



THURSDAY  
MAY 6, 2010

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# THE CHRONICLE-NEWS

50 CENTS  
TRINIDAD  
COLORADO

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## THE FINE PRINT

Please see page 6 for all SCHOOL EVENTS

### 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).

### Kiwanis & Rotary

Join event luncheon for the Pueblo Medal of Honor Foundation 12 - 1:30 p.m. Thurs @ the Holiday Inn 3130 Santa Fe Trail drive, Trinidad. Cost is \$15/person @ the door; please RSVP to Pam Atwater (845-8489) or <pamatater@scenicwestproper ties.com>.

### Pray Rally

59th annual observance of National Day of Prayer "For Such a Time as This" 12 - 12:45 p.m. Thurs in front of City Hall. Sponsored by Faith Christian Fellowship Church.

### Museum

A.R. Mitchell Museum hosts 2010 season opening event "A Celebration of Hispanic Art" 5-8 p.m. Thurs, 150 E. Main Street. Event includes ribbon cutting by the Mayor, the Mariachis & 15 prominent Hispanic artists showing their work.

### SPPRCD Meeting

Spanish Peaks Purgatoire River Conservation Dist meets 7 p.m. 1st Thurs @ the District Office. Please call Jonna @ 846-3681 x117 for more information.

### Water District

Purgatoire River Conservancy monthly meeting 7:30 p.m. Thurs @ City Hall. Please call Thelma Lujan @ 846-7285 for more information.

### Elks Lodge

Trinidad Order of Elks, Lodge #181 meets 8 p.m. 1st & 3rd Thurs @ 120 South Maple St.

### FRIDAY

#### Al-Anon Family

Group meets @ 6 p.m. every Friday in the Presbyterian Church basement, 801 San Pedro. For info call: Sharone 719-846-9999. No fee charged to participate & all are welcome.  
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## WEATHER WATCH

**Today:** Mostly sunny, with a high near 78. Windy, with a west wind 15 to 20 mph increasing to between 25 and 30 mph. Winds could gust as high as 45 mph.

**Tonight:** A slight chance of showers and thunderstorms. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 35. Windy, with a north northwest wind 25 to 30 mph decreasing to between 5 and 10 mph. Winds could gust as high as 45 mph. Chance of precipitation is 20 percent.

**Friday:** A 10 percent chance of showers. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 58. North wind 5 to 15 mph becoming east southeast.

**Friday Night:** Partly cloudy, with a low around 33. South southeast wind between 10 and 15 mph.

## RIVER CALL

Purgatoire river call as of 5/5/10  
Johns priority #20 10/7/1865  
Trinidad Lake accounting  
Release 234.18 acre ft.  
Inflow 133.77 acre ft.  
Evaporation 20.59 acre ft.  
Content 31655 acre ft.  
Elevation 6195.31  
Precipitation 0  
Downstream river call  
JMR 12/31/1948  
(Provided by Division of Water Resources)



Photo by David J. Santistevan, Jr.

City Manager Jim Soltis is hanging up his tie after 14 years of service.

## City Manager Soltis tells city he is retiring in 2 months

By MIKE GARRETT  
The Chronicle-News

After 14 years as Trinidad city manager and nearly a lifetime spent in city government, Jim Soltis has decided to retire to spend more time with his family, effective in two months.

Soltis delivered his retirement letter to Trinidad City Council after Tuesday night's executive session and confirmed his intent Wednesday morning.

Council is expected to publicly acknowledge and accept his retirement letter as a formality at next Tuesday's meeting.

"Retirement is something I'm looking forward to doing, some things that I have been putting off for a long time and being able to spend some time with my daughters," he said. At this point, Soltis said he expects to spend his retirement in Trinidad.

As for looking back on what he feels were significant accomplishments during his 14 years, Soltis, low key as ever, pointed to "a whole lot of things that have come together for the city. I guess the accomplishments came as a result of a lot of work by a lot of people," noting that he has been privileged to work with many good people over those years. "It has been the vision of present officials and past.

"I think there has been a tremendous amount of accomplishments done when you look around and see all the improvements throughout the city, the walking trail, the downtown streets, the swimming pool, the parks, all community assets," he said.

Soltis said he is required by his contract to give two months notice to the city or the first week of July to find a successor. "I said to them that if they needed me to be around a little bit longer, to make sure that transition gets done, I agreed to that."

Soltis is still actively involved negotiating with the city employees union, trying to hammer out an agreeable contract to both sides and plans to meet with union management again later this week. His last year and a half in office has been especially tough with the local, state and national economic downturn forcing the city to make some unpopular decisions in the wake of a \$900,000 budget shortfall resulting from a substantial 2009-10 loss of city sales tax revenues.

At this point, Soltis said he hasn't given much thought as to who might be a worthy successor. "I think they (council) need to look around to see if anybody is interested before they go outside (the city), but that's going to be their decision, not mine," he said.

## Three elected to Ambulance District board

C-N STAFF REPORT

Tuesday's election results for the Trinidad Ambulance District Board of Directors will not be certified until May 10, so the following results are unofficial.

#### Four-year terms:

Rob Bukovac - 86 votes  
Kelly Smith - 83 votes  
Other candidates were Jeanie Hollon with 61 votes and Thomas Murphy with 55 votes.

#### Two-year term:

Colleen Williams - 58 votes  
Jason Catrambone received 54 votes and Kathleen Kumm withdrew her candidacy last week, according to Trinidad Ambulance District Executive Director Brandon Chambers. This was the District's third election since its inception in 1989 and the last election was four years ago, Chambers said.

The board will next meet at 4 p.m. on May 19.

## Gaming board revokes Raton gaming license

By RICHARD SITTS  
The Chronicle-News

**RATON** - The casino and race-track proposed for the southeast side of Raton took a significant hit Tuesday when the New Mexico Gaming Control Board voted 5-0 to revoke the project's gaming license.

La Mesa Racetrack and Casino President Michael Moldenhauer is expected to appeal the decision, according to La Mesa spokesman Tom Carroll.

"If this doesn't go through, then Raton will not have a race-track or casino. Michael Moldenhauer has decided to fight this to keep it in Raton. He's going to appeal and go through all the legal hoops and file a lawsuit to keep it in Raton," Carroll said.

Depending on the outcome of  
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## City Council updated on lots of hot topic issues

By MIKE GARRETT  
The Chronicle-News

Trinidad City Council didn't have much official business to address at Tuesday night's regular council meeting other than unanimously passing the first reading of an ordinance amendment more clearly defining the city's definition of fireworks that can be set off within city limits and by whom.

Most of the news came from City Manager Jim Soltis and City Attorney Jerod Beatty's updates on issues still confronting the city.  
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## County gets head start on noxious weed control

By DAVID J. SANTISTEVAN JR.  
The Chronicle-News

Las Animas County has started spraying for noxious weeds, getting off to a much earlier start than it did one year ago. The county has about \$15,000 from a grant by the Department of Agriculture, \$12,000 of which was amended from 2009. Along with monies from the State Land Board the county has started spraying in the eastern part of Las Animas County.

"I think the early start this year is because we have better communication between Leslee (Fresquez the county's Deputy Administrator), Phil (Dorenkamp, county Road and Bridge  
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## RHS band wows them in the Show-Me State

By TIM KELLER  
The Chronicle-News

**RATON** - Fresh off its showing of "Excellence" in the New Mexico State Concert Band Championships, Raton High School's band traveled to St. Louis, Missouri, last week to win further honors Friday at the St. Louis Heritage Festival. Competing against dozens of bands from many states, the Raton musicians earned 2nd place in their division, topped only by Paragould High School of Paragould, Ark.

Band Director Russell Woods was even more proud of an unexpected award. Festival organizers sent "spies" among the performing groups, observing them at their hotels, restaurants, and theme parks. They interviewed the competition judges and festival organizers. After compiling all their notes, they awarded one "Spirit of St. Louis Award" for the entire festival, to "the one school that best represents its community and school." The spirit award went to the Raton High School Band.

"At the awards banquet, when they called our school name, there was an initial silence," Woods recalls. "Then we all screamed and cheered as it sank in that it was our school they'd called. I was really most proud of that award."

The first New Mexico band to ever make the trip, Raton competed in the small schools division against bands from Iowa, Illinois, Missouri, Tennessee, Kentucky, Oklahoma, and Arkansas. Eighteen band members made the trip on the school's activity bus, leaving Wednesday afternoon and



Photo courtesy of Russell Woods

Raton High School's concert band poses under the St. Louis Gateway Arch.

returning to Raton the following Monday morning, May 3.

Three university-level music professors evaluated performances at the nationally accredited educational music festival. All bands were rated and ranked according to their performance level, with Raton's 2nd place finish a milestone in the band's history.

Woods expressed appreciation for all the band's supporters, say-

ing, "We've only been able to do this through the generosity and support of all the people who have come to our concerts and helped us with fundraisers. We really appreciate them."

Local music lovers will finally get a chance to see and hear this year's seasoned concert band when it presents its annual spring concert at the Shuler Theater Tuesday evening, May 11, at 7 p.m.