area of 3013, extending northeast of Hwy 90 to CR 1093 – a pretty expansive area for five ladies. The first thing I noticed when we began our pickup duty was the lovely wild buttercups spreading out in a blanket of pink on either side of the highway.

Intermittent Indian Redblanckets shared space between sparse wild dewberry vines struggling to come out from the dry and littered earth. My first thought was for the flowers, but perhaps it was the grass and earth itself crying out for more air and less pollution, that ultimately got my attention. Either way, I hated the thought of all these lovely creations of nature sharing the green roadside with pieces of trash.

So, off we went - bagging any and all unwanted, foreign objects.

And what items we found! At the time of my first empty beer bottle, I wondered aloud to my co-workers whether I'd find enough for a 6-pack that morning.

Within three hours I had already made a 12-pack. And into just how many pieces can a Styrofoam cup divide? Mary Ann and I decided our least favorite litter item was Styrofoam.

Whether a cup or a plate, your hand would reach out for the whole object, just to have it crumble to numerous pieces when touched, the sun and weather making the material dry and brittle.

Googled fact: Styrofoam can take anywhere from 450+ years to disintegrate. Some sources are quoted as stating that Styrofoam is an "immortal substance." Apparently the sun can weaken and break it down, but the millions of pieces can last for millions of years.

Not a comforting thought to know my great-great grandchild may one day still be picking up the pieces of this cup.

We also found enough fabric composites to nearly clothe a person. Becky found a sock, I found part of a shirt and a large swatch of denim.

And those plastic water bottles – lots and lots of plastic water bottles.

Googled fact: There is environmental controversy questioning a length of time anywhere from 450 – 1,000 years for a plastic beverage bottle to completely disintegrate.

And cigarette butts and plastic straws. Most people that I'm acquainted with do not litter. However, I bet at one time or another someone I know has flipped a plastic straw from his car window.

I picked up LOTS of annoying plastic straws Saturday morning. Beware: no one I know better be tossing plastic straws or anything else from the car window!

Hours later our group had put in our available volunteer time, and there was still litter that could be collected.

Workers pulled their full bags (personally, I filled my three plus one or two more) to the roadsides and Jim Wiese was on pick-up duty, patrolling all the areas around Eagle Lake and hauling the bags and additional discarded pieces to a pile behind the police department.

Jean Wiese reported that approximately one hundred 30-gallon bags were collected, along with a lounge chair, several tires and other assorted large items.

Mary Ann Kaluza was the fortunate volunteer who found, and kept, a horseshoe for good luck.

The Old Skool group in particular received special commendation by an Eagle Lake resident passing by their clean-up area.

He stopped to comment that the youth were doing a good job and asked if they were working on community service hours.

He was even more impressed with their work when he was informed that they were participating in the clean-up completely as volunteer service and to beautify the city. "Good job!" he said in praising the youth.

I questioned Mrs. Wiese on the success of the event: "The goal of Revitalize Eagle Lake is to get all community organizations together to work on a project.

We want to thank everyone for participating, and let them know how much we appreciate their efforts. We hope this is the first of many such volunteer community events to beautify Eagle Lake."

Revitalize Eagle Lake is planning for a possible fall clean-up

that would involve expansion into the neighborhoods.

Plan now to help at any future events, and remember the April 15 tire clean-up sponsored locally by LCRA, where Colorado County citizens can recycle scrap tires.

We must all work together to keep our city and surrounding areas clean and litter-free.

Leaving town, I drove past 3013 to appreciate the cleaner roadsides. The afternoon winds were getting stronger and the grasses and trees were swaying in the heavy breezes.

But more than a mere continu-

ation of March winds, I like to think the Earth itself was breathing a heavy sigh of relief and pleasure at its pretty spring adornment and its cleaner landscape.

And the slight tinkling sounds carried by that deep breath of wind? Why those were just the tiny happy voices from those lovely pink buttercups whispering lightly but appreciatively, "...thank you, thank you, thank you..."

"Like late milk weed that blooms beside the lonely and sunlit road, peace bloomed all afternoon." –Robert Penn Warren

### Red Cross Lifeguarding Courses

Tuesday, April 14

6:30 p.m. at the Eagle Lake Pool

Course Fees: New Students, \$140

Course Fees: Lifeguard Renewals, \$50

CPR renewals, \$40

For More Information Call

Judy Pustejovsky at 979-234-5208

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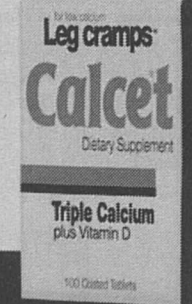
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Baumgart Agencies recently honored employees for their service at an open house. From left to right: Doug Lillie 36 years, Mary Ann Kaluza 35 yrs, Judy Vornsand 20 yrs, Susan Glithero 22 yrs.



JC Cooper, the incoming Eagle Lake Rotary Club President, was congratulated by Rotary International District 5890 Governor, Rhonda Kennedy and incoming Rotary International District 5890 Governor Dr. Ed Charlesworth for the Eagle Lake Rotary Club achieving 100% participation in Rotary International's Polio Plus program.

Current club President Kevin Collison appointed Judge George Cason to head up the local effort. Cooper said there was no coercion from the Judge but he did suggest that we might want to go over and see what the local jail looks like.

Pictured, from left are: Rhonda Kennedy, JC Cooper, and Dr. Ed Charlesworth.

## NEWSBRIEFS

Continued from page 6

social security card and immunization records. If applying for pre-k, you must provide proof of income to possibly qualify. If you have any questions, please call the ELES office at 979/234-3587.

### GC Panhellenic Sorority Workshop

If you're a college-bound female, and interested in becoming a member of a University Sorority, please join the Gulf Coast (GC) Panhellenic for their annual Sorority Workshop Saturday, April 25 at 10 a.m. at the First United Methodist Church in Wharton, 1717 Pioneer Street. This free event includes an educational forum on the most frequently asked questions about the sorority membership and the recruitment process. For more information please call Julie Aaronson 979-532-5554 or Jenness Ousley 532-2313.

### Prom meeting April 22

Prom meeting for Jr. class parents is on Wednesday, April 22 at 6 p.m. in the Rice High School Commons. All junior parents are asked to attend.

### Estate planning workshop is April 23

Attorney Kimberly Hedwood of Hedwood Associates of Houston, who specializes in Elder Law, will present an Estate Planning Essentials Workshop at the Nada Parish Hall on April 23 at 6:30 p.m. This will be a very informative workshop and guidance for your estate planning. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to take advantage of the opportunity to attend this free workshop. The workshop is sponsored by the Nada KJT Society #34 and the Nada/Garwood Gadabouts.

### Crawfish boil is April 25

The Eagle Lake Knights of Columbus will hold their 6th annual Crawfish Boil on Saturday, April 25 at the Parish of the Nativity Pavilion at 545 S. Austin Road. All-You-Can-Eat Crawfish served from 4 to 8 p.m. Presale tickets are \$20 each. Tickets at the event are \$25. No take out plates. No food or beverages allowed to be brought into the area. Tickets available from Council 4843 members or by calling 281-413-2450 or 979-234-3447.

### Live Oak CCA Spring Fish May 2

The 2009 Live Oak Chapter Spring Fishing Tournament will be held Saturday, May 2, in Port O'Connor. Teams may consist of 1-4 persons and only one boat per team. All persons must be entered in the tournament and all team member must be a member of CCA. If you are not a member of CCA and would like to become a member we can get you signed up prior to the beginning of the fishing tournament. Entry fee is \$20 per person. Deadline to register for the fishing tournament is April 28. For more information, complete rules, and registration please contact Ellen Labay 979-733-6045, Barrett Orsak 979-732-0550, or Taylor Kotrla at 979-732-7265.

**Old Skool Organization trip to Coshatta Casino Resort**  
May 2 • \$20 per person  
Need to pay by April 24  
Bus will leave B&B Grocery in Eagle Lake at 5 p.m. May 2 and will return to Eagle Lake at 9 a.m. May 3. For additional information or to sign up contact Kevin Earls at 979-257-7489 or Sue Ann Scott at 979-332-1168

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Mary Morales  
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With Many, Many More...  
Love, Carol and Donna