

THE FINE PRINT

TAAC K-12 Writing Contest

Trinidad Area Arts Council deadline for entries for the K-12 writing contest is today. Home schoolers can pick up information and entry forms at Carnegie Library. For more info call 846-2840.

Arthritis Exercise

Arthritis exercise classes will start today, and will continue every Monday and Wednesday following. The 9 am class will be held at the Corazon Square and the 1:30 pm class will be held at the Early Learning Center. To register or for more information please call 845-1133 ext 224.

Spanish Peaks and Bon Carbo Fire Protection District

Notice is hereby given that the monthly Board of Directors meetings for the Spanish Peaks and Bon Carbo Fire Protection District will be at 9 a.m. today at the Century Financial Group office, 109 W. Main St.

TMS Band Boosters

The TMS Band Boosters will hold their monthly meeting at 6 p.m. today in the TMS band room. Parents are encouraged to attend.

Board of Directors meeting

The Board of Directors for Trinidad-Las Animas County Economic Development will meet at 6 p.m. today, at 134 West Main Street, Suite 12, (the Bell Block) in the conference room.

Community Chorale

The Trinidad Community Chorale rehearsals begin at 6:15 p.m. every today at the First United Methodist Church. New members are welcome. No auditions.

Trinidad Italian Club

The Trinidad Italian Club will meet at 7 p.m. today in the Berg Building, Room 304.

Pastor's Text Study

Pastor's Text Study will meet at 9 a.m. at Zion's Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall on Tuesday. All pastors welcome to come and study the texts for Sunday and for support of each other.

Alzheimer's support group

The Alzheimer's Association Caregivers Support Group will meet at 10 a.m. on Tuesday at the H.R. Sayre Senior Center. For more information, call (719) 868-3789.

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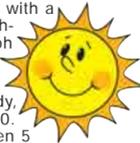
WEATHER WATCH

Today: Mostly sunny, with a high near 66. North north-west wind 5 to 10 mph becoming west south-west.

Tonight: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 30. Southwest wind between 5 and 10 mph.

Tomorrow: Mostly sunny, with a high near 67. Breezy, with a south southwest wind between 10 and 20 mph.

Tomorrow Night: A slight chance of rain and snow showers. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 37. Southwest wind between 10 and 15 mph. Chance of precipitation is 10 percent.



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Photo by Regina Hamlin

Liz Torres (Commercial Street Salon) and Earl Hurley (Bob and Earls) kicked off the New Year with large donations to help purchase a new freezer for the soup kitchen on Church St. Pictured left to right, Liz Torres, Sandi Espinoza and Earl Hurley in front of the new freezer purchased three weeks ago.



Photos by Tim Keller

Above: Carol Crary spent Thursday in Des Moines creating a mule's head mask for the Raton Choral Society's upcoming production of "Man of La Mancha".

Below: As her mule waits patiently, Carol Crary makes more paper mache.



Carol Crary gets mulish for Raton Choral Society

By Tim Keller
The Chronicle-News

Ratonian Carol Crary spent Thursday in the art studio at Studio C in Des Moines making a mule head mask for the Raton Choral Society's upcoming Shuler Theater production of "Man of La Mancha".

Her husband Bill Crary, the production's music director, had learned through his participation in the Raton Arts & Humanities Council

that Studio C's Christina Boyce teaches workshops in mask-making and paper mache. Thursday, Crary got herself a workshop for one.

Stage director Gail Willden-Dixon ordered up two masks for the production, asking Crary to create a horse's head and a mule's head, each to be worn by an actor onstage. She asked that the masks be "comical but not grotesque." The actors must be able to see and move.

Crary is building both masks on helmets that fit the actors. Actor Jeffrey Redlick will wear the horse's head, which Crary is building right on Redlick's own bicycle helmet. The helmet for the mule's head was a tougher find. Actor Mallorie Salazar didn't have a helmet so she and friend Mariah Fleming went looking for one Mallorie could use. Mariah's cousin Tessa Fleming had one that fit and

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Colorado lawmakers say higher education funding cut is seen as a budget fix

By DAVID SANTISTEVAN JR.
The Chronicle-News

Over the past few weeks Colorado state lawmakers have been looking for ways to fix the budget. The Joint Budget Committee (JBC) has looked at a possible \$300 million dollar cut to universities and community colleges. This drastic cut could have a devastating effect at Trinidad State Junior College (TSJC).

Ruth Ann Woods TSJC President could not be reached for comment.

The state was nearly \$800 million short last year.

If the budget cut goes through, higher education could find itself with a double edged sword because the state could be penalized and forgo \$105 million dollars in federal stimulus money. This would cause a problem for college presidents and might force them to pass on costs to students such as a raise in tuition.

The federal government is requiring Colorado to keep funding levels from 2005 - 2006. If not, TSJC and Colorado colleges would lose tens of millions in federal money.

Colorado has 13 community or junior colleges, which could lose 62 percent of money from the state, and they could also lose stimulus money too.

Under Amendment 50, which the Colorado voters approved in November; most of the gaming tax revenue that results from new gaming limits in Black Hawk, Central City and Cripple Creek will go to the Colorado community colleges and to the gaming cities and counties. However this money won't be distributed until the 2010-2011 fiscal year.

The wild card in all of this is the Pinnacol Insurance Company. Lawmakers have advised Pinnacol to cough up over \$500 million dollars of its estimated \$2 billion dollars in assets, which could help avoid the cuts to colleges.

Pinnacol is a government agency owned by the state and started by Colorado lawmakers back in 1915. Pinnacol is a tax-exempt company that does not pay state or federal taxes, and the JBC looked at taking the money from the insurance giant as if it were paying taxes back to the state.

Pinnacol is not funded by the state of Colorado. They are funded by small businesses, wherein lies the problem of the state taking money from them. If the state does take the money from Pinnacol, who can hold up the funds in court, this will do nothing to help higher education in the short term.

In a 2003 audit of the company, Pinnacol executives received an estimated \$400,000 in pension bonuses. The state is considering selling the company for about \$1.6 billion.

Last week the head of Pinnacol was quoted as saying the company could go to court to stop lawmakers from taking any of the agency's money. Also, last week, Ken Ross, Chief Executive of Pinnacol did not accept the JBC's offer to transfer funds that would go towards higher education in Colorado.

"We don't know how the cuts will ultimately affect Trinidad State. All we can tell you is that it will effect all colleges, universities, and community colleges," Rhonda Bentz spokes person for the Colorado Community College Systems told The Chronicle-News.

CASH & NUMBERS

Here are Thursday's Cash 5 numbers: 1-7-11-19-26.