



FRIDAY

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PHOTO BY RICHARD AKRIDGE

Autograph, please

Charles Pekins and his daughter, Claire, were on hand for last Saturday's book-signing by the Lampasas County Museum Foundation Inc. at the museum. Here, Jane McMillin, one of the authors of "Lampasas County," a photographic history book, affixes her signature to one of the copies.

Sales tax growth slows, but gains still recorded

By GAIL LOWE
Staff Writer

After having posted the highest percentage gains in sales tax rebates among area cities for each month since January 2008, the city of Kempner finally has been dethroned.

But the honor remains in Lampasas County.

Lometa, with its 57 percent jump in sales tax revenues in February, claimed the biggest percentage increase this period among the Central Texas entities for which the Dispatch Record keeps statistics.

With a check this month for \$7,766, Lometa easily outpaced the \$4,944 it collected in February 2008, and for the first two months

of 2009 it shows a 28 percent cumulative increase. Year-to-date sales taxes are \$10,884 for the city.

February rebates to local entities are based on December sales, but also include fourth-quarter returns by businesses that file quarterly with the state comptroller's office.

Kempner's payments to date total \$17,723 for a 22 percent gain over last year. Its February increase, however, amounted to just 2 percent, as the \$8,983 it received this period was only \$167 more than it garnered in February 2008.

After three months of declining sales tax returns, the city of Lampasas recorded a nice 8 percent boost in February. With a check for \$130,201, its 2009 total has climbed to \$228,000 -- almost 4

SALES TAX Rebates

February Payments to Area Cities

Burnet	down	13%	\$134,920
Copperas Cove	up	3%	\$379,174
Evant	up	31%	\$2,829
Gatesville	down	0.4%	\$162,462
Goldthwaite	up	5%	\$33,335
Hamilton	down	0.1%	\$48,348
Kempner	up	2%	\$8,983
Lampasas	up	8%	\$130,201
Lometa	up	57%	\$7,766
Marble Falls	down	4%	\$618,901
San Saba	up	5%	\$36,890

GRAPHIC BY BONNIE LEESE

All three Lampasas County cities showed sales tax growth this period, as reflected in their February rebates. Lometa recorded the largest percentage gain at 57 percent.

percent ahead of last year's receipts for the comparable period. And Lampasas County posted a 7 percent gain this month. Its half-percent sales tax amounted to Please see SALES, page 8A

Commissioners vote to move fence

The Lampasas County Commissioners Court voted 5-0 Monday to authorize Precinct 4 Commissioner Jack B. Cox to move a fence he said is obstructing the roadway on County Road 3064.

Cox said the fence near the edge of the county road narrows the space needed for opposing traffic to cross safely, and County

Judge Wayne Boultinghouse said the fence prevents precinct workers from maintaining a ditch and the edge of the pavement.

Precinct 1 Commissioner Robert Vincent said the road is part of an unplatted subdivision. The county has a 50-foot easement in the area, Vincent said, but he wants commissioners to proceed with caution to avoid a legal

dispute with property owners.

"I'm cautioning you," Vincent said to Cox. "Be careful. Make sure it is within the right of way."

Cox said the county's road maintenance policies allow precinct workers to move objects that obstruct road work or make driving conditions unsafe. Cox said he will do more research to determine if the fence is within the

county's right of way.

Also Monday, Clossner Equipment president Bennett Clossner spoke to the Commissioners Court about several options for an asphalt distributor. A distributor with a 2,000-gallon tank will cost about \$125,000 to \$130,000, Clossner said, and he estimated a 3,000-gallon to 3,500-gallon COMMISSIONERS, page 8A

Lampasas council reserves land for open park space

By DAVID LOWE
Staff Writer

The Lampasas City Council on Monday voted unanimously to designate 32 acres of land as permanent open space at the site of the Lampasas Regional Sports Complex, to be built on Farm-to-Market Road 580 West.

The designation of open space fulfills a Texas Parks & Wildlife Department condition attached to the TPWD grant the city received for the sports park.

City staff now can submit park plans for approval, after which they can advertise for bids, City Manager Michael Stoldt said.

The 32 acres sit at the south end of the sports park. Boundaries of the open space have been drawn to leave a strip of land near the fence line available for the extension of utilities and for a possible city street extension, Stoldt said.

The 32 acres occupy a marshy area of the sports park property, and the land collects a large amount of runoff, the city manager said.

"Of all the land out here, it is the least suited for development," Stoldt said. "That's why we picked it."

In other business, the City Council selected a bid of \$536,823 from CWA Construction Inc. of Waco for construction of an animal control facility on 1.7 acres on College Street at the city's wastewater treatment plant.

Because the city and Lampasas County will share the building costs, the council's vote on CWA Construction is subject to approval by the Lampasas County Commis-

Next steps...

- Submit park plans for approval •
- Advertise for bids •

sioners Court.

The bid total includes an increase of \$6,250 for 16-gauge doors. CWA Construction's original bid of \$530,573 covered the installation of 20-gauge doors.

Even with the adjustment, however, the Waco company's price is about \$5,000 less than the second-lowest bid.

Stoldt said CWA Construction, which has worked on numerous projects at Cameron Park Zoo in Waco, submitted several "outstanding" references.

In another matter, the City Council voted 7-0 to approve a request by Vision Downtown Lampasas! to install on city poles along Third Street several banners advertising the downtown area.

The banners, which will feature the same designs as the banners on Key Avenue, will be placed facing the sidewalk, rather than on the street side, to keep them from being hit by street-sweeping trucks and delivery vehicles.

The banners will follow the color palette specified for the downtown business district. Mayor Pro Tem John Cole suggested using bright colors, as he said some banners on Key Avenue are difficult to see.

"I just would like to see more brilliant colors -- something that jumps out at you," he said.

In the first of two votes related to the new high school, the City

Council approved a quote of \$36,488 from Techline Inc. for the purchase of material to build a new electric feeder line from the Naruna Road

substation to the campus. The quote also includes the cost of poles to build service lines for the second phase of Diamond Ridge subdivision.

The council also accepted a quote of \$8,635 from Pete Henniger Fence to build six gates and a fence for access to utility easements for the feeder line.

In addition, the council voted 7-0 to set fees for the 10 new hangars being built at Lampasas Municipal Airport. The monthly rental fees are \$160 for a 40-foot hangar, \$180 for a 42-foot hangar and \$200 for a 44-foot hangar.

During the citizen comments portion of the meeting, Lampasas resident Kenn Manly said the city needs traffic lights at the intersections of Western and Fourth streets, and at Western Street and Central Texas Expressway. Manly said he has seen near-collisions at both sites.

Mayor Judy Hetherly said city staff have asked the Texas Department of Transportation to install a light at Fourth and Western. TxDOT officials, the mayor said, have indicated they want to put a light there in conjunction with possible future improvements to Fourth Street/Loop 257.

The mayor said she will ask for a light at Western and Central Texas Expressway as well, but she said TxDOT officials often ask which traffic light Lampasas would be Please see LAMPASAS, page 8A



PHOTO BY
CHERI JAY-
WIENECKE

Opening tip-off

The Lometa Hornets are headed to the area round of playoffs after defeating Veribest 80-52 in the bid district round. The Hornets are headed to Harper Friday to play the Knippa Rockcrushers at 7 p.m. Here, Brandon Faubion (30) jumps in an attempt for the early advantage.

WEATHER

Date	High	Low	Rain
Feb. 23	68	36	
Feb. 24	83	50	
Feb. 25	82	57	

2009 rainfall to date: 1.48 inches. Same date last year: .53 inches.

Data collected from the archives of weather.com.

Tour, meeting

The public is invited to take a tour Monday of the new Lampasas High School campus under construction. Anyone interested should be at the Lampasas Independent School District parking lot at 4:30 p.m. A bus will provide transportation.

The tour will be followed by a meeting of the Lampasas ISD Board of Trustees at 6 p.m.

Show entry

Entries for the annual Needle Art and Quilt Show: Stitches in Time will be accepted Saturday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Keystone Square Museum, 303 S. Western.

The show will be at the county courthouse. Admission is \$5 for adults and \$3 for children under 12. A bake sale will be held at the museum during show times.

Kempner VFD

Kempner Volunteer Fire Department's annual barbecue dinner and auction is March 7. A catered barbecue meal will be served beginning at 3 p.m. for \$6 for adults and \$3 for those under 12. Dessert will be available.

The auction will start at 3 p.m. For more information or to donate an auction item, phone 932-3993 or (254) 432-4822.

Blood drive

The next American Red Cross blood drive is Monday from 12:30-6:30 p.m. at AMVETS Post 80.

Donors should be at least 17 years of age and weigh a minimum of 110 pounds and be in general good health.

For information, contact Wanda Meyers, blood drive coordinator, at 556-3338.



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