



WEDNESDAY
APRIL 7, 2010

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THE CHRONICLE-NEWS

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TRINIDAD
COLORADO

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THE FINE PRINT

Please see page 3 for all SCHOOL EVENTS

WEDNESDAY

Arthritis Exercise

Free Arthritis Exercise Class every Mon & Wed @ 9 a.m. @ Corazon Square & 1 p.m. @ Early Learning Center. Info call: 845-1133 ext. 224.

PAL

Playgroup meets 9:30 - 11 a.m. every Weds at Alta Vista, 415 S. Indiana. Moms & caregivers with infants, ages birth to 3. Playroom is also available for same time use Tues & Thurs. Information: Martina at 846-4400.

A.R. Mitchell

Museum hosts volunteer coffee & meeting 10 a.m. Weds, 150 East Main Street. Call 846-4224 for information.

LaCasa - Fiesta

Meeting for all members 2 p.m. every Wed @ LaCasa Lodge in Jansen.

Teen Maze

Committee meets 5:15 p.m. Weds @ the First Street Art Gallery. Call Tony @ 680-2059 or Lisa @ 846-1005 for more information.

THURSDAY

Quilt Club

Bound Together Quilt Club meets 9:30 a.m. every other 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.

Parenting Class

FREE "Parenting with Love & Logic" class 6 p.m. (1st & 3rd Thursday) @ Fisher's Peak Elementary, 900 Moore's Canyon Road. For more information call Kevin Crosby @ 845-2043

Weight Watchers

Meets 6 p.m. every Thurs @ the Senior Citizens Center, 1222 San Pedro Ave.

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WEATHER WATCH

Today: A chance of snow showers before 10 a.m., then a chance of rain showers. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 49. Breezy, with a north northwest wind between 15 and 20 mph. Chance of precipitation is 50 percent. New snow accumulation of less than a half inch possible.

Tonight: A 10 percent chance of snow showers after midnight. Partly cloudy, with a low around 25. North northeast wind 5 to 15 mph becoming southwest.

Tomorrow: Sunny, with a high near 68. North northwest wind between 5 and 10 mph.

Tomorrow Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 31. South southwest wind between 10 and 15 mph.

RIVER CALL

Purgatoire river call as of 4/6/2010 South Side Priority #80 - 4/7/1877 Trinidad Lake accounting: Release 0.10 acre feet Inflow 291.88 acre feet Evaporation 20.78 acre feet Content 26233 acre feet Elevation 6188.71 feet Precipitation 0 inches Downstream river call: JMR - 12/31/1948 (Provided by Division of Water Resources)



Photos by Richard Sitts

Students and staff at the Trinidad Head Start welcomed guests at the Community Partnership Luncheon Tuesday by singing a few of their favorite songs. Students pantomimed along with the lyrics and invited the audience to sing along if they knew the words.

Head Start hosts Community Partnership Luncheon

By RICHARD SITTS
The Chronicle-News

Head Start is much more than just a pre-school program, Volunteer Coordinator Rhonda Duskey-Kochis told guests at the Community Partnership Luncheon Tuesday. The event was hosted by Rocky Mountain SER Southern Colorado Head Start in Trinidad.

The program, geared toward 3-5 year-olds, enhances the children's self-worth and education, Duskey-Kochis said. It also helps them in social interactions and helps make families stronger in the communities that Head Start serves, she added.

Head Start Area Manager Tamara Trujillo-Pacheco also was on hand and addressed the throng of guests that attended the luncheon. Major focuses of Head Start

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Trinidad Head Start Volunteer Coordinator Rhonda Duskey-Kochis, standing at right, talked about Head Start and later had guests introduce themselves and give a brief presentation about their program or agency during the Community Partnership Luncheon on Tuesday.



Inge and Tom Bobek relax in their Trinchera Canyon home.

To be an American: 'Home on the Range'

By TIM KELLER
The Chronicle-News

A drive to visit Tom and Inge Bobek takes one through the most American of scenes. Trinchera Pass Road is the historic Goodnight-Loving cattle-drive trail, crossing fields in which deer, elk, wild turkey, and bison still mingle and graze. Perched on a hill in a valley two miles south of the Colorado border, the Bobek home is built of logs; inside are Tom's handmade knives and rifles, 150-years old. Outside the window sprawls the 1,180-acre Spahn & Friends Bison Ranch; Tom and Inge are the Friends.

Although they have managed this ranch since its inception 11 years ago, they worry that U.S. immigration rules may prevent their attaining the American citizenship they long for and force them to return to their native

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An antler salt and pepper shaker is an example of Tom's work.



Photo By David J. Santistevan Jr.

Charlene Tortorice, director of the Advocates Against Domestic Assault, addresses the Las Animas County Board of County Commissioners at Tuesday's meeting, seeking an endorsement for an Emergency Shelter Grant from the Colorado Division of Housing.

Domestic assault shelter seeks endorsement for grant

BY DAVID J. SANTISTEVAN JR.
The Chronicle-News

Charlene Tortorice, director of the local Advocates Against Domestic Assault (AADA), addressed the Las Animas County Board of Commissioners at its regular meeting on Tuesday, asking for an endorsement or letter of support for \$30,500 for an Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) from the Colorado Division of Housing for staff salaries and operating expenses. The ESG is an annual grant.

"I am here today because AADA here in Trinidad has submitted a grant for funding for the Emergency Shelter Grant and one of the requirements is that we receive support of the county commissioners and get a letter of

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Walsenburg man dies after being shot by police officer

C-N STAFF REPORT

WALSENBURG - The Colorado Bureau of Investigation is looking into the case of a Walsenburg police officer who allegedly shot and killed a Walsenburg man during a domestic violence call Sunday night. The Bureau was called in to take over the investigation and crime scene processing, which is standard procedure if a police officer is involved in a shooting.

Pueblo County Coroner James Kramer said Armando Gallegos, 29, died at 1 a.m. Monday at Parkview Medical Center, where he was transferred. The officer is on paid administrative leave.

Walsenburg Police officers were dispatched to Stacy Drive in Walsenburg on a report of a domestic violence incident in progress at about 9:30 p.m. Sunday, according to a press release from the Walsenburg Police Department. Upon their arrival, one officer went to the back of the residence while the other went to the front, where children were trying to escape through a window. The officer in front helped the children to safety, according to the press release.

The officer in the rear of the residence witnessed a male subject attacking a female subject with a weapon. The officer was forced to fire his duty weapon to protect the female subject from a deadly assault, the press release stated. Officers immediately initiated first aid actions and the male subject was transported by ambulance to the Spanish Peaks Regional Health Center emergency room.

Walsenburg police said more information will be released once the investigation is complete.

To be an American: 'Home on the Range'

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Germany when their current work permit expires. Friends and neighbors have mounted letter-writing campaigns on their behalf, and both U.S. Rep. Ben Lujan and U.S. Sen. Tom Udall have taken up their cause.

When Germans Christian and Sonja Spahn bought this land and began building their own log home in 1998, they brought longtime friend Tom Bobek to help. By the time construction was finished, they'd offered Tom the job of ranch manager. Tom called Inge on her birthday, at home in Germany, to ask whether she'd be willing. The Spahns paid her way to come check it out.

"All the way from the Denver airport to Trinchera, I said, 'No, no, no!'" Inge recalls. "But then we came over the pass into this valley and I said, 'Yes, yes, yes!'" It took a year for the Bobeks to get the required visas and work permit. They moved in and set to work on June 10, 1999.

The ranch sells bison



The Bobeks prepare to load a bison bull into a Springer stockman's trailer.

meat throughout the region and by mail order. It supplies livestock to ranches as close as Springer and as far as San Antonio, Texas. It sells heifers to cutting-horse trainers; last weekend six were in a pen awaiting their ride to trainers in Artesia and Las Cruces.

"Right now I have 60 bison," Inge beams. "I should have my first calf in two weeks. This year - I hope! - I'll have 22 calves."

Officially, Inge doesn't work. She doesn't get paid; the Bobeks' American work permit allows only Tom to work; Inge is just the wife. In fact, Inge regularly works two 8-hour days each week, feeding bison in the

office, selling and delivering meat, making trips to town for hay and supplies. Of course, in reality, the work spills over into most days.

Inge is also active in both the Branson and Des Moines communities. A regular in the Branson Hiking Club, she's also the president of the Trinchera Arts & Crafts Club at the Senior Citizens' Center in Branson, 18 miles from home. She annually brings the club for a day of arts and crafts at The Legacy, a Trinidad assisted-living center, 44-miles from home.

She was contracted as an artist by the Des Moines Schools to help students paint a mural. Across the

street at Studio C, owner Christina Boyce says, "Inge is one of my best-selling artists. She makes both large-ticket and small-ticket items. I'm currently sold out of all her big pieces." Inge makes small and large stained-glass pieces, from mobiles to windows. She makes portable, two-piece chairs. She also enjoys drawing, painting, and beadwork. She and Tom sell their diverse work through their own Web site at TrincheraValleyArts.com.

"Every dollar we make is reported on our taxes," Inge says. "We pay enough taxes to prove to the government that we pay our way. Our truck is paid off, our house and land are paid off. And we keep all our money here, in Colorado and New Mexico." In fact, she and Tom sold everything they had in Germany to buy 50 acres from the Spahns and build their own log home. Inge kept only some of their furniture, which she had shipped to their Trinchera home.

They met 23 years ago in Bad Goegging, a village of hot springs in southern Germany, 80 miles north of Munich, where they both worked in an Audi factory making electric cables for the upscale cars. They married in 1992.

Tom took to Trinchera right away. A handyman who can seemingly make or fix anything, his hobbies



Photos by Tim Keller

Tom built a display case to showcase the knives he creates.

include making knives and shooting old, collectible rifles - Springfields, Ballards, an 1840 muzzle-loader. He and Inge are both NRA members and enjoy competitions at the NRA's Whittington Center, though their best shooting is right at the ranch. Inge organizes NRA shooting classes at the ranch "for the rancher ladies, to get them used to the firearms they have at home." She brings NRA instructor Keith Gibson from Trinidad. The first class was on home safety, the second on handguns. Inge is currently planning a rifle-shooting class.

In 1999, Tom Bobek received his first E-2 visa, a work permit allowing him to live and work in America for five years. The 2004 renewal was easy, he says; they had to pay a lawyer, but they didn't have to leave home. "But in 2009, everything had changed. We had to return to Germany to apply for the renewal at the U.S. Embassy in Frankfurt. It took lawyers, meetings at the consulate, lots of appointments. We ran out of time and had to apply for a temporary extension. Altogether, that renewal cost us \$10,000 and kept us away from the ranch for weeks."

The E-2 visa is attached to the ranch and owner/investors Christian and Sonja Spahn, who divide their time between the ranch and their home in Germany. The U.S. government looks for a profit in the investors' business, but the bison ranch is currently just breaking even, throwing the Bobeks' 2014 visa renewal into doubt: they may be forced to move back to Germany - where they no longer have a home or any possessions.

"If we worked for an American, after five years we could apply for citizenship," Tom says. "But for an American to hire us, he has to certify that no American can or will do the work."

The U.S. government holds an annual lottery to

fill quotas for immigration from each region or country. Winners receive green cards, allowing them to remain in America and apply for citizenship - the Bobeks' dream. "We try every year," Inge says. "Nowadays it's done on the Internet. But our name has never come up."

They're looking for all the help they can get. "Last year, Congressman Lujan sent a letter to Frankfurt to help us," Inge says. "When Sen. Udall's representative came to Des Moines last month, she said, 'We want people like you here!'"

"We do everything like an American citizen except vote," Inge says. "We own our home. We pay taxes. We have health insurance. We have Social Security cards. We've never had an accident, nothing to do with the law." With nothing left behind them in Germany, they're Americans in every way except the official papers.

Saturday afternoon, they walked down the hill from their house to separate a bison bull from a corralled group. French Tract bison rancher Mike Decker arrived and backed his long trailer to a chute. The Bobeks opened a gate and the half-ton bull exploded through the long chute and into Decker's trailer, slick as a whistle. The three ranchers talked about the animals and the business, then Decker headed back toward Springer, south along the old Goodnight-Loving Trail.

The Bobeks walked up the hill as the sun approached the mountain-top to their west. A dozen bison wandered across the draw at the base of the mountain. Tom and Inge turned toward their home, looking forward to at least four more years of this American life, and hoping for even more - hoping for a document to make official what already seems true in all other respects, that they have become Americans.

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PG

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Clarification

In a story about Holy Trinity Academy in Monday's *The Chronicle-News*, a board member's name was inadvertently left out of information provided to *The Chronicle-News*. Phyllis Moniot is the secretary of the HTA board.

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PARADE

What People Earn
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Noni Federoff, 53, Carpenter, Alaska, \$45,000

Patricia Smith, 20, Country singer, Nashville, Tenn., \$17.2 million

Colt Allen, 48, U.S. Air Force, Tulsa, Okla., \$130,000

Derrick Leake, 29, Web developer, Louisiana, La., \$55,000

Michael Corbett, 40, Urban planner, Las Vegas, Nev., \$41,000

Philip Tilly, 50, Author, Billings, Mont., \$39,800

Michelle "Sooki" Postell, 22, Reality TV star, Nashville, Tenn., \$2500

Elizabeth Kelly, 36, Model, Murray, Utah, \$23,000

Paul Hargrove, 62, Cashier, Westport, N.Y., \$40,000

Jennifer Winters, 33, Freelance writer, Silverwood, Ark., \$45,000

John St. Reg, 56, CEO, San Francisco, Calif., \$10,000

Sarah Ward-Bowling, 66, Food bank coordinator, Ocala, Fla., \$20,000

Neslor Retha, 23, Accountant, Auburn, Va., \$10,000

Julie Lewis, 59, Television host, Beverly Hills, Calif., \$12 million

DeAnn Cushman, 40, Real-estate broker, The Dalles, Ore., \$17,000

Tiger Woods, 34, Golfer, Westmoreland, Pa., \$110 million

Sharon Harris, 48, Career counselor, West Roxbury, Mass., \$33,700

Craig Thompson, 59, Math/science teacher, Granite, Calif., \$44,700

this weekend in PARADE and THE CHRONICLE-NEWS

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