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## Armed robber strikes Oakwood Super Pantry

By Melissa Missildine

Oakwood's one and only grocery store, The Super Pantry, was robbed late Wednesday night. As Manager David Rantala was locking the store to head home for the night, an approximately 5'10" black male wearing a dark blue or black hooded windbreaker and a dirty white or tan toboggan style hat pulled over his face with eye holes cut out, forced him back inside

the building at gun point. The man pointed his small caliber revolver at Rantala and demanded the money from the register. According to Chief of Police Louis Miller, Rantala reported that the man tried to disguise his voice to further foil any attempt to identify him. Rantala handed over the the clear plastic bag containing the day's register receipts and the money for the deposit. The robber left with

the undetermined amount of money on foot, running behind businesses on the Northside of HWY 79.

Miller, assisted by supporting members of the Buffalo Police Department, DPS, and Leon County Sheriff's Department, searched the area, but could not locate the robber, the weapon, or the bag with the Super Pantry receipts. At this time there are no suspects.

## DNA not a match to "Twilight Rapist"

By Sherry Matney

Department of Public Safety spokesperson Tom Vinger said DNA has ruled out a Lubbock area man's involvement in the "Twilight rapist" case. The DNA results were expedited because the case is a high priority across the state.

Joshua Paul Stephenson, 22 years old of Idalou, was picked up Monday on credit card abuse charges. Police said the credit card belonged to an 87-year-old woman who was raped and robbed the night the card was stolen. The woman's phone lines had been cut before the attack.

Because of the similarities in the attack, investiga-

tors thought it could have been the so-called "Twilight Rapist", however DNA results proved otherwise.

This investigation has been going on for over a year when the first known attack occurred in Lavaca County. The rapist made his way to this part of the state in July, with assaults verified in Leon, Bell and Falls Counties until October, when a Centerville woman escaped his attack. Then on November 9, the first known victim, who had moved to another residence, was attacked again. DNA verified the assailant was the same as before.

Governor Rick Perry called for a task force dedi-

cated to the investigation and those agencies involved met on January 27.

Vinger said the DPS is leading the investigation and there is now a much higher level of coordination. Seventeen state troopers have been assigned to primarily focus on the case.

Leon County Sheriff's Department chief investigator Victor Smith said he attended the task force meeting, along with others who have been involved in the investigation. He said "The difference is the dedication of state employees to assist those already in the loop. The people have been assigned to work exclusively on the investigation."

## Cemetery request, grant funds and elections fill commissioners' agenda

by Vanessa Goodwyn

Much of the final January meeting of the Leon County Commissioners Court focused on a request by the Boggy Creek Cemetery Restoration group, many of whom were present. They were hoping for the commissioners' help in opening up county roads to the cemetery which is currently land-locked in a dispute with property owners. After

hearing their formal request and moving personal testimonials, Judge Byron Ryder promised to have a response when he and County Attorney Jim Witt have reviewed the information presented. (For the full story, see CEMETERY, page 8A.)

Steve Kerbow of Kerbow and Associates was back with the long-awaited federal contract in hand for the Com-

munity Development Block Grant. The county is serving as a pass-through entity for a number of area cities and water plants to get generators to keep utilities and services running during times of disaster or emergency.

The county has also been approved for \$65,000 in stimulus funds through the Hurricane Ike Relief Fund (an SSBG Grant). In order to

## Update - Bicycling family make it to the Pacific Ocean

By Sherry Matney

Remember the Harrison's, the family of five who left Kentucky in August on a tandem bicycle built for five and plan to pedal to Alaska? The Buffalo Press received more than a few comments on concern for the safety and well being of the three little girls who are riding with their parents.

According to their website the group touched their toes into the Pacific Ocean on February 1 after enduring some brutally cold weather crossing the New Mexico Rockies.

In December the bikers ran into severe weather while crossing the mountains and finally relented and caught a ride to Tuscan, AZ. They

have spent most of January in Arizona and pedaling across southern California. According to report the girls, aged 2,4,6, are healthy and happy.

As of January 26, 2010 the family has traveled 3,750 miles, has had 19 flats and 5 falls. The original article can be found on leoncountytoday.com, November 17, 2009 issue.



LCTP president Bill Lyle presided at Monday's Tea Party at Hilltop Lakes. Sherry's Shots

## Leon County Tea Party announces forums and debates for upcoming primary

By Sherry Matney

The Tonkawa Room at Hilltop Lakes was filled with Leon County Tea Party patriots who were hoping to hear Anne Mezone inspire and motivate them on Monday, February 01, 2010. Unfortunately, Ms. Mezone failed to appear so LCTP president Bill Lyle took up the slack.

Lyle announced three upcoming events which

will allow citizens of Leon County to hear and evaluate candidates in the upcoming primary.

On 2-15-10 Leon County Republican Party will host an affair at Dona Chuy's Mexican Restaurant in Jewett. The meeting will focus on the Leon County contested races but there will possibly be some District and State candidates as well. This will not be a debate but will be a forum setting where each contender will be allowed three minutes to speak. The cost will be \$15.00 per person or two for \$25.00. To be a sponsor the cost is \$100.00.

The LCTP in conjunction with Madison and Houston Counties Tea Party will host a debate on 2-17-10 at the Jewett Civic Center in Jewett. This will feature Steve Ogden and Ben Bius, both of whom are running for State Senator, District 5. Representatives from Rick Perry's and Debra Medina's offices have committed to attend and other contestants will be highlighted as well. The debate will begin at 7:00 p.m. but the doors may be open earlier to give the candidates an opportunity to meet the people. The time will be

announced at a later date.

Hilltop Lakes Property Owners Association will host a "Meet the Candidates" event at Hilltop Lakes on Sunday, February 21, 2010 at 3:00 p.m. This will include all District and County candidates and will be a forum format allowing each contender to speak for three minutes.

In the absence of the primary speaker Lyle asked the group if anyone would like to share their thoughts. Brian Welch, who lives between Buffalo and Centerville, encouraged members to attend a Tea Party Protest scheduled for August 28th in Washington D.C. Welch said he had attended two such events and believed them to be very effective.

There were several County and District candidates scattered throughout the room but none were on the program or volunteered to speak.

Lyle proclaimed the need for the group to elect a Nominating Committee to suggest officers for the upcoming year. A committee was formed and the group held its first meeting following Monday night's assembly.

## Centerville ISD extends Cathy Nichols contract three more years

By Sherry Matney

The Centerville Independent School District Board of Trustees completed the superintendent evaluation in executive session of the CISD regular Board Meeting on January 27, 2010 and agreed to extend Superintendent Cathy Nichols' contract for three more years. Fall of 2010 will begin Nichols 4th year as superintendent of CISD, the same position previously held by her father Pete Lagrone.

The CISD held its meeting the CHS library with all Board members present with the exception of Tuffy Loftin. Before the meeting was called to order, Board members were given a certificate of appreciation for their service to the district by Junior-Senior High School Principal Bob Loomis and Elementary Principal Jason Jeitz. Also, Board members were given gift baskets from CISD administration. Jeitz presented each member with letters

written by elementary students in appreciation of their service.

The Board reviewed the investment policy and made no changes. Assistance Superintendent Carole Dickey informed the Board she and Nichols had completed their required investment training for the year. Dickey then presented the invest report stating that interest rates on CD's are 2%, based on the school depository. All investments are currently in certificate of deposits.

The use of the old gym was approved for the Douglass Alumni Tournament on April 2nd and 3rd with the stipulation security would be provided by the Alumni Association.

The Board called for the Board of Trustee Election on May 8, 2010 for positions # 6 (Craig Smith) and #7 (Danny Lacey). Election judges were appointed. Cathie Largent for Early Voting; Dan Wingerson for the Centerville site; and

Steve Huebner for the Leona site.

The Cheerleader Constitution was approved. Changes made to the constitution included: Captain & Co-Captain must have a year experience on Varsity; Jr. High Captain & Co-Captain must be an 8th grade student with one year experience; each candidate must obtain a minimum score of 50; all payments for camp and other expenses must be paid by the deadline; cheerleaders are not eligible for letter jackets until they have completed the football and basketball schedule; and the cell phone policy in the student handbook will be followed by the Cheerleaders.

Preceding the School Board meeting was a public hearing held to discuss the Academic Excellence Indicator System and the School Report card for 2008-2009. Centerville ISD was rated

SEE CISD, page 7A



The Harrison family crosses the desert on their 7,000 mile trip to Alaska.

Contributed photo