

Eagle Lake Headlight

75¢

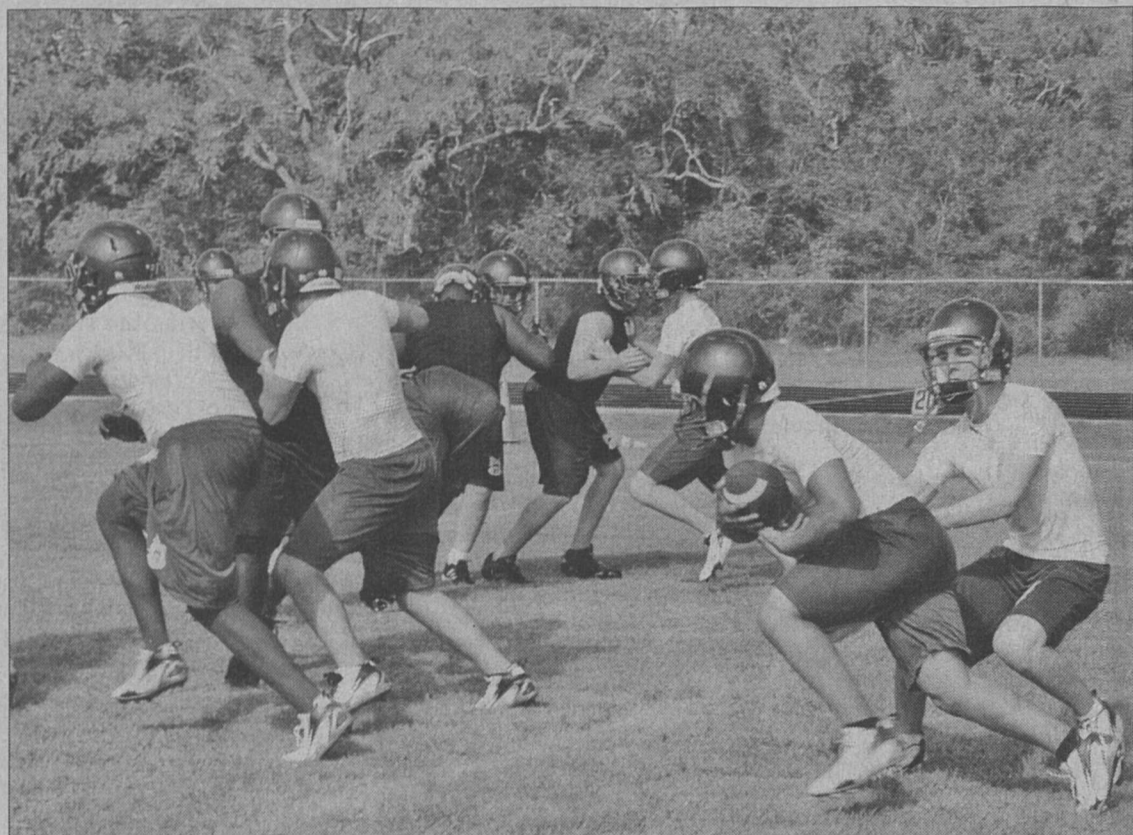
Serving Southern Colorado County
www.eaglelakeheadlight.com

75¢

VOLUME 106 NUMBER 20

EAGLE LAKE, TEXAS

AUGUST 6, 2009



Pictured above are the Rice Raiders on Monday, the first day of practice, preparing for the upcoming football season during two-a-days. The Raiders' first scrimmage is on August 15 against Needville at home.

City Council Discusses Hangars, Leave Policy

Meeting on Tuesday, July 28, the Eagle Lake City Council discussed several items regarding the airport's hangars, the city's sick leave policy and the new city manager.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance and invocation, the minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

The first item discussed was in regards to the 120-acre expanse of land adjacent to the airport hangar.

City Secretary Sylvia Rucka informed the council that James Weishuhn had completed his environmental audit and saw no possible problems.

It is now being reviewed by the Texas Department of Transportation's aviation division.

The next step for the council may be a survey or appraisal but it will be discussed more at an

upcoming council meeting.

Rucka also informed the council that a renter who runs a vintage/antique airplane repair shop in the hangar has requested permission to sub-lease part of the hangar to help offset some of his costs.

Jane Mehl Dahl expressed concern about who the hangar could be sub-leased to and asked that the council would have to pre-approve anybody who the hangar is sub-leased to.

Mayor Mike Morales along with the rest of the city council agreed that this was a legitimate concern. The motion was amended to add "with prior approval of the council."

The opinion that only the two large hangars could be sub-leased was also raised.

The motion that only large hangars could be sub-leased with

prior approval of the council was passed.

The council discussed the city's policy on sick leave and vacation time.

One main concern was that employees accumulate sick leave, never use it and once they reach the maximum, they lose anything else they may accumulate.

Michael Cooper raised the possibility of increasing the maximum number of hours a city employee can accumulate.

The council decided to take action at a later time.

Rucka brought to the council's attention the fact that the Director of Public Works, Thurston Webb, had announced his resignation and would be taking disability retirement.

The council discussed the need for the city manager to hire a new director.

The council then went into executive session.

Upon entering back into open session, the council voted to hire Bill Rankin as the new city manager effective August 3 with a salary of \$55,000 a year.

The council also said Rankin would serve a six-month probationary period.

Police chief W.E. Bill Latimore informed the council that the newest officer for the Eagle Lake Police Department, Jessica Alvarado, would start on August 1.

Rucka informed the council that the city had recently used one million gallons of water in one day but was actually averaging about 750,000 gallons per day.

Rucka also informed the council that she had received ad valorem rates from the appraisal district and was planning a budget workshop for Thursday, July 30 at

Continued on page 2

NEWSBRIEFS

Farmer's market open Thursdays

The Eagle Lake Farmer's Market is open on Thursdays from 4-6:30 p.m. under the community center pavilion. Bring your fresh produce to sell, or come to buy fresh, locally grown produce and homemade food. See our ad in this week's Headlight. For information about the market, call 979-243-4261.

RJH students to pick up schedules

Student junior high schedules are available for pick up at the Rice Junior High (RJH) Office. Schedules will be available on August 5 and 6 or August 10-13 from 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. If you have any questions, please contact the school a 979-234-3531 ext. 1900.

Senior citizen's dance is Friday

A senior citizen's dance will be held Friday, Aug. 7 at the Eagle Lake Community Center from 8 to 11 p.m. The Lazy Farmers will provide the musical entertainment. For more information call 979-234-2903.

FPC to celebrate 100th birthday

The First Presbyterian Church (FPC) in Eagle Lake invites everyone to come and celebrate the 100th birthday celebration. The program starts at 10:30, Aug. 9. Rev. John Howard Reed, former member and Pastor of the Central Presbyterian Church in Houston will be guest speaker. A program will follow with a BBQ lunch and signing of Sidney Struss's 4th historical book publication, The First Presbyterian Church of Eagle Lake - 100 Years. Only those books bought at the church will have a discounted pre-release price. Spread the word and make this a grand homecoming for the church! If you have any questions, please contact Mike Cooper at 979-234-2937.

Raider season tickets on sale

Season tickets for Rice High School (RHS) home football games will go on sale at the Rice CISD Administration Office Monday, Aug. 10 and will continue on sale through Friday, Aug. 14. Beginning Monday, Aug. 17 those who haven't held season tickets may purchase them on a "first-come, first-serve" basis. These will be on sale until Friday, Aug. 21. The cost for season tickets for all home games is \$30 per set (we have five home games this year). The cost at the gate will be \$6 per game. Reserved seats for individual games will cost \$7 at the gate. Call Suzanne Sykowski at 234-3531 for additional information. Adult pre-game general admission tickets will also be sold. The cost for these tickets will be \$6 and will be available only at the RHS and Rice Jr. High on Thursday and Friday until 3 p.m.

RHS schedule pick up Aug. 12-13

Students attending Rice High School (RHS) can pick up their schedule in the main office on August 12 and 13 from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. and from 1 to 4 p.m.

GMOBC BTS explosion Aug. 14-15

Back to School (BTS) Explosion "Armed or Battle" hosted by Greater Mt. Olive Baptist Church (GMOBC) and Pastor D. Curry will be held August 14-15. Youth and young adults come on out and join us! Friday, August 14 session 3-6 p.m. Saturday, August 15 session 10 a.m. - noon, fun and fellowship noon - 4 p.m., praise and worship rally, 6 p.m. We are currently in need of sponsors to donate school supplies. If you or someone you know is interested in being a sponsor or for more information please call Paula Richardson at 979-234-7062.

Adult GED classes to be held

Education is more important now than ever. A high school equivalency diploma, GED, can help land a better job or gain entry into a trade school or college. GED Registration/orientation will be held from 6-9 p.m., August 17 and 18. All students must pre-register and attend orientation. Registration forms can be received and questions can be answered by calling Jerry F. Hudec at 979 263-5829. After registration/orientation is completed, classes will meet every Monday and Tuesday evening from 6 to 8 p.m. at Weimar High School. Students will be accepted on a first-come first-serve basis. Registration/orientation must be completed before the student can begin class.

FBC to hold discussions

The First Baptist Church (FBC) of Eagle Lake invites any and all to a discussion of the new book "The Good and Beautiful God: Falling in Love With the God Jesus Knows." Would you like to have abiding peace? A heart that is filled with love? A hope that endures even in discouraging circumstances? Join us for this weekly discussion of James Bryan Smith's book on Wednesday evenings at 6 p.m. in our Fellowship Hall, beginning August 19.

Free youth camp at WCBC

Free youth summer camp hosted by SOAH ministries. Join us at White Cloud Baptist Church (WCBC) in Eagle Lake thru August 21, Monday-Friday 9 a.m. - 6 p.m. Ages up to 18 years old. Meals will be served. Program activities include youth forums, life skills, arts and crafts, reading and math enrichment, dance/music, table games, and physical fitness. For more information call 832-677-6320 or 832-483-2521.

City Council Hires Bill Rankin as New City Manager

By Cameron Miculka

Meeting July 28, the Eagle Lake City Council voted to hire Bill Rankin, 55, of Lake Jackson as the new city manager, starting August 3.

Rankin has served in various positions in both government-appointed jobs as well as jobs in private industries.

Immediately prior to becoming the city manager, Rankin worked for the City of La Porte as a risk manager from October 2007 to August 2008 where he handled occupational health and safety, insurance matters, and safety programs for the city.

Rankin has also served as an assistant to the city manager of Alvin from 1984 to 1989 and as an

Continued on back page

Rice CISD Receives 'Acceptable' Rating From State

By Cameron Miculka

Sheridan Elementary in the Rice School District has received a rating of "Exemplary" by the Texas Education Agency for 2009.

This is higher than last year when the campus was ranked "Recognized."

Garwood Elementary, which received a rating of "Exemplary" last year, was rated "Recognized" for 2009.

The other three campuses, Eagle Lake Elementary, Eagle Lake Junior High and Rice High School were all ranked "Academically Acceptable."

All had the same ratings last year.

The ratings were released Friday, July 31.

Overall, the district was ranked "Academically Acceptable" by the state.

This is the same rating the district received in 2008.

"I'm happy with where we are," said Michael Lanier, Rice CISD superintendent.

"We're very close to being

Continued on back page

Rice Raiders Ranked First in Area 2A Schools

In a recent edition of the Houston Chronicle, Rice Consolidated was ranked as the top 2A football team in the area.

East Bernard was ranked third.

The Chronicle noted that Rice had 12 returning starters and appeared very capable of more playoff wins.

Rice has been one game short of competing in the state championship for the past two years.

Also, with a record of 51-11 during Coach Brad Dumont's career, the Chronicle predicted that Rice has a great opportunity to win the state title.

Rounding out the top five teams are New Waverly (second), Anahuac (fourth), and Hitchcock (fifth).



Bill Rankin, right, was hired as the new city manager on July 28. He is pictured with Sylvia Rucka, city secretary.

City Council Discusses Tax Raise

The Eagle Lake city council held a workshop on Thursday, July 30, to discuss the budget for the fiscal year, beginning Oct. 1.

Council members discussed raising the current tax rate by 6.4 cents per \$100 to a total of 84.275 cents per \$100 valuation.

That would generate an additional \$34,204 annually for the general fund.

That is just below the rate that could trigger a tax rollback election.

Council members noted the effective tax rate, which would bring in the same amount of revenue as last year, is 79.554 cents per \$100 valuation.

City Secretary Sylvia Rucka said that the city will save approximately \$32,000 in the coming year due to a reduction in employee health insurance premiums.

Rucka noted that the proposed tax roll is \$82.4 million, but that the city lost about \$500,000 in value this year due to new property tax

exemptions.

The proposed expenditures for the general fund were estimated at \$1.18 million.

Council members discussed adding an additional \$9,400 for repairs to the fire station.

They also discussed adding \$15,000 to \$20,000 for purchase of a replacement car for the police department in the coming year.

The police department currently has six vehicles and re-

Continued on back page



Yard of the Month

The English style home situated at 300 E. Prairie Avenue was built in 1927 by Mr. and Mrs. Elo Beckman. The home was one of the first brick homes built in Eagle Lake with a slate roof. A perfect etching of the home graces the Beckman Cemetery Marker at Lakeside Cemetery.

Johnnie and Mary Ann Kaluza purchased the home from the Beckman estate with the closing date on Mary Ann's 25th birthday in 1974.

The three large oak trees planted by the Beckman family grace the front yard. Azaleas are planted along the front of the home. In the fall of 2008, Tony Tyler refurbished the façade of the home with the original paint colors of the home. Landscaping was started at that time by removing overgrown shrubs in the front flower beds and removing large metal awnings.

Robert Boone is given the acclamation for bringing the front yard back to a green lawn and for caring for the large yard. A front garden was incorporated into the front landscaping. A large urn is the centerpiece of the garden with pink and white caladiums and pink begonias. There is a rose garden in the back with a large plumeria tree and hibiscus plants.

The hot and dry summer has been a challenge, but Robert Boone has diligently kept the lawn watered and the plants alive and flourishing.