

THE FINE PRINT

TSNH Forum meeting

The second Trinidad State Nursing Home Forum meeting will take place at 9:30 a.m. today at the All Purpose Room in the Sullivan Center on the TSJC Campus. For more information, call Penny at (719) 846-3943.

Red Hat Mtn. Mama's mtg.

The Red Hat Mountain Mama's will meet for lunch at 1 p.m. today at Tequila's. New members welcome. Questions, call Beverly (719) 846-7992.

Mobile Food Pantry

Care and Share's Mobile Food Pantry, in collaboration with the Open Door Soup Kitchen, will distribute food at 1:30 p.m. tomorrow at 308 W. Church St. Due to space limitation, all products are on a first-come, first-serve basis. Bring boxes and bags.

Al-Anon Family Group

The Al-Anon Family Group, to help family members living with someone who is drinking and/or using drugs, will host a free meeting at 6 p.m. tomorrow at Presbyterian Church, 801 San Pedro, in the basement. For more information, please call Sharone (719) 846-9999. Not affiliated with any other organization.

Narcotics Anonymous

Narcotics Anonymous will meet from 7:30 - 8:30 p.m. tomorrow at the United Presbyterian Church, 801 San Pedro, in the basement. For more information, call Eric (719) 846-0754 or Vincent 846-9999.

Gideon's Fisher's Peak camp

There will be a prayer meeting at 8 a.m. on Saturday. Call (719) 846-4044 for location.

Trinidad Supper Club

The Trinidad Supper Club will meet at 6 p.m. on Saturday at Quality Inn. Entertainment will be provided by Rachel Valencich. Contact Peggy at (719) 846-4967 for more information.

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WEATHER WATCH

Today: Patchy freezing fog before 9am. Partly sunny, with a high near 43. West wind around 5 mph becoming calm.

Tonight: Partly cloudy, with a low around 18. Southwest wind between 5 and 10 mph.

Tomorrow: Sunny, with a high near 54. West southwest wind between 5 and 10 mph.

Tomorrow Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 19. West southwest wind around 10 mph.

RIVER CALL

Purgatoire River Call as of 1/14/09. Baca Priority No. 8 as of 11/15/1864.

Trinidad, Lake Accounting: Release, .52 acre ft.; Inflow 56.80 acre ft.; Evaporation, 1.28 acre ft.; Content, 20,529 acre ft.; Elevation, 6,180.92; Precipitation, 0.

Downstream River Call, Winter Storage as of 3/10/1910.

(Provided by Division of Water Resources)



The new Las Animas County Board of County Commissioners Chairman Pro Tem and newly elected commissioner Gary D. Hill, left, Chairman Jim D. Montoya, and first term Commissioner James Vigil, presided over their first meeting together yesterday.

(Photo by David Santistevan Jr.)

Concerns about TSNH, COG head issues of first commissioners meeting

By DAVID SANTISTEVAN JR.
The Chronicle-News

The Las Animas County commissioners wasted no time getting to some of the major issues facing our community.

The meeting started with comments about the Trinidad State Nursing Home (TSNH). Recently Republican Sen. Ken Kester of District 2 introduced Senate Bill 09-056, but all three commissioners were concerned about the language in section 2 of the bill. As written it states that "The executive Director of Human Services has the authority to transfer the title to any real property at the TSNH." This language appears to be contrary to the Las Animas county boards desires and contrary to the collective desires of those looking to support the TSNH, according to county officials.

Officials do not know where the disconnect came from

and Commissioners Jim Montoya, Gary Hill and Jim Vigil and Montoya especially emphasized that they wanted the local media to know about the error in the language of the bill. To make sure the media had a copy of the bill to inform community of this error and to do what is necessary to get the wording corrected. County officials also said that they are not trying to discredit Sen. Kester or anyone else, they just want to make sure that whatever their collective efforts are to help the TSNH are still on track and TSNH remains a viable state facility.

As the meeting continued Montoya was again appointed as Chairman, and Hill was then appointed as Chairman Pro Tem.

KCRT was then designated as the official radio station for 2009. Dixon Waller was named the fiscal auditor for '09.

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GAO: Army failed to explain Colo. expansion need

By IVAN MORENO
Associated Press Writer

DENVER (AP) - A study by the investigative arm of Congress calls on the Army to better explain why it is seeking 100,000 acres to expand a training site in southeastern Colorado and to estimate how much the expansion would cost.

Tuesday's report by the

Government Accountability Office says the Army didn't do a good job of telling local residents why it needs the land near La Junta, about 140 miles southeast of Denver.

The Army said last summer it would scale back an original plan to expand its 235,300-acre Fort Carson training site, known as the Pinon Canyon Maneuver Site, by 418,577

acres, or more than 1,000 square miles. Army officials said they would instead only seek 100,000 acres, or 525 square miles, citing budget constraints and concerns about archaeological sites and environmentally sensitive areas.

But the GAO study said the Army did not specify how it selected the site and its size. It said the Army failed to explain how much of the 100,000 acres

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Raton PTA art winners advance to state competition

By TIM KELLER
Special to the Chronicle

Many of Raton's finest young artists received awards Tuesday night that will send their work to the state competition at New Mexico's PTA Convention in Albuquerque later this month. State award winners will advance to the PTA's national art show in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, in June.

Raton Middle School hosted the annual PTA Reflections Art Show, whose theme this year was, "Wow!" PTA President Sue Holland coordinated the show with Vice President Donna Emiro. Raton students from primary school through high school entered 83 pieces in four categories — photography, visual arts, musical composition, and literature. Two other categories provided by the national PTA organization — dance choreography and film production — drew no entrants locally.

Seventh-grader Mikayla Vertovec took Best of Show honors for her intricate drawing, in both lead pencil and colored pencils, depicting scenes suggesting jellyfish, shellfish, and vegeta-



Sue Holland, left, Donna Emiro, and Royal Quint flank a group of winning young artists at the PTA Reflections art awards show Tuesday night at Raton Middle School.

(Photo by Tim Keller)

tion under the sea. Her untitled piece formed eight scenes, each within a triangle, the eight triangles forming an octagon.

Holland said that half the work in the show came from classwork, while half was submitted independently by students. The Raton schools have two art teachers: Melissa Goetsche-Medina teaches grades K-8, Kathy Vertovec grades 7-12.

Judging took place without student names on the work. Community members volunteered their time and

expertise: Glenna Brink and Nancy Arcangeli judged the literature, Robert Bauler and Carol Crary the visual arts, and Marty Mayfield the photography. Forrest McConnell, who learned musical notation for this contest, was the only entrant in the musical composition category, earning the first place award.

McConnell also won the literature division for intermediate grades with his poem, "Leaves." The middle and senior divisions were won by Marisa

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Trinidad Fire Department summarizes large variety of 2008 service calls

By MIKE GARRETT
The Chronicle-News

The Trinidad Fire Department had its hands full of firefighting equipment, hiring new recruits and training procedures and programs in 2008, according to Fire Chief Leroy Perea in his annual status report to Trinidad City Council at Tuesday's work session.

Perea said his department had three new recruits who were state certified in 2008 and is currently working hard at implementing new firefighter training procedures and programs. He outlined some of the department's many community assistance programs such as helping low-income elderly through the purchase of small in-home smoke detectors.

Perea pointed out what his inspectors look for in the way of possible fire code violations during their annual building inspections such as outdated extinguishers and what his firefighters do in terms of public service activities like puppet shows for the kids.

Perea said his department responded to 1,245 service calls in 2008. Below is a summary of the types of those calls.

In other city news, council agreed to a request by Steve Simonson, executive director of Trinidad-Las Animas County Economic Development, for a letter of support of a \$50,000 United States Department of Agriculture grant application to help establish a revolving loan fund and low-interest loans to help revitalize struggling local businesses better cope with the current economic downturn. TLAC ED would be the grant administrator.

Simonson said economic development would use the grant as a springboard to a larger revolving loan fund he wants to establish and partner with existing lenders to help needy local businesses. They are now waiting on the federal government to formally approve the grant program.

Utilities Superintendent Jim Fernandez told council that the \$35,000 roof repair project for the Miramont Lodge at Monument Lake has been completed. The next two construction phases will involve replacing the sidewalks in front of the 20-unit lodge and start replacing and repairing the leaking water drainage system around the lodge. Fernandez said water is seeping through the soil and concrete walls of the building and creating mold problems inside the units.

An engineering study has determined that those needed lodge foundation repairs and installing new drain pipes will cost the city around \$61,000. The city has budgeted \$100,000 for the two-phase lodge project. Monument Lake lease-holder and developer Mike Robb has a 50-50 match funding agreement with the city for grounds improvements. Council has some concern that all of the drainage repairs and improvements can be completed by mid-May, when Monument Lake is scheduled to reopen for its summer season. Fernandez said some drainage upgrades may have to wait until the fall.

City Manager Jim Soltis reported that Trinidad's November retail sales tax collections were just a hair under 1 percent from what they were in November 2007, or good news compared to what has been happening with the national and state economy. He said year to date city sales tax collections are about even to where they were at this time in 2007.

City Attorney Jerod Beatty discussed the intergovernmental agreement progress the city is making with Aguilar to provide the town with an emergency communications center

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