

Eagle Lake Headlight

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EAGLE LAKE, TEXAS

FEBRUARY 11, 2010



The scaffolding may be gone now, but get used to seeing because the county just approved a Texas Historical Commission grant to restore the building. Commissioners also approved moving ahead with an annex project to house offices that will be removed from the courthouse as part of the restoration project.

NEWSBRIEFS

Logo contest underway

Help us design a logo for Rice Little League to be used on fan shirts during the season and at All Stars. Submit your logo by Feb. 19. Stop by registration Thursday, Feb. 11 at City Hall from 6 to 8 p.m. for details.

Reminder from City

Residents of Eagle Lake are reminded to bring by some sort of statement if you had broken pipes caused by the freezing temperatures. That way the City can take into consideration the amount of water used as a sewer averaging rate is underway. For more information call the City at 979-234-2640.

Mid-winter camp meeting set

Rock Island Full Gospel Church will hold their mid-winter camp meeting thru Feb. 14 in Rock Island. Special singers welcome. All meals served. RV hook-ups. Services times are 10 a.m., 2:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. For more information call 979-234-5214, 979-732-3624 or 732-3945.

PJ's Bake sale set for Friday

PJ's will hold a bake sale on Friday, Feb. 12 in front of First National Bank. Buy your sweetie a Valentine's cake!

Brown Bag Lunch is Friday

Rice Medical Center Employee Volunteers' Annual "Brown Bag" hamburger drive-thru fundraiser to support Rice and East Bernard High School graduating seniors entering into a medical profession is Friday, February 12 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Tickets are \$6/bag and are available for purchase by any RMC Employee Volunteer or by calling Geri Vandermark at 979-234-2551 or Vicky Pavlu at 979-234-5571.

Scholarship fundraiser Sunday

American Legion Post #226 East Bernard will hold their annual scholarship fundraiser, Sunday, Feb. 14. Everyone is invited. Come enjoy BBQ chicken with all the trimmings. Meal starts at 11 a.m. Plates are \$8 each. Dine in or drive thru. Auction at 12:30. The Legion Hall is located 1-1/2 miles south of East Bernard on Hwy. 60.

Project graduation meeting is Monday

There will be a Project Graduation meeting on Monday, February 15 at the Rice High School Commons at 6 p.m. Seniors and their parents are invited to attend.

President's Day Closings

The following will be closed in observance of President's Day, Monday, Feb. 15. The Colorado County Courthouse, First National Bank of Eagle Lake, Wallis State Bank, Wintermann Library and the City of Eagle Lake Offices. The Eagle Lake Headlight will be open.

KC Fish fry set for Feb. 17

The Eagle Lake Knights of Columbus will hold a fried fish dinner Wednesday, Feb. 17 (Ash Wednesday), 5:30-7:30 p.m. To go plates ONLY. Serving will be held at the Parish of the Nativity Pavilion on S. Austin Road. Plates are \$8 each. Tickets may be purchased from any KC member or call 234-7175 or 234-3447. Proceeds benefit local scholarships and charities.

PJ's Annual pantomime is Feb. 20

PJ's will be performing "Snow White and the Seven Aliens" Saturday, Feb. 20 at 7 p.m. and Sunday, Feb. 21 at 4 p.m. Please come and support the enthusiastic and talented youth performers. Tickets can be purchased from the museum on Sundays from 3 to 5 p.m. and weekly at the library. You can also reserve tickets by calling 979-234-5529. Please put it in your diary!

Powerlifting meet set for Feb. 20

Rice High School (RHS) will be hosting the annual Rice Powerlifting Championships on Saturday Feb. 20. It has always been a huge success, due in large part, to the many community members who volunteer their time and hard work. If you're interested in volunteering this year please contact Coach Dumont at 234 - 3531 ext. 1204. Your help would be greatly appreciated.

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New City Code Enforcer Introduced To Public

The Eagle Lake City Council held a public meeting February 4 to provide interested citizens information on the newly hired city electrician/code enforcement officer.

City Manager Bill Rankin introduced James Ferreri to the audience of about 15 citizens.

Rankin said that the job duties of the full-time position would include electrical work for the city, as well as inspections and code enforcement. Council has given the position the power to issue citations on various code infractions such as weedy lots or junked cars.

Ferreri is a master electrician and worked for many years as a contractor.

He said that initially, a big thing he will do is review the city's ordinances and make recommendations for updating or revising them as need be.

He said after that, they would get into education and enforcement.

He said that educating the public on the city's ordinances and what was expected of citizens would be a major part of getting Eagle Lake cleaned-up.

"I want to have a public presence. I want people in the city to come to me with questions or problems," Ferreri said.

Most of the questions asked from the audience dealt with dilapidated buildings in the city and what would be done about them.

Ferreri said that dangerous buildings would be a priority and that the city would move ahead in areas where it was possible.

Rankin said that one of the largest of the many issues with removal of the buildings is the cost of hauling and disposing of the debris.

He indicated that the city just didn't have the funds for it, though it was noted that the city did budget \$5,000 for this purpose.

Rankin said that based on homes that have been cleared out somewhat recently, the \$5,000 could probably cover two projects, so long as neither was too large.

He indicated that they were ready to go ahead with demolition of two buildings and would get that process started soon.

A citizen asked about whether the city would take donations from people and Mayor Mike Morales said that they would entertain offers.

He said that at a previous demolition a number of citizens had volunteered to help, but that most of the work is really done

with heavy equipment, and that not much actual manpower was needed, though it was very much appreciated.

"75% of the costs are hauling and dumping," he said.

One citizen asked about burning the debris and the city said they had discussed it and that they couldn't do that because of potential air quality and liability issues.

Rankin said another big hurdle in getting these buildings taken down was getting in contact with property owners, especially in the case of estates with numerous listed owners.

He noted that the whole process is lengthy and involved, which is another reason having a full-time position to deal with issues like this was step in the right direction.

It was noted that the city had been interested in hiring someone in this capacity for a number of years, but just had not been able to get it done.

Though the dilapidated building issue dominated the discussion, a few other items were covered.

Ferreri talked about the need to update the electrical code the

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County Accepts THC Grant, Approves Annex

Colorado County commissioners, meeting on Monday, approved accepting a \$1.78 million state grant for restoration of the exterior courthouse.

The county's share of the grant will be \$665,896.

Commissioners also agreed to move forward on building an annex at cost of \$1.5 million.

That building, to be located across the street on the east side of the courthouse, would house the county clerk and tax assessor-collector offices which would be moved.

One of the requirements of the grant is that the courthouse be restored to its original design, which will require removal of additions that were added on to the south side of the courthouse in the 1950s.

Commissioners were also in agreement on seeking an extension on the date for beginning construction on the courthouse restoration.

The normal requirement is that work start within six months of the award of the grant, which was made on Jan. 29.

But County Judge Al Jamison noted that the county had been told informally earlier that they

probably would not get funding at this time.

He said that the construction of the annex is needed to house the offices that must be moved.

Jamison also outlined a proposal to take \$1 million from reserve funds to payment for the county's share of the grant and also cover other expenses related to architect fees and site preparation for the annex.

It was noted that the building currently housing the offices of Justice of the Peace No. 3 will probably be moved.

Jamison said that \$1.5 million for the annex can come from funds remaining from the the county's issuance of certificates of obligation in 2008.

He said based on current cost estimates an annex in the range of 12,000 square feet could be constructed.

Commissioners agreed to use the firm of Cutright & Allen Architects in La Grange for design of the annex.

Jamison also asked Commissioner Doug Wessels to work on compiling names of individuals, including officials, who would serve on an annex design committee.

In other action, commissioners:

-Discussed the procedure for naming private roads and giving addresses. Commissioners expressed some concern about reports that a landowner needed to have a building or building permit

to get an address. They agreed to discuss the matter further at a later meeting.

-Heard about the start of a "2010 Wellness Program" for county employees. County Treasurer Diane Matus, who is the coordinator, said last year there were 33 participants and she would like to see more this year.

-Appointed Josiah Fling, Betsy Miller and Jo Ann Locklin to the Colorado County Historical Commission.

-Approved a request to put portable toilets on the courthouse square on March 6 for the Texas Independence Relay.

-Approved renewing membership in the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas for \$1,100.

Filing Begins For May City, School Elections

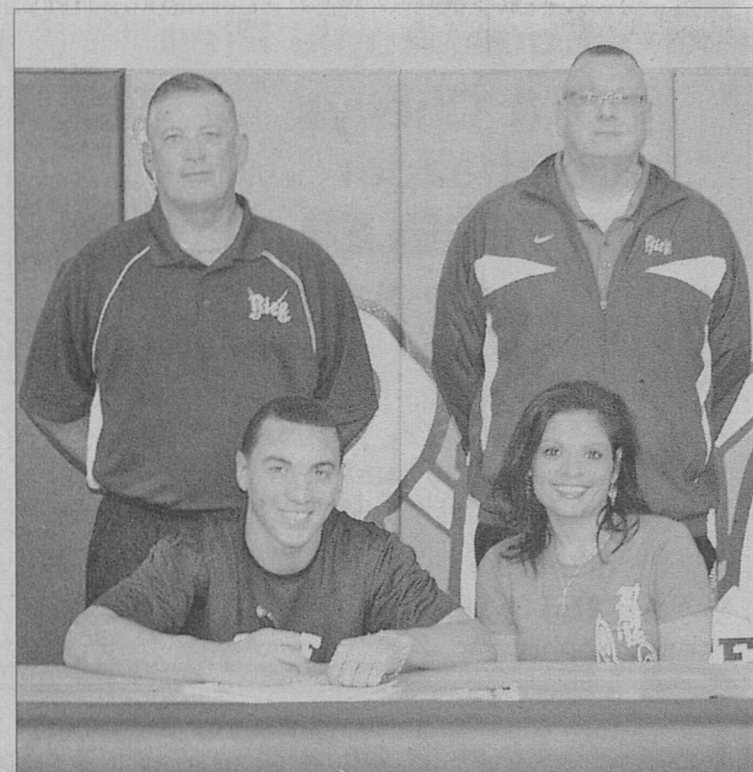
Filing has begun for city and school election slated for May 8.

Up for election in the City of Eagle Lake are Mayor Mike Morales and Councilmen Chriss Schiurring and John Young.

Up for election to the Rice Consolidated Independent School District Board of Trustees are Jack Vawter in Position No. 4 and Carolyn Baird in Position No. 5.

Filing began on February 6, and as of press time on February

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Rice Raider standout receiver Mario Hull signed a letter of intent to play football at Rice University, a Football Bowl Subdivision team, on National Signing Day, February 3. Seated with Hull is his mother, Prisca Cantu. Behind them are Athletic Director Brad Dumont, left, and Rice High School Principal Eric Grogan. Two other Raiders also signed letters of intent, see back page.



The Lady Raiders recently presented a \$1,200.00 check to the American Cancer Society. The Lady Raiders dedicated a game and raised the money through pledges. Pictured accepting the check is Carrie Smith-American Cancer Representative. Pictured from left to right in the back row, Jaquita Woods, Machelsea Thomas, Kaycie Rathburn; middle row, Kayli Kallina, Brooke Popp, Annicia Williams, Dynasty Johnson; front row, Smith, Brittany Parker, Kaydi Gold and Adrianna Ruiz. See story on page 9.