

SCHOOL NEWS

High school teaching offers welcome career change

By **TIM KELLER**
The Chronicle-News

Quincey Burkhalter is a performer, a stand-up comedian. He's an author whose short stories and poetry are published by journals and magazines around the country. He's a former TV news anchor, reporter and producer. He sings karaoke. Oh, and he's a new English teacher, setting up shop in the Raton High School classroom Jana Chicarelli vacated when she retired in May.

Born and raised in Dexter, New Mexico, south of Roswell, Burkhalter grew up in a household of teachers, his mother teaching first grade, his father teaching science at Dexter High. "Teaching was always an ambition of mine," he says. "It's something I meant to do in the first place."

Instead, he majored in broadcast journalism at NMSU at Las Cruces. "I guess I found the limelight a little more appealing and went into TV instead of teaching." He spent three years at KTAB-TV in Abilene, TX, as both reporter and anchorman. Then he spent eight years as an on-camera reporter at KOBR-TV in Roswell, where he wrote his own reports, set up the camera, and stood in front of it. "Until you reach the big leagues, in the place I was, you do it all."

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Quincey Burkhalter



Raton High School English teacher Quincey Burkhalter

He moved to Ruidoso to work for Trident Media Services, broadcasting horseracing simulcasts around the country and producing TV commercials. Again he was a jack-of-all-trades, writing the commercials, filming them, editing. When the economy tanked early last year, he suddenly found himself without work. Time to finish that college degree, and tack a teaching certificate onto it.

"I think it's incredibly important that kids learn how to write," he says. "If you learn to think creatively, it makes you better at whatever you do." Burkhalter has found success in his own writing for several

years, seeing both his poetry and his short stories published in several prestigious literary journals around the country.

His poem "The Soldier" was published by *American Veteran* magazine. One of his stories has been published several times, in different publications.

"I think poetry is the foundation of all good writing," he says. I got into poetry to make my fiction writing better. I've ended up loving the poetry." He comments that while most people's heroes are athletes or stars, his heroes are literary giants. In addition to dead giants (Faulkner, et al.), he lists Salman Rushdie, Maya Angelou, and Alice Walker; in fact, he gets visibly excited talking about their work.

Burkhalter has been performing stand-up comedy in clubs since 1989. He's booked to give a 30-minute opening set for Sun City Comedy in Taos next month. He specializes in impressions – Sean Connery, both Presidents Bush, Bill Clinton, cartoon characters (Droopy is a favorite) – but not President Obama. "I haven't been able to do Obama. I have some of his expressions, but not his voice. He's so articulate, no one's really mastered him yet."

And he sings karaoke. "I like to think I can sing," he says, not entirely convinced. In fact, he says karaoke brought him a miracle: he met his wife last year when they were both singing karaoke. They married in June, just in time to move to

Raton and take teaching jobs. After 15 years teaching junior and senior high school choirs in southern New Mexico, Sarah Burkhalter is the new Raton schools music teacher for grades K-5.

Her husband says, "Sarah is an incredible singer. Basically we're both a couple of hams: that's why we get along so well. I call her my miracle."

They've living in an apartment above a defunct hotel on historic First Street, getting the feel of downtown. Quincey has signed on as sponsor of the RHS drama club, so he'll be spending a lot of time around the block at the Shuler Theater. He says he and Sarah are awed by the beauty and the rich history surrounding them. "I get excited, thinking of all the things that have happened here." Sugarite State Park and Johnson Mesa have quickly become favorite destinations.

Now he's added the Class of 2013 to his repertoire, teaching all the freshman English classes at RHS. It's enough to keep anyone busy. But Burkhalter is writing, too. And that comedy gig is coming up. In front of a class this week, he doesn't look stretched thin, nor does he look like a first-time teacher. In fact, he looks as comfortable and happy as the seasoned performer and writer that he is. His students look pretty happy, too.

Miner Golfers win Regional Championship, qualify for state

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the kids played a really good back nine." Coach Mike Vecchio told the Chronicle-News after Tuesday's Regional.

For the second year in a row Garrett Schrepfer will head to the big dance finishing with a backside score of 39 tied with Armentrout finishing with a score of 80 and a top fifteen score.

Sophomore Brett Dixon who just missed the cut to qualify for last year's state tournament shot a 39 on the back nine to also help propel the Miner Golf team to the team title and gaining his spot at this year's state tournament.

All year Coach Vecchio has told his squad their strength is in the depth of their team and on Tuesday by all the kids shooting low rounds they proved him to be right.

"We are very excited. These kids are pretty remarkable. They all are real good competitors and all of them are really comfortable on their golf game." Vecchio added, "They just hung in there and played hard all year. I'm excited that all our kids qualified for state, and because we're hosting the state tournament and all four kids will compete makes it even that much more special."

Final Team Scores from the 2009 Southern Regional Tournament in Colorado City played at the Holly Dot Golf Course.

Trinidad	238
Salida	242
Manitou Springs	251
CSCS	253
St. Mary's	253

Trinidad Scores:			
Name	Front Nine	Back Nine	Final Score
Blake Young	40	38	78
Troupe Armentrout	42	38	80
Garrett Schrepfer	41	39	80
Brett Dixon	46	39	85

Top Individuals:
Andrew Cornelia, St. Mary's 74, Tyler Hunt, Manitou Springs 76,
Blake Young Trinidad 78, Tanner Edwards, Salida 79

Century Club Fundraiser set Oct. 3 to benefit Holy Trinity Academy school

Holy Trinity Academy is celebrating the beginning of its sixth year of operation as a faith based K-12 private school on the beautiful campus of Trinidad State Junior College. This year the elementary school age children will be near their older counterparts in the Davis Building, which has proved to be a popular move for all the students.

One of the loveliest fall events will take place on Saturday, October 3, 2009, at the Sullivan Center's Pioneer Room as HTA hosts its traditional Century Club Fundraiser Dinner. The event will honor the hundreds of supporters who contribute to one of the eight levels during the drive which began in July. The committee members who oversee the details of the drive are Judy Cambuzzi, Anna Risley, Phyllis Moniot, Sister Olivia Bellegante, and Gloria Starkovich. Ralph Veltri continues to serve as auction chairman. The thank you response to the drive will include an invitation to the dinner and dance.

This event is a major fundraising endeavor to provide needed funds to support this school which receives no federal or state funding. The students understand the great sacrifices that people make each year. The student ambassadors will provide wait services for the dinner to personally thank donors for their continued support.

There will be a short program following the dinner, a silent auction including autographed memorabilia, raffle drawings, and dancing to the music of Dennis Hawley. This event brings benefactors from near and far to celebrate and share memories of their time in Trinidad. A night of celebrating the belief in education and the continued appreciation for Trinidad's rich history.

If you like to contribute to the drive, please call the academy office at 719-846-5900 for more information.

Upcoming School Events:

WEDNESDAY

Hoehne Schools

Parent Information Night
– Wed. 6 - 7:15 p.m. – Hoehne School Building.

Trinidad High

HOME COMING

Parade information: If you would like to participate in Trinidad High School's Homecoming Parade on Friday, Oct. 2 at 2 p.m., please call 846-4340.

Elks sponsors scholarships

Special to the Chronicle-News
from the Trinidad Elks Lodge 181

Every year the Colorado Elks Association awards each lodge in the state \$1000 to distribute to deserving students as they choose. As well, the Trinidad Lodge awards \$500 from their local Scholarship Fund.

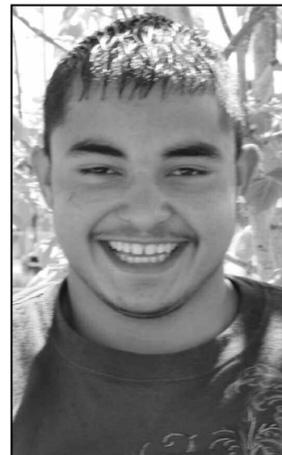
The scholarship chairman chooses the students to receive awards from the group of applications submitted by students for the Elks National Foundation 'Most Valuable Student' Program.

Each year, the Elks National Foundation awards more than \$2.29 million in scholarships to the nation's top students. Starting with the 2010 scholarship contest ENF has streamlined the application process. This will make applying for a scholarship easier, encouraging more students to participate and ensuring that the winners will be announced well before students must commit to a college or university.

Starting September 1, 2009 a pared-down application became available online at www.elks/enf/scholars and at Elks lodges. This shorter version includes all the necessary information to accurately assess a student's academic record, leadership and financial needs. Those that advance to the national level will be asked to complete another application and submit supplemental materials, such as an essay.



Jimmie Bonato



Kyle Maniscalco



Jillian Merchant

Jimmie Bonato, Kyle Maniscalco and Jillian Merchant have each received \$500 in scholarship money from the Trinidad Elks. Jimmie is attending the auto mechanics program at TSJC, Kyle is in Pueblo studying criminal justice and Jillian is pursuing a degree in education at TSJC.

The Trinidad Elks Lodge 181 encourages all area high school students to submit a 'Most Valuable Student' Scholarship Application. Even if you do not advance all the way to the national level you are eligible for \$500 in scholarship money.

The deadline for this year's contest is November 2, 2009. Please visit www.elks/enf/scholars to download an application. This version can be filled out and saved. Or you may print the form and type or print clearly to complete it. Either way, take the time to read the instructions carefully so you don't omit any information. Return your completed application to Trinidad Elks Lodge 181 at 120 South Maple Street (after 5pm) or by mail to P. O. Box 77, Trinidad, CO 81082. Good Luck.



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