

Local officials warn of WNV threat in area

With reported cases of the West Nile Virus being found in mosquitoes in nearby Jefferson County, Jasper County health officials are warning of the threat here as well.

Jasper-Newton County Health District Administrator Danny Brackin said the area has not been tested.

"We don't have anybody testing like they have in Jefferson County but you can almost bet there are some infected mosquitoes around here as well," Brackin said.

Mosquitoes taken on June 12 from Corley and 11th streets as well as two other areas in Beaumont tested positive for West Nile for the second time in a month, officials from the Jefferson County Mosquito Control District said last week.

Mosquito samples from Cable Avenue and Interstate 10 and Cleveland and Monroe streets also tested positive for West Nile.

Lee Chastant, Jefferson County Mosquito Control District director, said mos-

quitoes in these areas test positive for West Nile, "year after year."

According to the Center for Disease Control, WNV is a potentially serious illness and experts believe WNV is established as a seasonal epidemic in North America that flares up in the summer and continues into the fall.

Brackin said the best way to avoid WNV is to prevent mosquito bites.

"When you are outdoors, use insect repellents containing an EPA-registered insect repellent containing DEET, Brackin said.

According to Brackin, many mosquitoes are most active at dusk and dawn. Be sure to use insect repellent and wear long sleeves and pants at these times or consider staying indoors during these hours.

He also recommended getting rid of mosquito breeding sites by emptying standing water from flowerpots, buckets and barrels.

"Change the water in pet dishes and replace the water in bird baths weekly," Brackin said. "Drill holes in tire swings so water drains

out. Keep children's wading pools empty and on their sides when they aren't being used."

According to CDC, about one in 150 people infected with WNV will develop severe illness. Symptoms can include high fever, headache, neck stiffness, stupor, disorientation, coma, tremors, convulsions, muscle weakness, vision loss, numbness and paralysis.

Milder symptoms include fever, headache, body aches, nausea and vomiting.

These symptoms may last several weeks and neurological effects may be permanent.

There is no vaccine to prevent humans from getting WNV.

Most often, WNV is spread by the bite of an infected mosquito. Mosquitoes become infected when they feed on infected birds and spread the disease when they bite humans and animals.

Last year, human cases of the disease were confirmed in Orange, Jefferson and Jasper counties.

Meeting explores new water laws

New laws passed by the Texas Legislature this year will produce water management changes in East Texas during the coming years, two officials of the Texas Water Development have told the East Texas Regional Water Planning Group.

Meeting in Nacogdoches on Wednesday, the Group heard Temple McKinnon and Carolyn Brittin report on the legislative changes.

A major change, they

said, will produce more emphasis on water conservation.

Kelley Holcomb of Lufkin, chairman of the regional group, said one of the five water planning projects in East Texas will include a study to separate municipal water uses into residential, commercial, light industrial and institutional categories to improve water conservation planning.

Through Senate Bill 3, the Legislature also defined 19 possible reservoir sites and 16 unique stream segments and approved the designation of Fastrill Reservoir on the Neches River and Marvin Nichols Reservoir on the Sulphur River.

The planning group's next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, Sept. 12, at 10 a.m. in the Nacogdoches Recreation Center in Nacogdoches.

ATV/ Continued from Page 1A

Texas Parks and Wildlife game warden Ellis Powell said he was one of the first to arrive. The grandparents rushed the child to Burkeville, where they were met by the Burkeville Volunteer Fire Department. First responders started toward Christus Jasper Memorial Hospital and were met midway by an ambulance. Powell followed the ambulance to the emergency room, where the boy was pronounced dead.

Powell said in his three years as Newton County game warden, he has seen too many accidents like this.

"We deal with this—kids and adults—all the time. It's

against the law and no one under 16 should be driving an ATV. They're not physically able and the vehicles aren't designed for such small torsos and legs. When we see children driving them, we will enforce the law."

Rayburn-area Constable Gerald McAdams told *The Jasper Newsboy* just last week, "I'm not out here to write tickets or arrest folks, but just because we don't have the traffic doesn't mean you can ride anywhere you want... safety should be number one."

Mattox said he was grateful to Powell and the first responders who helped

Friday night, and hoped that others will hear of this incident and think twice about safety.

Funeral services were held June 26 at Beatty Funeral Home in Winnsboro.

Survivors include his parents, Jeremy Sr. and Heidi Donnell-Capehart Crow of Winnsboro; sister Madison Crow and brother Kenny Crow; grandparents Canter and Gabrielle Mattox of Winnsboro, James and Deborah Donnell of Houston, and Sherrie and Greg Crow of Ennis; great-grandparents Bartine Donnell and Geraldine Gresset of Ennis and Margaret Clover of Lufkin.

Raise/ Continued from Page 1A

"The other side of the coin is that they have received a big break for several years while others appraisals were higher," Luther said.

Luther said all calls would be returned until the final date of July 23, when all appeals must be filed.

"I take a lot of pride that we really try to work with people," Luther said. "We

will be really busy the first few days but I suggest that they don't give up."

If the district turns down their appraisal, residents have the right to appeal that decision to an appraisal review board, which is made up of citizens from throughout the county.

The reappraisal for the 2007 tax year is primarily

based on residential and lake properties.

The Texas Comptrollers office conducted an appraisals standards review in January of 2006. A draft of the report was presented to the district, which contained recommendations for the district to improve the results of its appraisals.

"The basis for that stan-

dards review being triggered was for the Jasper ISD was that the district was appraising single-family residences at 85 percent of where they ought to be," Luther said.

The appraisal district appealed the figures but all appeals have been exhausted, according to Luther.

He said homes that have been filed as homesteads

during the previous year, can only go up 10 percent a year.


"If we go up 35 or 45 percent on the value of their home, the Texas Constitution says I can only go up 10 percent a year," Luther said. "It phases in that increase. It's a lot better than being hit with it all together at once."

Luther said his office is

more than prepared for the residents coming in to question their appraisals.

"The work doesn't bother us and talking with the taxpayers doesn't bother us," Luther said. "I'm really worried about them getting frustrated because they don't call right back right away or they don't get to see us right away."

Few Ready Mix Concrete Co. Community Calendar July 2007

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 • JEDCO monthly meeting, 6 p.m., City Hall • Jasper Lakes Area Humane Society, 5:30 p.m., City Hall • East Texas Art League, 6 p.m.	3	4 Happy 4th of July 	5	6	7
8	9 • Deep East Texas Arch. Society meeting, Newton County History Center, 7 p.m. • Commissioners Court, 9 a.m. • City Council Meeting, 6 p.m. • School Board Meeting, 7 p.m.	10 • Chamber of Commerce Embassy Club Meeting, 12 p.m.	11	12 • TopsTX Chapter 1065 meet every Thursday, 5:45 p.m. First Bank and Trust Board Room. Call 381-8642 or 383-0357 • Sabine Neches Writers Guild Meeting, 6:30 p.m., Remax Conference Room	13	14
15	16	17 • "Caring Friends" Luncheon, Belle Jim Hotel, 11:00 a.m. • Chamber of Commerce Executive Meeting, 10:30 a.m. • Board of Directors Meeting, 11:30 a.m.	18	19 • Pine Country Gem & Mineral Society, monthly meeting, 7 p.m. Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31 • East Texas Photography Club monthly meeting, 7 p.m., City Hall, call 384-3167				

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