



THURSDAY
AUGUST 26, 2010

Vol. 134, No. 165

THE CHRONICLE-NEWS

50 CENTS
TRINIDAD
COLORADO

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THE FINE PRINT

It's back to school time. Let The Chronicle-News help keep you informed about all local school activities & events. Please send your community calendar submissions to cathy@trinidadchronicle.com.

THURSDAY Quilt Club

Bound Together Quilt Club meets 9:30 a.m. Thurs @ the Las Animas County Fairgrounds. For info call 719-846-3855 (Sandy).

Rotary Club

Weekly Luncheon & Meeting 12 p.m. every Thurs. @ the Holiday Inn, 3130 Santa Fe Trail Dr.

Mitchell Museum

Opening reception for "A.R. Mitchell National Invitational" (final show for the 2010 Season) 5-8 p.m. Thurs & runs until Oct 3 @ the Mitchell, 150 E. Main, Trinidad. For more information call 719-846-4224.

FRIDAY

COLORADO STATE FAIR

Starts today Aug 27 & runs until Sept 6 @ the state fair grounds in Pueblo. For schedule of events & tickets go to www.coloradostatefair.com.

Agular Events

The Apishapa Valley Heritage Center will be open 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. this Fri & Sat. After that it will be open by appointment only. Please call Pat Romero @ 719-941-4678.

Miners' Colfax Medical

Long Term Care Board of Trustees meets 10 a.m. Fri @ the Long Term Care Facility, 900 S. 6th St. Raton, NM. Call Henrietta Romero @ 575-445-3661 for more information.

Art Walk

El Corazon d'Trinidad 3-7 p.m. Friday at all participating downtown shops, galleries & museums. Sponsored by the Trinidad Area Arts Council (TAAC). Call TAAC for more information 719-846-1441.

Eagles #179

Regular meeting 7 p.m. 2nd & 4th Fri @ Eagle Hall, 204 Pine Street, corner of Pine & Nevada.

Pre-Fest

Countdown to the Blues Fest starts 7 p.m. Fri @ El Rancho on Santa Fe Trail Dr. Must be 21 in order to attend.

SATURDAY

Gideons

Fisher's Peak Gideons Saturday Morning Prayer Group meets @ 7 a.m. every Sat. Call 719-680-0290 for location.

'Coffee for Causes'

Come join us for coffee & cookies & a visit with informative guests in our non-profit vendor's booth 8 - Noon Sat @ the Farmer's Market in Cimino Park. Your donation sponsors our area youth scholarship fund. For more information call Tom or Linda Perry @ 719-846-8380 or e-mail tomandlindaperry@gmail.com.

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WEATHER WATCH

Today: Sunny, with a high near 87. West wind 5 to 10 mph becoming east southeast.



Tonight: A 10 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms before midnight. Partly cloudy, with a low around 53. South southwest wind between 10 and 15 mph.

Friday: A 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms after noon. Partly cloudy, with a high near 90. South southwest wind between 5 and 10 mph.



Friday Night: A 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms. Partly cloudy, with a low around 58. Breezy, with a south southwest wind between 15 and 20 mph.

RIVER CALL

Purgatoire river call as of 8/25/10
South Side priority #74 2/17/1876
Trinidad Reservoir accounting
Release 289.21 AF
Inflow 206.66 AF
Evaporation 10.45 AF
Content 18,910 AF
Elevation 6,178.52
Precipitation 0
Downstream river call
Highland Canal 5/31/1866
1 cubic (cfs) foot per second equals one cubic foot of water passing a point in one second of time.
1 acre-foot equals a quantity of water required to cover one acre of land to a depth of one foot.
1 cubic foot per second = 1.9835 acre-feet per day (24 hrs)
(Provided by Division of Water Resources)



Photo courtesy of Judy MacLaren

A crew of Upward Bound students and staff recently performed an outstanding service, recycling the paper in over 300 boxes of old law books for Trinidad's recycling program. Shown here are some of those helpful students with TSJC's Math Science Upward Bound program. In front, from left, are Sergio Sandoval, John Jaques, Jose Lopez, and Andres Lara. Standing at top, from left, are Kevin Perez, Nick Walters, and Terrell LaForge. Among many other year-round activities, UB students regularly provide such services. Upward Bound directors Judy MacLaren and Debra Krumm are always looking for new opportunities to help students obtain their community service credits.

Green is growing in Las Animas County

Special to The Chronicle-News

ReGroup and the City of Trinidad's recent July recycling event brought in more than double the amount collected at the January event. At this one event, more than 195 cubic yards (six and a half bins) were diverted from the landfill into the recycling stream.

Trinidad's first three events were funded by the City of Trinidad. The Trinidad Area Catholic Community and Walmart have been consistent supporters of recycling and will partially fund the last event of the year in October.

Residents are making special efforts to recycle. Carolyn Vernier of Branson organized collection events to gather recyclables for Trinidad's bins (although Branson uses another recycling company

for some items, Trinidad's program is more comprehensive). Kathy Young of Trinidad Lake Ranches took the initiative to organize her community to collect recyclables.

ReGroup's latest collaboration involved a big effort. Mary Bulson at the courthouse called ReGroup to ask if a roomful of old law books could be recycled. Only softcover books are taken at the recycling events, so ReGroup contacted Debra Krumm and Judy MacLaren of Upward Bound at Trinidad State Junior College. Krumm is the director of the Upward Bound Classic Program, which involves students from the local area, and MacLaren is the director of Math Science Upward Bound, a regional program with students from New Mexico and Colorado.

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Photos by Tim Keller

Three women kept up to 12 soccer balls airborne at a time - one for each arm and leg

Golden Dragon Acrobats put the awe back in awesome

By TIM KELLER
The Chronicle-News

The word "awesome" has long been ruined, watered down until an early release from school is awesome, finishing your homework is awesome, and last night's enchiladas were awesome.

Monday night's Shuler Theater performance by the Golden Dragon Acrobats put the awe back in awesome.

Often seeming to defy the laws of physics, the troupe of 25 young acrobats put on a two-hour show that stilled the restless children brought by their parents and left jaws open in awe.

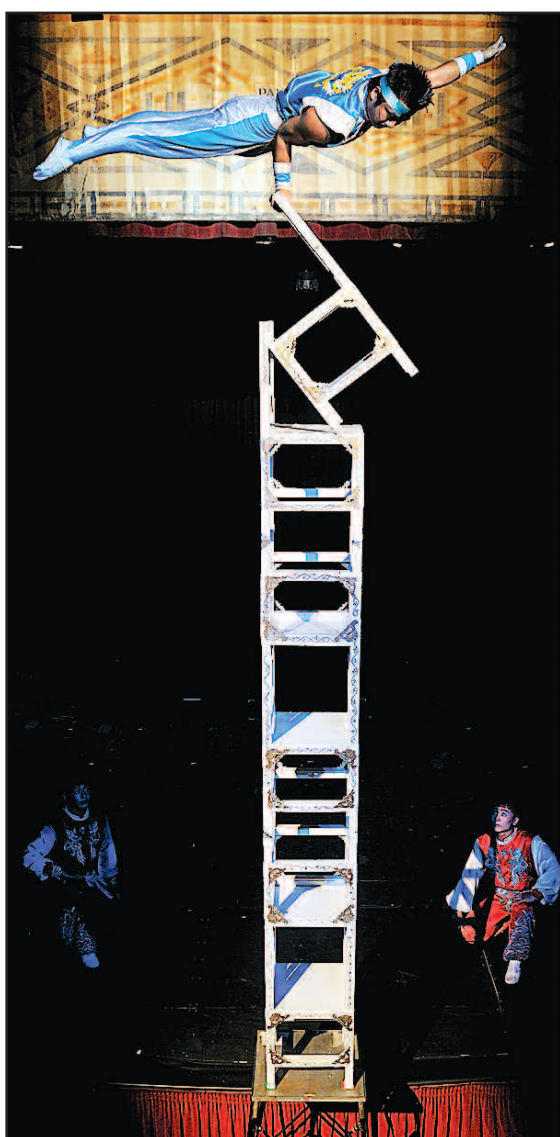
The feats of balance, contortion, juggling, speed, and daring begged the question: How long did they have to practice to learn that? The answer would seem to be counted in years, although the acrobats were all quite young, and very limber.

They come from various parts of China, where records of this art form go back 4,000 years. Their current tour features 11 women and 14 men with names resembling items from a Chinese menu - Ping Gao, Jia Hui Shen, Qing Qing Zhu. (Of course, they may think Tim Keller is something on the menu at Black Jack's Steakhouse.)

The Golden Dragon Acrobats was created in 1978 by Danny Chang and the Shuler Theater's own Bill

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The show stopper came near the end of the performance when this acrobat took seven chairs and climbed them as he stacked them, until he was level with the proscenium arch over the stage, seen here from the balcony.



Council continues to determine fate of Water Works project, area agency funding

By MIKE GARRETT
The Chronicle-News

Work on Trinidad's historic Water Works rehabilitation project is still in limbo, as the City Council remains undecided on whether there will be sufficient state grant funding available next year to complete the estimated \$950,000 project. The Water Works Building project was again a hot topic of discussion at Tuesday's regular work session, along with seven more area agencies and non-profits making their 2011 city funding requests known to council.

Fort Collins-based consultant Richard Beardmore again urged the council to exercise patience to ensure that the state's possibly oldest and most historic water works building will be completely

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District takes on heat, rain at middle school

By RICHARD SITTS
The Chronicle-News

In the first week of classes for Trinidad School District #1, enrollment numbers are slightly up while temperatures are way up. During his report toward the end of Tuesday night's regular board meeting, Superintendent Mike Tranter told board members that Eckhart Elementary School enrollment is up by 37. If that figure holds, the district may have to hire another full time kindergarten teacher in January 2011, Tranter said, quickly adding that enrollment numbers this early in the school year fluctuate greatly and are not set until October. Meanwhile, preliminary numbers are down a little at Fisher's Peak

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Consultant: Trinidad economy needs nursing home

By DAVID J. SANTISTEVAN JR.
The Chronicle-News

A feasibility study done by Michael Martin of Denver-based Healthcare Realty Investment, Inc. concluded that there is a need for the 53-year-old Trinidad State Nursing Home and Las Animas County Commissioners will now move forward and submit a proposal to purchase the home through a November ballot question.

The Las Animas County Board of Commissioners Tuesday agreed to send a letter to the

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Commissioners approve sewer project for wellness center

By MARTY MAYFIELD
The Chronicle-News

RATON - City commissioners approved a sewer project bid and tabled a decision on the gas tax loan and road projects that could be funded by refinancing the gas tax loan. There is a lot of data and possible alternative financing that could be looked at and Mayor Pro-Tem Chuck Henry complained about not getting the information soon enough because he was out of town and could not make an informed decision. Therefore, he requested the decision be tabled.

In a 4-0 vote with Henry abstaining, commissioners approved W.M. Serazio Construction as the low bid for the sewer project connection to the

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Golden Dragon Acrobats put the awe back in awesome

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Fegan. Fegan booked their tours for a quarter century before passing the duties to his Nashville cousin, Art Fegan. Chang still produces and directs the shows. Angela Chang does brilliant work both in costuming the performers and choreographing their movements in precise coordination to ever-present music.

The acrobats have returned to the Shuler every couple of years since their founding, so they're no secret locally. That explains the nearly-full house, and the reason so many par-

ents brought their kids of all ages – on the first Monday night of the new school year: it was not a show to be missed if you could help it.

Despite their youth, the acrobats were seasoned professionals who knew how to thrill and entertain a crowd.

The show reached its high point near the end when a chest-high stand was placed between the stage and the front row of seats. A young man topped the stand and accepted a chair from a helper. He set the chair on the stand and climbed higher, then did the

same with another chair. Another, and another, until he stood atop the stand and seven chairs, until he had direct eye contact with people in the balcony.

Way up there, he did handstands and other stunts. It seemed truly dangerous – not only for himself, but for the audience members below. He never faltered. It was an exhilarating end to an awesome show.

Photo by Marty Mayfield

It's a heart of girls in blue as the Golden Dragon Acrobats perform Monday night in the Shuler Theater.



Commissioners approve sewer project for wellness center

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new wellness center. Serazio's bid (\$103,414) was not the lowest, but with the 5 percent in-state bidders preference, the bid came in just over \$300 less than the next lowest bid from Purgatoire Valley Construction (\$98,572). Commissioners approved Serazio's bid, however, stipulated that a hold be placed on the start of the construction until the bid dispute time has elapsed.

Commissioners then tabled action on three projects that could be funded with money that would be

realized from refinancing the gas tax loan. The money that would be realized would be used to complete road construction from Grant Avenue to State Road 72 and provide access to the wellness center. Refinancing the loan would allow the city to do the project with its own money rather than from somewhere else, such as GRIP 2 funds. It was noted that the city had lost \$1.1 million in GRIP 2 funds because of the state's financial woes. Commissioner Sandra Mantz suggested the city look at alternative financing rather than extend the debt on the loan out another 15 or 20 years.

The gas tax produces approximately \$200,000 a year and is designated for road construction or repair and improvements and has no effect on the general fund. About \$104,000 of those funds are used to service the gas tax loan, which has about three years left on it. By refinancing the loan and keeping the payment at about the same, the city could realize an additional \$700,000 by refinancing for 15 years and \$904,000 if refinanced for 20

years.

If the city looked at just creating another loan to be used for matching funds for grants to complete the projects, the city would need anywhere from about \$90,000 to \$140,000. The gas tax would then be used to service that loan debt, as well as leaving the city with less than \$100,000 for road repair and maintenance. After the debt on the original loan is paid, the city would have the \$104,000 to spend on road projects. Commissioners will decide just how to do the deal and will have a special meeting sometime before the Sept. 14 recall election.

Commissioners also approved rescheduling their regular Sept. 14 meeting due to the recall election being on that day. Henry, Mayor Jesse Johnson and Commissioner Joe Apache are all up for recall. A date will be determined later and if need be, a special meeting can be called to handle any dire city business.

At about noon on Monday, just before the 24-hour deadline on agenda items, Mayor Pro-Tem

Henry asked that a discussion about the city attorney's contract be placed on the agenda. Henry wanted clarification as to whom the city attorney actually works for. City Attorney Ray Floersheim informed commissioners that the city commission hired him and therefore, he answers to them and does not answer to anyone else. Floersheim did indicate that if the city manager asked for a legal opinion, that he would be obligated to give him one and the same would go for commissioners. He also suggested that if a citizen of Raton has a problem that he or she should take it to the commission and the commission should then schedule a closed executive session to discuss the matter. He also informed commissioners that what was discussed in closed session was not to leave that session and could not be discussed outside that forum. Henry felt that there was some misconception about who Floersheim worked for after some of the actions that were taken during the election process disputes and recall petition disputes. Henry felt that some of

those actions were not based on what the citizens wanted.

Discussion on the election process then followed, with Henry questioning Deputy City Clerk Geneva Trujillo on how the process for absentee ballots was handled. Henry said he felt that what applied to absentee voters should be applied to polling place voters. State statute, however, indicates that election officials cannot ask for ID from voters during the regular voting. However, in order to vote absentee, an application must be filled out and if the information, namely the address, doesn't match the voter registration rolls, then the application can be denied. Trujillo, however, said that applicants are told of the discrepancy and allowed to fill out another application with the correct information. She told commissioners that to her knowledge, no one had been denied the chance to vote. Henry said he disagreed with that statement. Henry then asked if her office filled out the absentee voter roll that is sent to the county clerk, indicating that person did vote and should not

be allowed to vote again, was done in front of the applicant. Trujillo indicated that it was because it was done as soon as the application was received and approved. This especially applied during early voting, she added.

In other business, commissioners approved the liquor license transfer from Vinco Yob to Yob Investment Company. They also approved the correction to ordinance numbering sequence and the July 13 meeting minutes in which the ordinance was incorrectly numbered.

In the city manager's report, PJ Mileta complimented H.S. Berry Engineering, specifically Jason Phillips, for the job he did on the Second Street construction project. Mileta also received several compliments and gave one to A.S. Horner Construction for working with affected business owners and the rapid completion of the project.

Commissioners then adjourned and will await the scheduling for the next commission meeting.

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(719) 846-3311
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Members Associated Press - Colorado Press Association.
Periodicals Postage Paid For At Trinidad, CO.
Published Daily
Except Saturday and Sunday
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www.thechronicle-news.com

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Consultant: Trinidad economy needs nursing home

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Colorado Department of Human Services notifying it that the county is intending to submit a proposal for the acquisition of the nursing home after listening to the findings of Martin's feasibility report.

Last month the board sent a letter out to the Las Animas County Clerk's office that the board may put forth a ballot issue to purchase the home through a possible sales tax to take over the home's operations. "You cannot let it close," Martin told The Chronicle-News in an interview. The Trinidad State Nursing Home is absolutely essential to your local economy. Again, you cannot let it close. The home has an impact beyond its actual direct payroll and revenues. There is a multiplier effect I have in the report. The home has 50 to 100 percent more impact on this community than its actual face value of its revenues."

Chairman Jim Montoya added, "We would like to thank Mr. Martin for doing the study. He did a very good job. The meat and

potatoes of the study is that the Trinidad home needs to stay open. Now it goes back to the voters to decide the future of the home."

The home also affects Trinidad State Junior College, and Mt. San Rafael Hospital. The home, according to Martin, is worth about \$2.7 million to \$3.3 million and this is a feasible price range.

Martin said, "It would make sense for the county to buy it at this level and that it could fund itself, cover its own cost and maybe have something left over."

It was also agreed that any bonds issued could be paid off.

Montoya added, "We voted to move forward and Mr. Martin will come back with some firmer numbers and we will have to work with the community college board to iron some issues out. If this all works out, this would give the residents and employees a sense of knowing the home will be open. This will give them a sense of stability and take the monkey off their back."

The study also states that there is verified and

sufficient demand for the home to continue to operate and based on the population in Las Animas County, there is a dire need for the home to do well and be profitable in the future.

"I think Mr. Martin did a great job given the short time that he had to do the study in," Commissioner Jim Vigil said. "The county will now move forward. The nursing home is very critical to the community. The home is valuable and as Mr. Martin stated in the study, it has to be kept open because it drives the whole economy in Las Animas County."

If no buyer - private, non-profit or other operator - steps forward to take the home over, it would not be acceptable, according to Martin.

Of the 130-plus staff at the home, about 2/3 of them are pure nursing staff. The ratio of nurses to residents is just below the state requirements - just over two residents to every one caregiver. There have not been many complaints or violations, especially compared to long care facilities statewide.

The study indicates that

the care at the home is where the state requires it to be, and that it is more than competitive when it comes to wages, compared to similar facilities around the state.

"Mr. Martin's study clearly indicates that there is a need for the home now and well into the future," Las Animas County Administrator Bill Cordova said. "The board next week will take up a ballot question that has to be submitted to the county clerk's office by Sept. 3. That is the deadline to submit local ballot questions."

Safety issues with the building that was built in 1957 and had an addition built in 1968. The Department of Human Services has stated that asbestos is a major concern along with other safety issues with the building.

The report added that there is not an asbestos problem and it is mostly in the floor tiles and that is not a threat to the residents or staff. The department of health takes the stance of managing asbestos in place. This means if it is not friable (reduced to powder) or in the air, it is not a danger:

Martin suggested to the board that it get it quantified and have a study done so they know the full facts, especially if they want to do a total renovation.

"This building was built well and is solid. The Department of Health in Colorado is not punitive," Martin said. "They do not want to see a nursing home close and 90 residents put out on the street. However, they will cite things and make sure to give nursing facilities time to correct problems and keep them up to codes and standards, and money is found to make sure this happens in a timely manner."

After the Colorado Department of Human Services told the Colorado Community College System's board to give up the title or the home would be closed, the Community College board decided it would sell the property to DHS for \$2 million to keep the home from closing.

The sale of the home was delayed until the end of 2010 by Gov. Bill Ritter back in May to give Las Animas County voters a chance to keep the home local and open.

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This Yoga is one of what is called a RAJ yoga – meaning one of the first, oldest and most basic of all yogas. Many other forms of Yoga come from this Kundalini base and practice. Kundalini Yoga mixes postures (asanas), breathing (pranayams), mudras (hand positions) and meditations to target, cleanse, revitalize and purify different systems of the body as well as focusing and calming the mind, the spirit, and re-aligning individuals with the HEART. Professor England-Sam specializes in Women's Wellness, Stress-Reduction & Overcoming Addiction. The class includes 1 1/2 hours of Warm-ups, The Specific Yoga set, Deep Relaxation and Final Meditation. The last half hour is left for training in Yogic Lifestyles – sleeping, eating, daily practice, etc...

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