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Football season begins tonight for local teams

By Melinda McCutchen
Football season in Bronte, Robert Lee and Blackwell officially begins tonight with the Bronte Longhorns taking on the Junction Eagles in Junction at 7:30 pm. The Robert Lee Steers take on the Eden Bulldogs in Robert Lee at 7:30 pm and the Blackwell Hornets face the Westbrook Wildcats at home at 8:00 pm.

With the beginning of football season, the annual "Football Sponsor" pages are beginning with this issue of the Observer/Enterprise.

I had a chance to visit with the head coaches of each of these teams on Monday to get their take on the upcoming season.

The fans in Robert Lee can head into the season cheering for their Steers who are ranked 3rd in the state right now in 6-Man Division II.

Coach Avants was very pleased with the Steers' performance in the preseason scrimmages. "We dominated Westbrook, tied May and almost beat Rankin who beat us 64-0 in last year's scrimmage. These were a good measuring stick."

He considers their strengths to be the depth in their bench with 25 kids on the team who have lots of experience. They are returning every starter on both sides of the ball.

When asked about possible weaknesses, the only thing which might be considered a weakness is a couple of new students who are trying to learn the system. So far, there are no injuries.

Looking ahead to their district opponents, Avants said that Blackwell should be

good - good coach and good numbers of players. "Panther Creek always fields a quality team. "We're taking one game at a time. Our goal is to win district and then win in the play-offs." Hopefully, this is Robert Lee's year. The Steers have not won a play-off game since 1994.

The Blackwell Hornets have a new head coach in Clint Lowry. During our conversation, he felt like their scrimmages went well and that his kids were picking stuff up pretty quick.

The Hornets have 3 seniors, 7 juniors, 7 sophomores, and 4 freshman on their team this year so depth will not be a problem. They will even play a JV schedule. With all of this experience and no current injuries, Blackwell should have a nice season start.

Coach Lowry targeted the Robert Lee Steers as the toughest team in their district, but he has a lot of confidence in his players. "I'm honored to be working with these kids. They work hard and try to do everything we ask of them."

Bronte Head Coach Kevin Burns said "Our expectations are still the same. We want to defend our back to back district championships and we feel that our pre-district schedule will prepare us for district competition."

The Longhorns have had great teams the last few years, but depth is now an issue with only 22 students on the team. Coach Burns felt that the scrimmages gave them a chance to evaluate the players through competition.

Although their team numbers are smaller, they are



Starting the Year Off Right! On Monday, August 27, Shaye Coalson's Bronte Elementary 5th grade class learned the importance of raising the flags correctly from Lane Parker, Army Combat veteran. Mr. Parker is the father of 5th grade student McKenna Parker.

returning four of their starting offensive line. They still have a lot of quickness on the defense. The lack of depth though means the players have to each learn 3 or 4 positions each.

"Our district is going to be a dogfight," stated Coach Burns, "Eldorado, Miles, and Christoval all have a bunch of kids returning and so does TLCA."

Dove season set to open Saturday

by Hal Spain

It's time once again for area hunters to try their luck with the gray ghosts of the shooting world. Saturday morning, September 1, 2012, will mark the beginning of a new dove season in Coke County and throughout the Northern and Central zones of Texas. The Northern dove hunting zone is basically the area above Interstate 20, with the Central zone being bordered on the north by Interstate 20 and on the southern end by Interstate 10. The South zone is below Interstate 10, and their season does not open until September 21.

As to our outlook for this year's season, I am predicting a pretty strong beginning of the season, at least, in spite of our continued drought during the latter part of the summer. I have seen as many as 200 whitewings in a group around the house, as well as a large number of collared

doves almost every day. What I haven't seen is many mourning dove except for those few local birds that stay here year round.

I think that like last year, there will be some hunting opportunities at the very beginning of the season. Once those birds get some hunting pressure, they'll be off to a safe zone, where they don't get shot at so much. Who's to say when or if we'll be getting any northern mourning doves migrating through the county? With the dry conditions, it looks pretty iffy right now, anyway.

There will always be some opportunities around tanks and water sources late in the afternoons (if we have any standing water left). And, there should be a good supply of dove around grain fields, if you are lucky enough to have access to any of these feeding areas.

The season will run from September 1 through October 24, 2012, with an additional late season from December 22 through January 6, 2013. Daily bag limit is 15 mourning, white-winged, and white-tipped doves in the aggregate, to include not more than 2 whitetips. Possession limit is twice the daily bag limit.

Legal shooting hours are from one-half hour before sunrise to sunset. Don't forget to plug those autoloaders

and pump shotguns, as dove are considered migratory birds, and plugs must be in place so that the firearm can hold no more than three shells.

A new hunting license will be required to hunt this fall, along with a \$7.00 migratory game bird stamp if you will be hunting dove or waterfowl, plus another \$7.00 stamp if you will be hunting upland game birds, which includes quail, turkey, and pheasant. If you will be hunting waterfowl, you will also need to purchase a \$17 migratory game bird stamp endorsement (duck stamp).

Best of luck in your dove hunting endeavors this fall. Make a mental note to make safety your main concern as you take to the hunting fields this fall.

Holiday Closings

The Coke County Courthouse and the Bronte and Robert Lee City Halls will be closed Monday, September 3, 2012, in observance of Labor Day.

The City of Robert Lee Landfill will be closed on Saturday, September 1st due to the Labor Day Holiday. The rescheduled date will be open on Saturday, September 8th from 9:00-12:00 noon.

The landfill accepts ONLY brush, shrubs, and tree limbs. Residents are reminded that the landfill will be permanently closed on October 27, 2012.

Football Games

BRONTE LONGHORNS

vs.

Junction Eagles

7:30 • Friday, August 31 • Junction



ROBERT LEE STEERS

vs.

Eden Bulldogs

7:30 • Friday, August 31 • Robert Lee

BLACKWELL HORNETS

vs.

Westbrook Wildcats

8 pm • Friday, August 31 • Blackwell

