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Weekend Edition
SATURDAY • SUNDAY • MONDAY • TUESDAY

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Trial for County Commissioner Romeo Lomas delayed

The trial for Precinct 4 Kleberg County Commissioner Romeo Lomas, who was indicted for official misconduct, has been reset for March 8 according to Shane Attaway, assistant attorney general for the state of Texas.

The trial had originally been set for Monday, Feb. 8. After Lomas was indicted, Judge J. Manuel Banales, presiding judge of the 105th District Court and John Hubert, Kleberg-Kenedy District Attorney, recused themselves from the case.

Rose Reyna, District Judge of the 206th Judicial District Court in Hidalgo County, was appointed to preside over trial.

Three elected officials and a city of Kingsville supervisor are among 12 witnesses subpoenaed to testify. They are Kleberg County Judge Pete De La Garza; Kingsville Mayor Sam Fugate; Precinct 2 Kleberg County

Commissioner Norma N. Alvarez and Dianne Leubert, City of Kingsville Solid Waste Superintendent.

Only a six-member jury panel will hear the trial because of the misdemeanor charges.

Attaway explained the verdict has to be unanimous. Although, the case involves a misdemeanor charge, it becomes a criminal trial because of official misconduct charges.

"It is unique from the rule standpoint in this particular case," Attaway said this week.

"This rule applies to all official misconduct trials heard in Texas," he said.

Attaway works with the Criminal Prosecution Division of the Attorney General's Office and assists district attorneys in prosecuting cases throughout Texas.

Lomas said he is ready to go to court. "I feel I have not

done anything wrong and let the jury decide," Lomas said last week.

"We can go to court to find out who is right or not right," he said.

"I believe in justice; some people do not believe in constitutional rights," he said.

"All of us veterans defended our country so we can have constitutional rights

and the right to be heard in a court of law and found guilty or not guilty."

Frank Alvarez, a Kingsville attorney, and Rene Rodriguez, a Corpus Christi attorney, are representing him.

Lomas was indicted by the Kleberg County Grand Jury on a misdemeanor charge of Abuse of Official Capacity under Chapter 39.02 of the

Texas Penal Code on Sept. 30, 2009.

Specifically, Lomas, 72, was charged with knowingly misusing government property, services or personnel this spring. The allegations against Lomas stemmed after a complaint had been filed with the Texas Attorney General's Office. Attaway was assigned to prosecute the case.

The complaint alleged that Lomas had used Kleberg County equipment to demolish his East Yoakum Street barbershop on or about March 2, 2009.

Lomas stated at that time that officials would not tell him who filed the complaint, but he knew the action was politically motivated. Lomas has served as a county Commissioner for 32 years.

Search continues for robbery suspects

Two men remain at large after an aggravated robbery at Kingsville Bakery in Bishop on Friday, January 29.

According to Bishop Police Chief Larry Lawrence, at approximately 11:30 a.m., the Bishop Police Department responded to a call at the bakery located at the corner of North Ash and Business Highway 77.

Upon officer De La Rosa's arrival, the store clerk, Jacqueline Coleman, said that two men, one Hispanic and one black, walked up to the door of the bakery, and while one stood outside the opened door, and the other walked in and looked around for a couple of minutes as if he

was going to purchase something.

Coleman told police that the man walked around the back of the counter with a hand under his shirt around his waist.

Although no weapon was ever displayed, Coleman told police that it appeared as if he had a weapon.

Coleman said he shoved her back away from the register, opened it, and grabbed an undisclosed amount of money.

After he grabbed the money, he ran outside of the bakery and both men began to run across Business Highway 77 and west on West Fourth Street across the rail-

road tracks.

Coleman said that both men were wearing blue jeans, white T-shirts, according to police.

The men were described as between 5-feet, 3-inches and 5-feet, 8-inches tall with short hair and a medium build.

Units from the Bishop Police Department, Nueces County Pct. 3 Constable's Office and the Nueces County Sheriff's Department responded to the call.

The entire area west of the railroad tracks, including some vacant houses and buildings, were searched for the men, however the suspects were not able to be lo-

cated and are still at large.

According to Bishop Police Chief Larry Lawrence, there is a possible person of interest in this case.

"We have obtained information that a black male who may have been involved goes by the street name of 'Que' and possibly drives a white in color Ford Expedition," Lawrence said.

"We believe he lives in Corpus Christi and hangs out in the Kingsville area," the chief said.

Anyone with more information about this robbery is encouraged to call the Bishop Police Department at (361) 584-2443 or (361) 584-2666.

SGISD

board members.

The proclamation also recognized the commitment of the board to children, and the fact that the board works closely with parents, educational professionals and other community members to create the education vision that is wanted for students.

"Our school board members are constantly striving to find new ways to improve the educational atmosphere of our students. This is illustrated by the wonderful new elementary school that is under construction" Mary Springs, SGISD superintendent, said.

"Although January is designated as school board appreciation month, our trustees work diligently year-round to promote a positive educational experience for our students," Springs said.

Board members include Alexandra Field, president; Rhonda Silguero, vice president; Bob Kinnan, secretary; Flo Falcon, trustee; Jesse Garcia, trustee; Noela Garcia, trustee, and Carrie DeLaney, trustee.

Douglass

celebrate this growth with the city of Kingsville as one unit is a great accomplishment."

Dr. Tadeo Reyna, Director of the Center for Continuing Education and Office of International Studies and Programs at Texas A&M University-Kingsville, started the process of the renovation after the Douglass Center Board of Directors approached him.

Reyna was able to secure a \$675,000 grant for the project through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

"This process has not been an easy one, however I am proud to say that we accomplished what we set out to do," Reyna said.

KISD, which currently owns the building, paid \$36,000 for the architect fees for the project.

"I am blessed to be fortunate enough to be able to participate in this realization of a longtime accomplishment," KISD Superintendent Emilio Castro said.

"Not only are we honoring the past and the present, but we are also making a testament to our future by making Kingsville an even better place to be," he said.

Mayor Sam Fugate spoke about the history of the Douglass Community Center and how it can serve as a reminder of the city's sometimes dark past.

"It is so important that we save this building; it is a vestige and distressing reminder of our past of segregation, prejudice, and discrimination. It is vital that we recognize our past and have it serve as a reminder that we will never go back to that in the future," Fugate said.

Once the renovation is complete, KISD is looking to have after school tutoring at the facility with computers and other materials necessary for a student's advancement.

"Part of the money for the grant will be used to provide computers for after school programs and we are hoping to attract other programs as well as time goes by," KISD Chief Administrative Officer Karen Griffith said.

Jeannette Price, President of the Douglass Center Board of Directors, was a bit emotional as she expressed her thoughts about this day, which was a long time in the making.

"To be here today is like a dream come true," she said.

"I am so grateful that this dream has become a reality."

Assault

Upon calling his mother on the cell phone, he returned the Victim to her apartment, but did not take her to the hospital, saying he was, "Scared". A relative later took the Victim to the hospital where she was treated for an orbital (eye socket) fracture and many bruises. An in-depth investigation by the Kingsville Police Department revealed Blood spatters were found in the apartment and inside the vehicles.

Testimony was submitted by a former girlfriend and by the Defendant's father and mother stating that they had never seen the Defendant angry before and that he was not a threat to the Community. However, the State based its recommendation on a previous conviction for Assault on a Public Servant for which the Defendant served prison time, a conviction for resisting arrest, and several other misdemeanor convictions.

New ambulance service right on track!

By Erika Hernandez
The Bishop-Driscoll 911 Ambulance Task Force met Wednesday in the first of a series of meetings to promote passage of an election in May to establish and ambulance district with taxation power.

The ambulance service, which is currently serving Bishop, Driscoll, and Petronila, has been in operations for two weeks through an inter-local agreement contract with funding from private donations.

According to Wesley Rogers, task force member, if the issue, which would fund about \$14,500 a month in operation expenses, is not approved, the service cannot survive and will be terminated at the end of the current 1-year interim contract.

"The service has only been up for a bit and already has had a positive response from the community; we are hoping that it gets approved by the voters, and we can continue moving forward," Rogers said.

According to Matthew Clark, a paramedic with the Medical Reserve Corps which is operating the ambulance service, 11 runs have been dispatched with half of them emergencies.

"Almost all of the cases that were emergencies were transported to Christus Spohn Hospital Kleberg," Clark said.

"We also did three wellness checks, which is where we do a follow-up on some of the patients we assisted," he said.

Clark said the ambulance staff of eight, with three hired from Bishop, is currently trying to familiarize themselves with the roads in the three areas that are served.

The staff is also in the process of creating a database of citizens, which would include a photo of the home, its inhabitants, information on their medical history, and a list of their medications.

"If we have a general knowledge of the citizens in the area and are sent out to assist them, then it will make a big difference if we know their medical history prior to arriving," Clark said.

Currently, the task force is creating ideas to promote the election so that voters are fully aware of all the facts before voting.

"We want the public to know the facts, which is if the issue is approved, there will only be a five- to 10-cent tax (per \$100 valuation) on their property per year," he said.

"Right now the plans are 5 cents, but we want the public

to know that the highest increase would be 10 cents," he said.

For example, if a home was valued at \$100,000, and the tax was 10 cents per \$100 valuation, the most the property owner would pay per year would be \$100," Rogers said. "To have an ambulance service that could determine the difference between life or death, we think that is a small price to pay," Rogers said.

The task force is in the process of creating flyers and signage to raise awareness to the public and remind them not to forget to vote in May.

The task force is organ-

izing fundraisers that would also provide opportunities for citizens with any questions to get more information.

In April, the Petronila city council is planning on throwing a meet and greet event where the public can have open conversations about any issues they have.

"We are also planning to have booths and flyers set up for information at the upcoming Bishop Chamber of Commerce Banquet and the Old Tyme Faire," task force member Iris Harlan said.

"We will announce dates and upcoming events as they come along."

In The Next American Profile...



Sibling rivalry

For four seconds and at 300 mph, Tony and Cruz Pedregon are the fiercest of competitors. But, when not facing off against each other on the National Hotrod Association circuit, the brothers are each other's most ardent supporter. Plus, saving soles and red beans and rice.

AmericanProfile