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TRINIDAD
COLORADO

TUESDAY
JAN. 21, 2020

THE CHRONICLE-NEWS

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THE FINE PRINT

■ TUESDAY—JAN. 21

LAS ANIMAS COUNTY
TUES. (9 a.m.) Board of County Commissioners regular meetings are held 1st and 3rd Tues. in the Las Animas Court-house, 200 E. First St., Room 201. Info: 719-845-2568. **COMMISSIONERS:** Luis Lopez, II (719-845-2595), Tony Hass (719-845-2592) and Felix Lopez (719-845-2593).

SAMARITAN CLINIC
1st & 3rd TUESDAYS (9 a.m.-4 p.m.) Here to serve the under-insured and non-insured community with free health care and low-cost lab work, 413 E. Frost and corner of Linden Ave. Info: 719-846-3536.

PRIMERO SCHOOLS
TUES. (5 p.m.) District Board of Education meets 3rd Tues. in regular session with executive session to follow if needed in the Primero School Cafeteria, 20200 Hwy 12. Info: Tina East, 719-868-2715.

TRINIDAD CITY COUNCIL
TUES. (6 p.m.) Regular sessions are held 1st and 3rd Tues. in Council Chambers, City Hall, 135 N. Animas St. Info: Desiree Sandoval, 719-846-9843 ext. 125. **Mayor Phil Rico and Council Members:** Rusty Goodall, Karen Griego, Anthony Mattie, Erin Ogletree, Franklin Shew and Aaron Williamson.

Today's Quote
"Love is the only force capable of transforming an enemy into friend."
 ~Martin Luther King, Jr.

■ WEDNESDAY—JAN. 22

TRINIDAD TOURISM
WEDS. (9 a.m.) The Trinidad Convention and Visitor's Bureau meets 2nd & 4th Weds. in the City Hall 3rd Floor Conference Room, 135 N. Animas St. Info: Marty Hackett, 719-846-9215 or marty.hackett@trinidad.co.gov

TRINIDAD AMBULANCE
WEDS. (4:30 p.m.) District Board of Directors regular meetings are held 4th Wednesday at the Trinidad Ambulance District Office, 939 Robinson Ave. Info: 719-846-6886.

HOEHNE SCHOOLS
WEDS. JAN. 22 (6 p.m.) Hoehne School Board meets 4th Wednesday in regular session in the Superintendent's Office. Info: 719-846-4457.

■ PUBLIC SERVICE

CHENOWETH AWARD BANQUET
SAT. JAN. 25 (6 p.m.) Annual Chamber of Commerce event will be held at the Mt. Carmel Community Center, 911 Robinson Ave. Individual, corporate tickets and info 719-846-9285.

WARM FEET ARE HAPPY FEET
THRU MON. FEB. 17: YOU CAN HELP! The Sangre de Cristo Hospice's annual sock drive for firefighters, patients, veterans and the Youth Center. Drop off at Sangre de Cristo, 1502 E. Main St. Info: Cindy Thelen, 719-846-3060 or cindy.thelen@scohospsice.org

CALL FOR ARTISTS
WEDS. JAN. 29 (10 a.m.-4 p.m.) Accepting all media works for the "Red" Show at the Corazon Gallery, 149 E. Main St. Info: 719-846-0207.

CHICOSA WATER USERS
FRI. FEB. 7 (6 p.m.) Association Board will hold their annual member's meeting in the Hoehne Community Center. Info: Karen Floyd, 719-846-4600.

MOTHER & SON DANCE
FRI. FEB. 7 (6:30-9 p.m.) Hometown Holidays sponsors will host the Winter Wonderland Dance fundraiser that will be held at Brix, 231 E. Main St. Professional photos available. Info: 719-846-0562.

FATHER & DAUGHTER DANCE
SAT. FEB. 8 (6:30-9 p.m.) Hometown Holidays sponsors will host the Winter Wonderland Dance fundraiser that will be held at Brix, 231 E. Main St. Professional photos available. Info: 719-422-4138.

RIVER CALL

Purgatoire River Call as of: 01/17/2020. Johns Flood Ditch, Priority #5 : Appropriation Date: 03/20/1862.

Trinidad Reservoir Report:
 Release 13.15 AF
 Inflow 28.15 AF - 14.19 CFS
 Evaporation 0 AF
 Content 22,403 AF
 Elevation 6,185.98
 Precipitation 0

Downstream Call: JMR Conservation Storage, Appropriation date: 05/31/1949.



Polar Plunge for Colorado Special Olympics coming to Trinidad Lake State Park Feb. 29

Eric John Monson
The Chronicle-News

The Trinidad Parks and Recreation Advisory Board with the help of the Trinidad Police Department and others is bringing the Special Olympics Colorado Polar Plunge to Trinidad Lake and Trinidad Lake State Park on Saturday, Feb. 29. The event will be open for registration at 11 a.m. the morning of the plunge with action taking place from Noon to 2 p.m.

The Polar Plunge is a signature fundraiser for Special Olympics Colorado (SOCO) and allows individuals, organizations and businesses to show support and raise money for Special Olympic athletes by jumping into frigid water.

"I spoke to one of the officers after they had done the Polar Plunge in Pueblo and I asked why not Trinidad?" said Trinidad Parks and Recreation Advisory Board member Linda Lamden. "Then I was put in touch with then Sergeant DuRan, now Captain Dan DuRan and he said there was no reason we couldn't get it done and he did some work to get us started." Lamden and board members



Special Olympics Colorado

A crowd of happy plungers makes a mad dash into the icy water for a great cause during the 2019 Colorado Springs Polar Plunge. New this year, Trinidad will host its own polar plunge at Trinidad Lake State Park on Saturday, Feb. 29.

then worked through the groundwork of securing commitments from SOCO, Trinidad Ambulance and Stonewall Fire Department to make the event safe, the state

of Colorado and the Army Corps of Engineers to secure Trinidad Lake, and the City of Trinidad for funding and support.

"Actually securing the funding was the easiest part," said Lamden. "(The city) approved us almost immediately for \$2,000. And

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Garrett Watson / The Chronicle-News

City Hall on North Animas Street has served as the governance base for the city since it's construction in 1901.

Trinidad Mayor Rico talks city's governance, Home Rule Charter to chamber luncheon goes

Garrett Watson
The Chronicle-News

On Wednesday, Jan. 15 the Trinidad and Las Animas County Chamber of Commerce hosted their monthly luncheon with The City of Trinidad as this month's sponsor. Following commentary from several businesses and organizations, Mayor Phil Rico took the podium and presented an informative discussion on the structure of the city and specifics to how the town is governed.

"There are two types of City Governances," said Rico, "statutory and home rule. Trinidad is governed by Home Rule Charter, which means that there is limited

Government interference. Our charter was established Aug. 9, 1993, and charter changes can only be made by majority of registered citizens of Trinidad. Council can recommend changes to the electorate or by electorate petition, which needs to be put on the next election."

Rico explained that depending on the seat being filled, there were different term lengths and stipulations.

"The governance structure is mayor, six city council members, and city manager," said Rico. "A mayor pro-tem from within city council is elected by city council

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Chasing Billy the Kid

Tim Keller's 3-part
 Western Adventure
 Feature

A New Mexico Travelogue Series Part 3: Fort Sumner — trail's end

Tim Keller
The Chronicle-News

—Editor's Note: This feature first ran in this publication in 2016, but is as fun and appropriate today as it was then. Perhaps it will inspire you to hit the adventure trail sometime during this New Year 2020.

The drive from Lincoln to Fort Sumner affords plenty of time to imagine horsemen making the same journey 135 years ago. About 100 miles on horseback,

140 miles by today's paved highways, both Billy the Kid and Pat Garrett made this commute countless times. They probably made the ride in two days, carrying food and water and bedrolls along with their firearms.

A trip to White Oaks would take just one day, Mesilla seven. Garrett and the Kid both made trips like this all the time, east into Texas, north as far as Puerto de Luna and Anton Chico near Las Vegas. Life on the trail took up much of their lives. They valued

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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.)



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WEATHER WATCH

Tuesday: A 20 percent chance of showers after 11 a.m. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 54. Southwest wind around 10 mph. **Night:** Partly cloudy, with a low around 31. West wind 5 to 10 mph.
Wednesday: A 10 percent chance of showers after 5 p.m. Partly sunny, with a

high near 52. Northwest wind around 5 mph. **Night:** A 20 percent chance of snow showers. Partly cloudy, with a low around 25. Northwest wind around 5 mph.
Thursday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 46. Northwest wind around 5 mph. **Night:** Partly cloudy, with a low around

22. Calm wind becoming west around 5 mph after midnight.

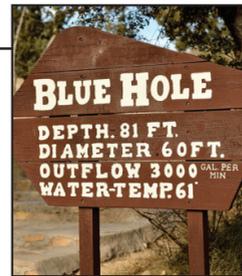
Friday: Sunny, with a high near 51. West wind around 5 mph becoming calm in the morning. **Night:** Mostly clear, with a low around 25. Calm wind becoming west southwest around 5 mph after midnight.

WESTERN ADVENTURE

Chasing Billy the Kid

A New Mexico Travelogue Series Part 3: Fort Sumner — trail's end

... Continued from Page 1



Photos by Tim Keller / The Chronicle-News

Open since 1953, Fort Sumner's Billy the Kid Museum has continually expanded as it's grown to more than 60,000 relics reflecting the history and life of the region. Billy the Kid's chaps, spurs and rifle are among the displays. The Kid was happy in Fort Sumner where he had a girlfriend and many other friends. At one point, the Kid and Pat Garrett were Fort Sumner neighbors. After Billy the Kid's dramatic escape the night of "The Big Killing," Garrett finally captured the Kid 12 miles east of Fort Sumner at Stinking Spring, located down Black Hat Road, above top, just beyond this remote ranch near Taiban. A trip past Santa Rosa's famed Blue Hole (inset top), where scuba divers make pilgrimages to explore the pool's 81-foot-deep crystal-clear spring-fed waters, was part of this journey.

good horses. With the need for quick getaways, horse thieves like Billy always kept the best for themselves.

Hoping for the same great luck I'd had at the Ellis Store Country Inn in Lincoln, I drove straight to the Billy the Kid Country Inn, directly across Highway 60 from the 62-year-old Billy the Kid Museum in Fort Sumner. No luck. The Inn has been contracted to BNSF Railway for three years while its workers build two new bridges over the Pecos River at the western edge of town. They have two years to go.

Although the highway carries thousands of long-distance travelers through Fort Sumner each day, there are few dining and lodging choices available. I stayed at a Super 8 and saw no sign of Billy the Kid.

He called Fort Sumner home for much of his last four years. Pat Garrett lived there at the same time, even working as bartender at Beaver Smith's saloon where Billy liked to gamble and dance. The two spent enough time together that some called them Little Casino and Big Casino. Their paths diverged when Garrett accepted the job of Lincoln County Sheriff.

Their Fort Sumner

hugged the Pecos three miles southeast of today's Fort Sumner, which migrated north to the railway when it came through. I drove down to the Fort Sumner Historic Site on a Monday morning, only to learn that it's fenced in and closed on Mondays and Tuesdays. My luck seemed to have turned since Lincoln. With a sitemap I'd found in town, I could look from a side road and almost tell—all that remains of the buildings are markers—where Beaver Smith's saloon was, where the old Indian hospital was where Garrett laid in ambush for the Regulators, killing Tom Folliard but missing the Kid. I could tell where Pete Maxwell's house was, where, seven months after the botched hospital ambush, Garrett waited in a dark bedroom and killed Billy the Kid.

Barely escaping Garrett's hospital ambush, Billy and four fellow Regulators went on the run. Garrett and his posse followed. Five days later and 12 miles east at a remote crossroads called Stinking Spring, Garrett followed the Regulators' tracks in the snow to a rock-and-adobe structure, 12 by 30 feet with just one doorless opening. It was 3 a.m. He had them pinned.

In the frozen dawn, a man emerged with a feed-bag for the horses outside. He wore a sombrero like Billy's. Garrett and his men filled him with seven rifle shots. They'd killed Charlie Bowdre, not the Kid.

A standoff lasted all day. At one point the bandits tried to pull their horses through the doorway so they could bolt out and make a run for it. Garrett shot and dropped a horse right in the doorway, blocking it.

At the end of a long day that saw many bullets fly but no one else hit, the four desperados emerged with their hands in the air. Billy's penchant for escape had failed him. Garrett escorted all four to Las Vegas, then onto a train south to trial in Mesilla.

Although there's no longer anything there, Stinking Spring is on Google Maps. From Old Fort Sumner I drove east past Taiban to Black Hat Road and turned south, crossing coarse new gravel on the railroad right-of-way, then a mile south to a family ranch house. With only a mile left to Stinking Spring, the road now turned rough, no problem for my pickup at home but too rough, I judged, for the dainty Toyota Prius I was driving on this road trip. My Fort Sumner luck continued. At least I wasn't taken back up Black Hat Road in handcuffs.

It got better, though. The Billy the Kid Museum pulled together everything I'd learned and more. Operated by one family since 1953, they've amassed more than 60,000 items showing the area's rich history. Billy the Kid's chaps, spurs and rifle are there, along with a rock on which he carved his name, and the curtain he passed through just as Pat Garrett shot him to death in Pete Maxwell's house.

The clerk suggested that I start in the mini-theater to watch the 50-minute PBS American Experience documentary "Billy the Kid." It was so good that I ordered my own copy, joining Lin-



coln Historic Site's large foldout pamphlet and Coloradoan Mark Lee Gardner's "To Hell on a Fast Horse: The Untold Story of Billy the Kid and Pat Garrett" as the perfect introductions to this uniquely American story.

A National Geographic documentary premiered in late October with DVD release January 16, 2016. Narrated by Kevin Costner, "Billy the Kid: New Evidence" examines a new photo of Billy the Kid bought at a California memorabilia show in 2010 for \$2 and now appraised and insured at \$5 million.

The films reminded me of "Young Guns," the popular 1988 Hollywood movie version of Billy the Kid and the Regulators, a good portrayal. I remember our living room outside Las Vegas filled with long clothing racks when my wife, Christina Boyce, made five each of Billy's and the Regulators' costumes for "Young Guns." The movie's Lincoln scenes were all filmed in Cerrillos, near Christina's family home on the Turquoise Trail south of Santa Fe. No longer a costumer, Christina is now the director of Trinidad's A.R. Mitchell Museum of Western Art and brings me True West magazines with Billy the Kid on the cover.

On the way out of Fort Sumner, I stopped at the De Baca County Courthouse and walked upstairs to see Russell Vernon Hunter's three large 1936 WPA murals depicting the area's history. There in one panel was Billy the Kid, his mom, his gray mare, his friends Charlie Bowdre and Tom Folliard, his one-time friend Pat Garrett, and Pete Maxwell and his house where Garrett killed the Kid.

I followed the Pecos north to Puerto de Luna where Billy liked to spend time. The quaint farming village was later the home



A picturesque abandoned church stands beside the highway at Taiban, two miles from where Pat Garrett captured Billy the Kid and killed one of the Kid's fellow Regulators.

of Rudolfo Anaya's mother's family and plays a big part in one of my favorite novels, Anaya's classic New Mexico coming-of-age tale, "Bless Me, Ultima." In nearby Santa Rosa I got my first look at the city's 2007 homage to its native son, a sculptured garden showing Anaya writing, surrounded by pages from his most famous book. Across the park, I got my first look at Santa Rosa's famed Blue Hole, where scuba divers make pilgrimages to explore the pool's 81-foot-deep crystal-clear spring-fed waters.

Driving home past Anton Chico and Las Vegas, I'd spent five days chasing Billy the Kid and Pat Garrett. My route—through Las Vegas, Santa Fe, Mesilla, White Sands, Tularosa, Lincoln, Fort Stanton, Fort Sumner, Puerto de Luna and Santa Rosa—would make an 1100-mile loop from Trinidad. Swinging west to include Silver City would add 120 scenic miles to the trip.

In fact it's all scenic, much of it dramatically so. I hadn't realized that there is no place in New Mexico without mountains. The expanses can appear endless, the distances daunting, reminding me that this is why I moved to New Mex-

ico in the first place: wide open spaces, dramatic landscapes, and a rich tri-cultural history that includes a scrawny kid who laughed easily and loved to dance. He was also a thief, rustler and killer gunned down at the age of 21.

With the exception of a few cities and the long asphalt roadways, my route was remarkably little changed from 135 years ago when Pat Garrett and Billy the Kid travelled these paths incessantly, riding horses day after day, camping night after night, just to get to the next town. I enjoyed the long drives when I'd try to imagine—to see—Garrett or the Kid riding alongside out there. Time after time, I succeeded.

—Editor's note: And so ends *Chasing Billy the Kid*. From Mesilla to Lincoln and surrounding parts of New Mexico, until the trail ends at Fort Sumner it's been quite an adventure for the arm-chair traveler. Makes a person want to hit the trail for real.

Reach Tim, or view his work, at TimKellerArts.com.



Located up the Pecos River from Fort Sumner, the small farming village of Puerto de Luna drew many visits from Billy the Kid. New Mexico novelist Rudolfo Anaya set his classic novel "Bless Me, Ultima" in Puerto de Luna and nearby Santa Rosa, where he grew up.



After opening a school in nearby Puerto de Luna, Russell Vernon Hunter in 1936 painted three historical murals in Fort Sumner's De Baca County Courthouse for the Works Progress Administration (WPA). This panel, still available on the second floor, shows Billy the Kid, center, with his gray mare and many of the central figures in his life, including his mother, his fellow Regulators and Pat Garrett.