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TRINIDAD
COLORADO

WEEKEND EDITION
FRIDAY, SATURDAY
& SUNDAY
MAR. 4-6, 2016

THE CHRONICLE-NEWS

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THE FINE PRINT

WEEKEND—MAR 4-6

TSJC FEATURE FRIDAYS
FRIDAYS THRU APRIL 22 (10 a.m.-2 p.m.) Featured Friday programs allow prospective students the opportunity to see what is available at **TSJC**, take a tour and ask questions, Berg Building, Room 201. Info: Greg Boyce, 719-846-5530.

AMERICAN LEGION
FRIDAY (6 p.m.) The Trinidad American Legion meets at the Holiday Inn, 3130 Santa Fe Trail Dr. Info: Commander David Walker, 719-846-5469.

OPENING NIGHT GALA
FRI. (6-8 p.m.) Realism, Surrealism and Photorealism Art Show opens to the public with a gala reception. Show runs Mar. 4-26. Info: Bree Pappan, 719-846-1441.

CITY COUNCIL
SAT. (9 a.m.) Special work session/retreat will be held at the Mt. Carmel Center, 911 Robinson Ave. Info: Audra Garrett, 719-846-9843. **CITY COUNCIL: Mayor: Phil Rico and Council Members: Joe Bonato, Pat Fletcher, Carlos Lopez, Anthony Matie, Michelle Miles, and Liz Torres.**

KIWANIS PANCAKE BREAKFAST
SUN. (7 a.m.-1 p.m.) Benefit to support the TMS Robotics Team will be held at the Trinidad Middle School, 614 Park St. Info: Stephanie Garcia, 719-846-4178.

Today's Quote

“Character may be manifested in the great moments, but it is made in the small ones.”

~Phillip Brooks

MONDAY—MAR 7

TAAAC
MONDAY (6 p.m.) Trinidad Area Arts Council will meet in the Gallery Main, 130 E. Main St. Info: 719-846-1441. Public is welcome to attend.

TRINIDAD MUSIC ASSN.
MON. (6:15- 8 p.m.) Community Choral rehearsals for the upcoming Spring Season will be held at the Massari Theater Music Room, corner of Pine and State Streets. Newcomers welcome — No auditions. Info: Russ Gorrell, 719-989-7317.

PUBLIC SERVICE

CARNEGIE LIBRARY
All free events. Info: 719-846-6841.
***FRI.** (11 a.m.-4:30 p.m.) Senior Citizens Day at Books & More, 132 N. Commercial St. Most items 50% off.

***MAR.** 9 (1 p.m.) Bocce at Cimino Park (Adult/Teen)

***MAR.** 10 (5:30 p.m.) Kelley Eden “Nutrition & Lifestyles” (Adult)

***MAR.** 17 (10 a.m.) Join Tim Crisler for a hike up Simpson's Rest (Adult/Teen)

***MAR.** 23 (1 p.m.) Join Tom Potter for beginner & intermediate golf workshop at the Trinidad Municipal Golf Course (Adult)

***MAR.** 30 (1 p.m.) Bocce at Cimino Park (Adult/Teen)

MINISTERIAL ALLIANCE
TUES. (7-8 p.m.) Group will host an hour of community prayer at the Sebastiani Gym on Animas St. Info: Pastor Bruce Knight, 719-846-6018.

DEMOCRATIC ASSEMBLY
MAR. 12 (9 a.m.) Event will be held at the Trinidad Middle School, 614 Park St. Info: Paula Lucero, 719-680-0709.

BAR NI COMMUNITY GRANT
MAR. 31 **DEADLINE:** The Bar Ni Ranch Community Fund is accepting grant proposals for area non-profits. Info: Tom Perry to tomandlindaperry@gmail.com.

BOWLING FOR ARTOCADE
APRIL 1: Get your bowling balls and costumes ready for another ArtoCade Bowling Extravaganza coming up April Fool's Day. Details & Sign-up: Rodney Wood, artcarfun@hotmail.com or 719-334-0087.

9HEALTH FAIR
APRIL 16 (7:30-Noon) The Mt. San Rafael Hospital will host the annual Fair in the Hospital Lobby. If you would like to secure a booth call Lynda Pachelli at 719-846-8051.

TRINIDAD HIGH SCHOOL
JULY 2-3: THS Class of 1981 will hold their 35th Class Reunion celebration. RSVP, help find members & info: Brenda Hance, brendamtzhance62@yahoo.com or 405-799-9045.

RIVER CALL

Purgatoire River Call as of:
03/03/16. Chilili Ditch: Priority # 7 --- Appropriation date: 04/30/1862.

Trinidad Reservoir Accounting:
Release 0 AF
Inflow 49.40 AF -- 24.91 CFS
Evaporation 7.40 AF
Content 28870 AF
Elevation 6,193.74
Precipitation 0

Down stream call: John Martin
Reservoir: 12/31/1948.



LEGACY

LA County's Deputy Russell leaves behind loving family, friends, grateful community

Remembering a big old Teddy Bear of a man who loved kids

Steve Block
The Chronicle-News

A black drop cloth sits atop the credenza on Deputy Travis Russell's office desk in the Las Ani-

mas County Sheriff's Office, a silent tribute to a fallen comrade placed there by his brother law enforcement officers for the man who died of unknown causes while on duty Tuesday afternoon. County Sheriff James Casias said the drop cloth was going to stay there for a while.

Just 44 years old, Deputy Russell leaves behind his wife, Meghan, two daughters and one son. A native of Quincy, Ill., he spent much of his youth in the Kansas City, Kan. area, and earned a bachelor's degree



from Avila University in Kansas City, Mo. He worked for the Trinidad Police Department, the Colorado Department of Corrections and for the Sheriff's Office on three separate occasions.

A few of his brother officers gathered at the office Wednesday to talk about the guy who served with them side-by-side.

“He was our school resource officer at one time and he was working very closely with the schools, and worked closely

Continued on Page 5 ...

Exploring Bent's Fort

Tim Keller's 2-part
Travel Feature



TRAVELOGUE

When America ended at the Arkansas River

A day trip to Bent's Fort — fascinating fun for all ages

THE SECOND OF TWO PARTS

Tim Keller
Correspondent
The Chronicle-News

Editor's Note: Early this year Tim Keller began his eighth year as a regular *Chronicle-News* contributor. Recently retired from teaching high school English, he has suddenly found himself with time to read whole books and go on road trips—which he will turn into adventures for all of us to enjoy.

After following Kit Carson's path up the Santa Fe Trail—now Highway 350 from Trinidad to La Junta—and into Bent's Fort, we were excited to discover that the fort's friendly host, John Carson, was Kit Carson's great grandson; the two men even shared a remarkable resemblance. And John knew far more than the guidebooks, right down to where the fort's horses were sent for R&R along the Purgatoire River near present-day Trinidad.

As he worked on a leather

Continued on Page 3 ...

Photos by Tim Keller / *The Chronicle-News*

A gentle scenic hike of just over one mile crosses marshes and follows the Arkansas River just outside Bent's Old Fort. The parking lot is a quarter mile from the fort, but a call box is available to request a shuttle.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Care and Share: Helping put food on the table for local seniors

Eric John Monson
News Editor
The Chronicle-News

They sure seem to have a good time. It's all smiles, laughs and some gentle ribbing from the disbursement crew as they feed local seniors through the Care and Share program at the Las Animas County Fairgrounds during a sun-drenched afternoon. Seniors come down the line, are met by a smile from Brittany, then take a little crap from a guy named John as he helps them with their produce, then have their staple-box loaded into their vehicle and are sent home with a wave from Dan. There are smiles, there is food for the dinner table, generosity, gratefulness and an exhale of relief.

“We do have the most fun,” says Brittany Flores, a Resource Specialist for Aging and Disability Resources for Colorado (ADRC), which falls under the umbrella of the South Central Council of Governments (COG). We have the best crew. The guys I work with, John [Smith] and Dan [Arrazola], are awesome. I couldn't do it without them. They're like my right hands...

“And yes, there's a lot of joshing. John is like our little assistant shopper. He's a comedian sometimes.”

That type of welcoming atmosphere in this place is simply the result of the warm personalities gathered—although it should also be by design for this kind of work. Asking for and receiving help is



Eric John Monson / *The Chronicle-News*

COG employees Dan Arrazola, ADRC Resource Specialist Brittany Flores and John Smith help feed the local seniors in need through the Care and Share program that distributes food monthly at the Las Animas County Fairgrounds.

hard. It can be intimidating and wears on a person's self-esteem. Yet it's amazing how quickly a friendly smile can restore dignity.

“I think at first they don't really know what to expect,” says Flores of seniors coming to the program for the first time. “They might be a little uncomfortable about the program in general. I think once

they get here and they see us, and they see our personalities and that we're laid back... It works out really great. You learn the names of a lot of people. You get to have some favorites, for sure, but it's always enjoyable and I think that's how it should be.”

Continued on Page 8 ...

WEATHER WATCH

Friday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 64. West southwest wind around 10 mph.
Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 33.

West wind around 10 mph.
Saturday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 64. West wind around 5 mph becoming south in the morning. **Night:** Partly cloudy, with a low around 33. West southwest wind 5 to 10 mph.

Sunday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 64. Southwest wind 10 mph. **Night:** Partly cloudy, with a low around 38. West southwest wind 10 to 15 mph.

Monday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 58. Breezy, with a west southwest wind 15 to 20 mph. **Night:** Partly cloudy, with a low around 31. West southwest wind 10 to 15 mph.

Tuesday: Partly sunny, with a high near 50. North wind around 10 mph. **Night:** Partly cloudy, with a low around 31. West southwest wind 10 to 15 mph.

Weather Sponsored by:

719-845-0102

TRAVEL ADVENTURE

Exploring Bent's Fort

Tim Keller's inspiring 2-part Adventure Travel Feature

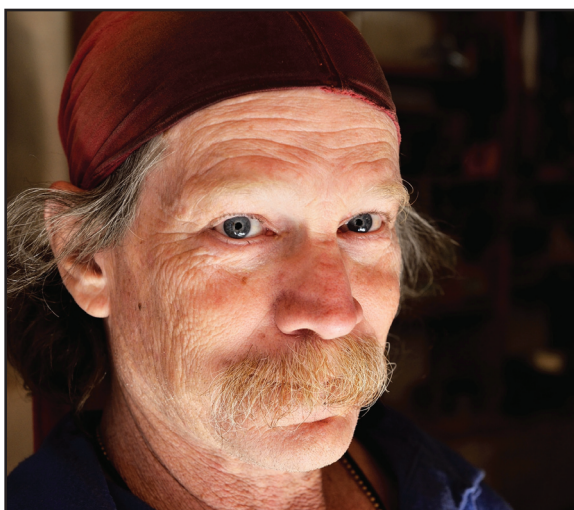
A Colorado Travelogue Series When America ended at the Arkansas River A day trip to Bent's Fort — fascinating fun for all ages

Part 2 of 2 Parts... Continued from Page 1



pouch while tending a small courtyard campfire, I climbed the stairs above him to explore a row of small apartments where a lucky few got to live for a spell. The fort was a busy trading post, an extensive retail operation in which visitors came and went throughout each day. Many, including large contingents of Cheyenne and other Native Americans, plus Santa Fe Trail travelers and "Mexicans"—any Hispanic from south of the adjacent Arkansas River—made camp in the shadows outside the walls of the fort.

Full-time employees numbered 60 to 100 and most of those slept in their work areas.



Kit Carson was a regular resident and employee at Bent's Fort in the 1840s. Today his great grandson, John Carson, is the resident host and guide at Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site. Once a history teacher at the high school and junior college in La Junta, Carson has been hosting visitors at the fort "since 1841," he says—although he allows that ten years is technically more accurate.



Tanning hides and preparing them for shipment back east was a major occupation at Bent's Fort. A huge fur press stood near the center of the courtyard, where ten buffalo robes were pressed into a single bale weighing 100 pounds, then shipped to St. Louis by wagon. Annual output reached 15,000 buffalo robes. Once the buffalo disappeared, so did Bent's Fort.



This "powder room" wasn't for the ladies: Barrels of gunpowder were stored for the making of ammunition.

The small upstairs apartments were reserved for favored guests, including select traders, hunters and military officers.

The first room I reached, though, was spacious and light-filled, located on the northeast corner at the top of the stairs. This was Dr. Edward Hempstead's quarters, now best known for housing Santa Fe Trail traveler Susan Magoffin. Wife of a wealthy trader, the 19-year-old suffered a miscarriage at the fort. Her diary became one of the leading sources about 1840s life in the Southwest. She had plenty of time to write at the fort.

"Our room...is quite roomy," she wrote. "We have two windows, one looking out on the plain, the other is on the patio." But there was no quiet. "There is the greatest possible noise in the patio," she wrote. "The shoeing of horses, neighing and braying of mules, the crying of children, the scolding and fighting of men, are all enough to turn

my head. The fort is crowded to overflowing."

Company partner Ceran St. Vrain had the fort's other spacious quarters, across the plaza from the doctor. When St. Vrain or the doctor was away, his room was loaned to others. There were too many people for any room to be left empty.

John Carson shared another fun fact not in the guidebooks. When the doctor was away, the camp's medical duties fell to the blacksmith. I found his shop dirty, near the livestock corrals and filled with heavy iron mallets, tongs, vises and anvils. Magoffin was lucky to find the doctor in when she miscarried.

The smaller apartments were little larger than today's jail cells but they were warmly painted and enjoyed window light from the courtyard. A narrow bed, desk and chair were lit at night by a candle or two. Best of all, each room in the fort had a kiva fireplace. Mountains of firewood were provided just outside the fort walls.

Idle time could be spent playing cards, checkers, chess or backgammon. Magoffin wrote, "I hear the cackling of chickens at such a rate sometimes I shall not be surprised to hear of a cockpit."

A billiards table arrived in 1836, installed in the bar upstairs. An 1839 ledger shows a bar inventory that included "12 boxes of claret wine, 37 gallons of brandy, and 58 gallons of rum." Although Indians, Mexicans, children and women were not allowed in the bar, Magoffin heard enough to write, "They are gambling off their clothes till some of them are next to nudity."

Downstairs across the courtyard, a kitchen and cook's room adjoined an impressively formal dining room. After teenage adventurer Lewis Garrard arrived from Missouri he wrote that his party "sat down to a table for the first time in fifty days and ate with knives, forks and plates." Another visitor wrote of "several days courteous and really delightful entertainment. The fattened calf was killed for us and the hoarded luxuries of (the fort) were produced."

Wagon trains arrived from Missouri after traversing 530 miles of rough prairie. Wagons and wheels took a beating. Bent's Fort was a busy repair center. A wagon shed sheltered 15 wagons while blacksmiths and carpenters worked on them in their adjacent shops.

Near the workshops was the powder room—not to be mistaken as a lounge for the women. The windowless storage room held almost two-dozen barrels of gunpowder for making ammunition. If it ever blew, the bar and billiards room directly above would have been the first to go. Mrs. Magoffin could rest knowing that she was far across the courtyard.

All of these rooms are open today and furnished just as they were when Bent's Fort sat astride the Mexican border. Overwhelmed by the possibilities, I ignored the Self-Guiding Tour book and explored randomly, checking in with John Carson when I had questions. Reading the guidebook at home, I see that I missed plenty. Two hours wasn't enough to take it all in.

We plan to repeat our trip in late summer or fall when the trees outside are in full leaf, giving the setting an entirely different look. The National Park Service's centennial celebration will still be providing free admissions, and John Carson, Kit Carson's great grandson, still plans to be there; after all, he says he's been there "since 1841."

We rushed our departure to make it to The Barista before it closed. La Junta's downtown espresso bar was the perfect way station for our return trip down the Santa Fe Trail (Highway 350) back to Trinidad. Arriving just before closing, the barista at The Barista had cleaned the espresso machine for the night but she smiled and made us fresh coffee. We didn't ask her to make us a sandwich, wrap, salad, soup or any of the shop's other enticing food offerings.

By the time we finished though, there was a line of four people behind us, including La Junta's mayor, Lynn Horner. A long chat answered many of our questions about La Junta and led us around the block to 1st Street Emporium where Lynn's rare-books shop is one of 22 stalls in the local-artists' co-



Photos by Tim Keller / The Chronicle-News

One of three plush quarters at Bent's Fort, Santa Fe Trail traveler Susan Magoffin spent 12 days in Dr. Edward Hempstead's room when she suffered a miscarriage during her stay, later immortalized in her book "Down the Santa Fe Trail and into Mexico."



When they weren't busy working, residents at Bent's Fort could pass the time playing checkers, chess, backgammon or billiards. The Billiard Room housed a bar serving alcohol and open only to "gentlemen," which did not include women, children, Indians or Mexicans.

op. The sign outside says, "Come in, We're Awesome," and that attitude extends inside where each artist takes one shift per month in running the emporium.

We left with three items: a four-foot-tall garden sunflower made of farm implements; a jar of local Scaff Brothers Habanero Ranchera Salsa ("Very Hot"); and a 1939-edition Zane Grey novel, "The Spirit of the Border," with cover artwork by Trinidad's own A.R. Mitchell.

The sky grew increasingly dramatic as the sun dipped behind clouds over the Spanish Peaks while we continued south on Highway 350, reminding us of the 1973 movie "Badlands" that filmed mostly in and around La Junta but also prominently featured Trinidad's Bloom Mansion. A young Martin Sheen and Sissy Spacek play disaffected teens on the run during a killing spree inspired by real events in Nebraska in 1958.

Already eager to re-

visit our late afternoon drive, we watched "Badlands" again at home the next night. Set in South Dakota, the doomed teens race their stolen Cadillac along Highway 350 and across pastures, ever destined for Montana—which throughout their race is represented by the distant silhouetted Spanish Peaks. They never get any closer. When the sheriff's finally catch up with them, it's at Delhi, halfway between La Junta and Trinidad.

The service station at Delhi was old then; now it's down to rubble. Bent's Fort used to be that way, too. Fortunately, and fabulously, the National Park Service recreated it as rich, immersive living history enjoyed by all ages. Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site continues its free-admission policy throughout 2016, open daily with winter hours 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. through May. Visitor information is available at the park's website or (719) 383-5010.

Read Tim's previous exciting 3-part travelogue series "Chasing Billy the Kid" on his adventures through New Mexico or view his other work, at TimKellerArts.com.



Staff blacksmiths and carpenters were among the fort's busiest craftsmen, repairing wagons broken by the dry desert air and rough passage along the Santa Fe Trail. "At times the fort resembled a wrecking yard, with broken axles, fractured hubs, splintered sideboards, mounds of white canvas, and piles of abandoned tongues and spreaders strewn about." (National Park Service)



Some employees and guests stayed in modest rooms upstairs at Bent's Fort. U.S. soldiers stayed during the U.S.-Mexican War and when Stephen Kearny's Army of the West made its way to Santa Fe and on to California. The fort was a bustling trading post, though, and most visitors camped outside the fort walls at night.