



WEEKEND EDITION
FRIDAY, SATURDAY
& SUNDAY
JAN. 1-3, 2016

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TRINIDAD
COLORADO

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THE FINE PRINT

HOLIDAY CLOSURES

*The Chronicle-News Office will be closed Thursday and Friday for the New Year Holiday. The paper will be delivered as usual on these days without any interruption of service.

*The City of Trinidad, the Landfill and the Carnegie Library will be closed Friday for the holiday.

*The Las Animas County Offices and Courthouse will be closed Thursday and Friday in observance of New Years.

*The South Central Council of Governments and affiliates in Trinidad and Walsenburg will be closed Friday for the New Year's holiday. Call the Ride Line 719-845-1127 by 4 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 31, 2015 to make reservations for Mon., Jan. 4, 2016.

Today's Quote

"Write it on your heart that every day is the best day in the year."

~ Ralph Waldo Emerson

PUBLIC SERVICE

TAKE THE SURVEY
JANUARY 7 DEADLINE: EVERYONE HAS A VOICE! Space To Create needs your input, so please take the survey! Let us know what you want. GO TO: www.corazondetrinidad.org

TSJC NEEDS YOU!
Volunteers are needed for science fair judges for area secondary schools on Jan 12, 14 and 27. Please email the TSJC STEM Outreach coordinator, Linda Perry at linda.perry@trinidadstate.edu or call 719-846-5697. Approximately 1/2 day will be needed from each volunteer.

PLANNING COMMISSION
JAN 4 (1 p.m.) The Las Animas County Planning and Land Use Office commissioners' meeting will be held at the County Court House, 200 E. First St., Room 201. Info: 719-846-4486.

CALL FOR ARTISTS
JAN. 8 - JAN. 30 SHOW: All area artists are encouraged to enter their work in the Contemporary Western Art of the Southeast Art Show to be held at Gallery Main, 130 E. Main St. Info about submissions: Bree Pappan, 719-846-1441 or trinidadareartsCouncil@gmail.com

SENIOR CENTER FUNDRAISER
JAN. 10: The Sayre Senior Center annual Quilt Raffle benefit for the facility will be held at the Center, 1222 San Pedro. To purchase tickets or info about the Center call: Anna Fislely, 719-846-3336.

STUDENT FINANCIAL AID
JAN. 13 & 27 (6 p.m.) Parents Workshop to help complete student's Financial Aid Applications with Louis Rino. Reserve a space: 719-846-2971.

STATE OF THE COLLEGE
JAN 13 (6 p.m.) President Dr. Carmen Simone of TSJC will give an address regarding the challenges the college faces as well as exciting plans for the future that will be held at the Masari Theater (corner of Broom and State Streets. Info: 719-846-5725.

TRINIDAD WORKFORCE
JAN. 19 (2-4 p.m.) First Responder Jobs Career Exploration will be held at the Center, 140 N. Commercial St. Info: 719-846-9221.

CHENOWETH AWARDS
JAN 22 DEADLINE: Individual nomination forms for outstanding citizens who have made positive contributions to the region can be picked up at the Chamber of Commerce office. For more information call 719-846-9285 or email tacchamber@outlook.com. Please include nominee's phone number and email address so they can be contacted.

TSJC LUNCH & LEARN
JAN. 28 (12:15-12:45 p.m.) Free program "What's all the Buzz About Bees" by Jim Conley, former Huerfano County Extension Agent, will be held in the Pioneer Room of the Sullivan Center. Lunch can be had on your own at the cafeteria. Lunch RSVP: Donna Haddow, 719-846-5541 or donna.haddow@trinidadstate.edu.

TRINIDAD LAKE
THRU MAY 1: Driftwood found along the shoreline at the Boat Ramp, in Reilly Canyon and on South Shore may be taken for household use by anyone who has first obtained a free

RIVER CALL

Purgatoire River Call as of: 12/30/15. Chilli Ditch: Priority # 7 --- Appropriation date: 04/30/1862.

Trinidad Reservoir Accounting:
Release .32 AF
Inflow 48.97 AF -- 24.69 CFS
Evaporation 0.65 AF
Content 25,069 AF
Elevation 6,190.34
Precipitation 0

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



Nick Ruybalid / The Chronicle-News

A transient fugitive out of South Dakota, James Aaron Swanson, was arrested near the Cedar Street Bridge on Weds. Dec. 23 by officers from the Trinidad Police Department.

CRIME

Police apprehend transient fugitive who now faces multiple weapons charges

By Steve Block
The Chronicle-News

A transient man living in Trinidad was arrested and has been charged with multiple felony counts relating to the illegal possession of firearms and being a fugitive from justice. James Aaron Swanson was arrested by Trinidad police at approximately 5:45 a.m., on Wednesday, December 23, near the Cedar Street Bridge in the 200 block of Cedar Street and charged with counts of being a Fugitive from Justice, Possession of Weapons by a Previous Offender, Possession of a Dangerous Weapon and Unlawful Carrying of a Con-

cealed Weapon.

Swanson was spotted by a police officer on patrol while carrying a large stereo speaker subwoofer. Police were able to identify Swanson because of his possible involvement in a recent shooting that was being investigated by police. He was heavily covered up with bulges under his outer coat that could be clearly seen when police observed him. A warrant check by Trinidad dispatch revealed that there was a confirmed nationwide warrant out for Swanson's arrest from South Dakota and that South Dakota would ex-

Continued on Page 4 ...

Chasing Billy the Kid

Tim Keller's new 3-part
Western Adventure
Feature



A New Mexico Travelogue Series Part 1: Mesilla

By Tim Keller
Correspondent
The Chronicle-News

Editor's Note: This month Tim Keller begins his eighth year as a regular *Chronicle-News* contributor. Recently retired from teaching high school English, he's suddenly found himself with time to read whole books and go on road trips — which led him to create the *Chasing Billy the Kid* series. Reach Tim, or view his work, at TimKellerArts.com.

Driving south on I-25 in late October, I knew as little about Billy the Kid as most people. Born Henry McCarty, he reached his teens in Silver City, NM, where he got in some trouble. He rode into Lincoln, 200 miles east of Silver City, as William H. Bonney, and hooked up with a young British businessman named John Tunstall who was shot dead by business rivals, launching the Lincoln County War. Billy killed people, escaped from jail, then was shot dead in the night by Sheriff Pat Garrett in Fort Sumner, NM. Billy the Kid was dead at 21.

Although I've counted Las Vegas as my hometown, and Santa Fe too, I had no idea as I drove through them that Billy the Kid had spent time in the jails of both towns. I was headed to the bottom of New Mexico with my Colorado friend Peter Burg to deliver a pair of large framed photographs for public installations at UNM Hospital in Albuquerque and the Luna County Sheriff's Department in

Deming. When we finished, we'd spend three days looking for great new photographs—a hunting expedition—from dawn to dusk daily, driving around southern New Mexico.

I had no idea that I was about to catch the Billy the Kid bug.

After photographing the verdant farm fields around the Rio Grande Valley village of Hatch, where chile and cotton and corn were growing even as snow covered our yards back home, I used Google Maps to find Mesilla so we could enjoy dinner and drinks at the historic La Posta restaurant, which had recently been featured in *New Mexico Magazine*. In the restaurant, I found Billy the Kid. He'd been there. So had Kit Carson.

Walking off dinner around the adjacent plaza, I found Billy the Kid again. In the corner building across a narrow lane from La Posta, he'd been tried and convicted of killing Sheriff William Brady in Lincoln. Brady's successor, Pat Garrett, took Billy the Kid from that building back to Lincoln to hang.

History is rich and unavoidable around the plaza at Old Mesilla, which was founded as La Mesilla when it was part of Mexico. No sooner did the United States annex New Mexico in 1853 than the new Butterfield Overland Stage Line made Mesilla an overnight stop on its route between St. Louis and San Francisco. Two Civil War battles were fought at Mesilla, where the Confederates established a capital until Union sympathizers routed it and es-

Continued on Page 3 ...

Photos by Tim Keller / The Chronicle-News

Born in New York as Henry McCarty, America's original bad boy became Henry Antrim, then The Kid, then the alias William H. Bonney, Jr., and finally, seven months before his death at age 21, world-famous outlaw Billy the Kid. (Photograph taken at Lincoln, New Mexico's Anderson-Freeman Museum.)

VET SERVICES

Veterans Identification Card Law draws many questions from local vets

By Eric John Monson
News Editor
The Chronicle-News

Las Animas County Veteran Service Officer J. Allen "Al" Trujillo said he has been fielding a lot of calls from local vets about the new federal law behind the soon-to-come Veteran Identification Card. Trujillo said chief responses to questions about veteran ID cards is that they won't be ready for issuance until 2017 and that guidelines are still being drafted. Aside from fielding veteran's

questions on the ID cards, Trujillo said, "At this time our office is not doing anything relating to this service, because guidelines are still being drafted. When they start issuing these Veteran ID cards (2017), it will be with confirmation that the veteran has served and was discharged honorably and a DD-214 (Military Service Document) will not be required as proof of service."

Both the House and the Senate passed the Veterans Identification

Continued on Page 4 ...



File photo / The Chronicle-News

Las Animas County Veteran Service Officer Al Trujillo.

WEATHER WATCH

NEW YEAR'S DAY: Sunny, with a high near 34. West wind around 5 mph. **NIGHT:** Mostly clear, with a low around

11. West wind 5 to 10 mph. **Saturday:** Sunny, with a high near 41. West wind 5 to 10 mph. **Night:** Mostly clear, with a low around 14. West wind around 5 mph. **Sunday:** Sunny, with a high near 42. West northwest wind around 5 mph. **Night:** Mostly clear, with a low around 16. West wind around 5 mph. **Sunday:** Sunny, with a high near 44.

West southwest wind around 5 mph. **Night:** Mostly clear, with a low around 20. West southwest wind 5 to 10 mph. **Monday:** Mostly sunny, with a high near 45. Southwest wind around 10 mph. **Night:** Mostly cloudy, with a low around 25. Southwest wind 5 to 10 mph. **Tuesday:** Partly sunny, with a high near 45. Southwest wind around 5 mph.

Weather Sponsored by:

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WESTERN ADVENTURE



Chasing Billy the Kid

A New Mexico Travelogue Series Part 1: Mesilla

... Continued from Page 1



established their own.

But in 1881—the year Pat Garrett shot Billy the Kid dead in Fort Sumner—the people of Mesilla declined the Santa Fe Railway's request for a right of way. Instead, the railroad was built through neighboring Las Cruces, three miles east. As a result, Las Cruces today has the railroad and I-25 and more than 100,000 people while Mesilla is a quaint village of about 2000 people.

La Mesilla Historic District has been a National Historic Landmark since 1961. The plaza is often bustling as people visit retail shops and two more renowned restaurants, the Double Eagle and Josefina's Old Gate. The impressive Basilica of San Albino has been an active Catholic church on the plaza since 1852.

From Mesilla we crossed the sharply jagged Organ Mountains to reach a photographer's paradise, White Sands National Monument northeast of Las Cruces in the Tularosa Basin, a kind of no-man's land then and now. It's the route from Mesilla to Lincoln. Pat Garrett and Billy the Kid rode through here together in 1881. Garrett later established his Black Mountain Ranch outside White Sands. In 1908, someone shot Garrett dead here alongside the road. Even today, no one's sure who done it.

After photographing White Sands—a visually arresting place better conveyed through photography than writing—we spent our road trip's fourth and final night



Photos by Tim Keller / The Chronicle-News

Famed restaurant La Posta de la Mesilla sits across a narrow lane from the building on Mesilla's plaza where Billy the Kid was convicted of murder. La Posta's building dates to the 1840s when La Mesilla was still part of Mexico. After the U.S. flag was raised in 1853, the Butterfield Overland Stage Line stopped here on its St. Louis-to-San Francisco route. Overnight visitors included Ulysses S. Grant and Kit Carson. When Mesilla rebuffed the Santa Fe Railway, the train route went through neighboring Las Cruces instead. Las Cruces blossomed while Mesilla kept its small size and historic rural charm complete with rustic bench. Tourists love it.



Artwork on a Mesilla plaza doorway reflects life at the time Billy the Kid entered this building.

in neighboring Alamogordo at the White Sands Motel, a lovely old motor court. Billy the Kid came back into my mind. I wondered whether there was a definitive book where I could learn his whole true story. Visiting Amazon on my laptop, I typed "Billy the Kid" and found 13,583 listings of available items—books, movies and more. That's why I've never investigated Billy the Kid: Where would I even start?

But Amazon lists its merchandise in order of sales and its top-ranked item is "To Hell on a Fast Horse: The Untold Story of Billy the Kid and Pat Garrett," an acclaimed 2010 book by Mark Lee Gardner of Cascade, CO, with 177 rave reviews from happy customers. Pay dirt. I ordered a copy that arrived at home shortly after I did. (Is Amazon today's Pony Express?)

I learned that Pat Garrett and Billy the Kid were once neighbors in Fort Sumner; they would sometimes gamble in the same Fort Sumner cantina. They were both known to gamble in Tularosa, where I stopped to photograph the beautiful St. Francis de Paula Church just north of White Sands. North of Tularosa I photographed Three Rivers, once a trading post at the center of John Chisum's and Susan McSween's cattle empires—but then I took the turn toward home rather than the turn toward Lincoln where Chisum, McSween, Garrett and the Kid had all etched their names into history.

Gardner opens his book with Pat Garrett bringing the Kid into the jail at Las Vegas, which we'd passed through without knowing they'd ever been there. Garrett staved off a lynch mob at the new Las Vegas train depot (now alongside I-25) before continuing with his prisoner to Santa Fe. The kid was kept in a Santa Fe cell downtown on

Christina Boyce. I never knew that Billy the Kid had spent some nights there.

Making extensive use of primary sources, Gardner's impressive narrative succeeded at making me feel like I'd met the Kid and understood him. The Kid made friends easily, spoke Spanish well, had an active sense of humor, and loved to dance. Driven by a strong sense of loyalty and justice, he was also a cop killer. And he was an escape artist, escaping shoot-outs and jails multiple times, by any means necessary.

From Mesilla, Garrett took him back to Lincoln to hang. The kid shot his way free, killing two of Garrett's deputies in the process. He didn't flee New Mexico; he simply returned to his girlfriend and friends in Fort Sumner. This time Garrett wouldn't try to catch Billy the Kid; he'd simply kill him.

Finishing Gardner's book, the hook had been set. Having just driven and photographed some of the places Garrett and the Kid had done their dance, it became easy for me to imagine them riding horseback across the land. They came to life. I grew hungry for another road trip. After three weeks at home, I took off again, just me and my camera this time, to chase Pat Garrett and Billy the Kid. I drove south to Lincoln.



Pat Garrett and Billy the Kid passed White Sands, now a national monument, on their way from Mesilla to Lincoln. Tim Keller, above, and friend Peter Burg, from Rye, Colorado, spent Halloween afternoon 2015 exploring the seemingly endless white dunes. Many in the Billy the Kid and Pat Garrett saga regularly commuted between Mesilla and Tularosa, Three Rivers and Lincoln.

Tim Keller's account of *Chasing Billy the Kid* will continue for the next two Fridays.
Part 2 – Lincoln
Part 3 – Fort Sumner



Three Rivers, between White Sands and Lincoln, was the center of the cattle empires of John Chisum and Susan McSween, both of whom played prominent roles in the Lincoln County War that led to Billy the Kid's brief blaze of glory.

Water Street. Just four blocks long, Water Street is where, in a live-music coffeehouse 29 years ago this month, I met my wife,



Both Billy the Kid and Pat Garrett used to gamble in the village of Tularosa, passing St. Francis de Paula Church on their way in and out of town.