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WEEKEND EDITION
FRIDAY, SATURDAY
& SUNDAY
MAR. 11-13, 2016

THE CHRONICLE-NEWS

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50 CENTS
TRINIDAD
COLORADO

Vol. 140, No. 51

THE FINE PRINT

WEEKEND—MAR 11-13

DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME
SUNDAY: Daylight Saving Time (United States) 2016 begins at 2:00 a.m. on Sunday, Mar. 13, 2016 and ends at 2:00 a.m. on Sunday, Nov. 6 2016.

TSJC FEATURE FRIDAYS
FRIDAYS THRU APRIL 22 (10 a.m.-2 p.m.) Featured Friday programs allow prospective students the opportunity to see what is available at TSJC, take a tour and ask questions. Berg Building, Room 201. Info: Greg Boyce, 719-846-5530.

SPBC FIRE DISTRICT
FRIDAY (10 a.m.) The Spanish Peaks/Bon Carbo Fire Protection District Board of Directors will meet in Century Financial Group Building, 109 W. Main St. Info: Dana Phillips, 719-846-2080.

DEMOCRATIC ASSEMBLY
SAT. (9 a.m.) Event will be held at the Trinidad Middle School, 614 Park St. Info: Paula Lucero, 719-680-0709.



Today's Quote

A life that touches others goes on forever.

~ Unknown

GUADALUPE SOCIETY
SUN: Potluck dinner will be held after 11 a.m. Mass and Rosary at Holy Trinity Church with dinner at Holy Family Hall. Info: Rose Mestas, 719-846-3647.

AUTHOR'S GALA RECEPTION
SUN. (1-3 p.m.) Gallery Main will host this event for Wang Ping, noted author and artist, at the Gallery, 130 E. Main St. Refreshments will be served. Info: Bree Pappan, 719-846-1441.

WRITERS' GUILD OPEN MIC
SUN. (4-6 p.m.) Group will host this event at the Famous Theatre on Main St. The evening's special guest will be noted author Wang Ping. Info: Dana Miller, 719-422-8352.

MONDAY—MAR 14
LITERARY PRESENTATION
MON. (5-7 p.m.) TSJC and the Trinidad Area Arts Council will host "VOICES" a discussion and reading on themes of labor and immigration in literature with featured noted speakers, Wang Ping, Juan Morales and Violet Snow at the Masari, 600 Prospect. Info: 719-422-8352.

TRINIDAD MUSIC ASSN.
MON. (6:15- 8 p.m.) Community Choral rehearsals for the upcoming Spring Season will be held at the Massari Theater Music Room, corner of Pine and State Streets. Newcomers welcome — No auditions. Info: Russ Gorrell, 719-989-7317.

PUBLIC SERVICE
CARNegie LIBRARY
All free events. Info: 719-846-6841.
*THURS. (5:30 p.m.) Kelley Eden "Nutrition & Lifestyles" (Adult)
*EVERY SAT. (10 a.m.) Chess Club meets in the Community Room

*MAR. 17 (10 a.m.) Join Tim Crisler for a hike up Simpson's Rest (Adult/Teen)
*MAR. 23 (1 p.m.) Join Tom Potter for beginner & intermediate golf workshop at the Trinidad Municipal Golf Course (Adult)

*MAR. 30 (1 p.m.) Bocce at Cirino Park (Adult/Teen)

THIS TALENT SHOW
MAR. 17 SIGNUP DEADLINE: Students grades 3-12 interested in performing on Mar. 31 at 6 p.m. must have a parent/guardian signed registration form in order to participate. Info: Kevin Crosby, 719-846-2971, x4007 or kevin.crosby@trinidad.k12.co.us

SPRING BAZAAR
MAR. 19 (9 a.m.-3 p.m.) The Heritage Christian School will host a school benefit event at the Faith Christian Fellowship Church, 2608 Santa Fe Trail Dr. Info: Priscilla Santistevan, 719-680-7691.

RIVER CALL

Purgatoire River Call as of: 03/09/16. Chilili Ditch: Priority # 7 --- Appropriation date: 04/30/1862.

Trinidad Reservoir Accounting:
Release 0 AF
Inflow 40.42 AF -- 20.38 CFS
Evaporation 7.42 AF
Content 28,098 AF
Elevation 6,194.01
Precipitation 0

Down stream call: John Martin Reservoir: 12/31/1948.



Photo by Steve Block / The Chronicle-News

Along with family, friends and community members, a brotherhood of officers attended funeral services at the Trinidad High School Donnelly Gym for Las Animas County Deputy Sheriff Travis Russell on Thursday morning. Deputy Russell died in an auto accident March 1 while on duty in Trinidad. **For more photos from Deputy Russell's memorial see the Chronicle-News website, or follow us on Facebook.**

Jury hands down GUILTY verdict in Candelario trial

... See Page 3

WATER FORECAST

Conservationists take snow survey from Cuchara snow-core

NRCS gathers data to forecast water for farmers, city, recreation

Eric John Monson
News Editor
The Chronicle-News

"Don't worry about falling in a snow bank, we've all been there. I think they brought me out here on like one of my first days of work," says conservationist Katie Woodruff; straightening snowshoes near Cuchara Pass at about 10,000 feet. She's one of three conservationists from Natural Resources Conserva-

tion Service (NRCS) and Spanish Peaks-Purgatoire River Conservation District (SPPRCD) who have been sent up here to manually survey snow depth and water content. The information they gather will be used to measure and forecast the water that will be available this spring and summer for irrigation, public use and recreation in the Arkansas River Basin.

Continued on Page 10 ...

Going Up the River

A new Tim Keller Travel Feature



TRAVELOGUE

A first-timer's journey up Highway of Legends

Storyteller with camera explores new, old ground close to home

Tim Keller
Correspondent
The Chronicle-News

Editor's Note: Early this year Tim Keller began his eighth year as a regular Chronicle-News contributor. Recently retired from teaching high school English, he has suddenly found himself with time to read whole books and go on road trips—which he will turn into adventures for all of us to enjoy.

Exploration evokes a sense of distance, of travel to far-flung locales. Henry David Thoreau, however, urged his readers to explore close to home. A habitual explorer himself, he rarely ventured more than a mile or two from his Massachusetts home. In fact, he spent two years living alone on a small pond and wrote a long book about it.

After 17 years living just over

Continued on Page 6 ...

Picturesque San Isidro-St. Francis Catholic Church stands tall alongside Highway 12 as it climbs toward Cuchara Pass. A wooden sign out front reads, "Sun. Mass 10:00 a.m. Confessions before mass. Vigil, Tercio, Stonewall, Monument Lake."



LOCAL GOVERNMENT

City Retreat focuses on infrastructure upgrades

Steve Block
The Chronicle-News

Gabe Engeland, City Manager said in a Monday interview that the City's aging infrastructure was badly in need of replacement or repair. Those ongoing issues surfaced again during discussions at a Saturday City Council retreat at the Mt. Carmel Health, Wellness and Community Center, and were accompanied by a series of power point presentations showing just how serious the problems were.

"Staff focused the most on infrastructure," Engeland said. "We focused on our water infrastructure, our sewer infrastructure and our roads, and the current condition of all of them. We undertook long-range planning for all of our

utilities beginning last year. What we found at that time was that 53 percent of our water pipes are cast iron, which are 50 to 75 years past their useful life cycle. So 53 percent were installed between 1890 and 1950."

The City's sewer system was also in need of major upgrades, he said.

"We did the long-range infrastructure for sewer and we found the same thing," he said. Our sewers, all of our pipes, are outdated or outmoded and ready to fail."

The majority of the City's sewer system was installed prior to the 1960s using clay tile pipe that was grouted at each seam. Over the years the pipes and grout have cracked and allowed for tree root infiltration, according to information presented at the retreat.

The City's aging streets were the subjects of another long-range infrastructure project

"This year we did it for streets. What we found is that within six years, almost 50 percent of our streets will be at the end of their useful lives, which is a shocking amount when you consider, by magnitude, the impact that that's going to have on our budget."

Engeland said the time was now to begin work on improving and upgrading its aging infrastructure, before it's too late. Plans have been made to begin addressing those major infrastructure problems.

"So between water, sewer and streets, we have utilities that are on the edge of catastrophe"

Continued on Page 7 ...

WEATHER WATCH

Friday: Sunny, with a high near 67. South southwest wind 5 to 10 mph becoming southeast in the morning. **Night:** Partly

cloudy, with a low around 38. South wind 5 to 10 mph.

Saturday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 67. West wind around 5 mph. **Night:** Partly cloudy, with a low around 37. North northeast wind around 10 mph.

Sunday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 66. West northwest wind 5 to 10 mph. **Night:** Mostly clear, with a low around 36. West southwest wind 5 to 10 mph.

Monday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 67. Southwest wind 10 to 15 mph. **Night:** Mostly clear, with a low around 37. West southwest wind 10 to 15 mph.

Tuesday: Sunny, with a high near 60. Breezy, west southwest wind 15 to 20 mph. **Night:** Partly cloudy, with a low around 29. West wind 5 to 15 mph.

Wednesday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 53. North northwest wind 10 mph.

Weather Sponsored by:

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TRAVEL ADVENTURE

Going Up the River

A Tim Keller Adventure Travel Feature

A Colorado Travelogue Series

A first-timer's journey up Highway of Legends

Storyteller with camera explores new, old ground close to home



... Continued from Page 1



Raton Pass from Colorado, I'm beginning to realize how many nearby places that I've neglected to explore. Along with my first trip to Bent's Fort, it was time for my first trip out Colorado's Highway of Legends. On a recent Wednesday morning, I took off at dawn with only a travel mug of coffee and my camera for company.

Photographers relish the long shadows and golden light from a low sun just rising or setting. I'd intended to be well out State Highway 12 for the sunrise. Running late, I improvised and drove above Fisher's Peak Elementary School—another place I'd never been—to catch the sunlight as it first reached Trinidad from the sprawling Front Range. A good start.

Then I wound a serpentine way through Trinidad, including a roundabout at the Colorado Visitor Center and some left and right turns, following the Highway of Legends as it struggled to escape town. I passed Trinidad Lake, the farthest I'd been before, and continued to Cokedale where I took the right turn up County Road 57.7.

Early in the current century, the remote county roads of New Mexico changed from numbers to names, to aid emergency responders as I recall. Senior ranchers down the roads usually got to pick the names; thus a road like A42 might turn into Moore Ranch Road. (Alice Moore's actual driveway turned into My Road.) Colorado has clung not only to its county road numbers, but to decimals. In a short stretch, one might encounter County Roads 34.1, 34.6 and 34.9.



By far the busiest retail establishment on a late-winter morning's drive between Trinidad and La Veta is Ringo's Super Trading Post in greater downtown Segundo, where big energy-company pickup trucks line up as workers stop for their morning pick-me-ups, including *The Chronicle-News*.



The Highway of Legends wraps close around the west side of Spanish Peaks between Cuchara and La Veta, with the Devil's Stairsteps adding to the beauty.



A coffee-fueled road trip reaches a high point near Cuchara Pass at this barn beside the Spanish Peaks, with signs crowding about coffee and offering miniature donkeys for sale.

Cokedale hugs the hill above the state highway, CR 57.7 and a picturesque creek, a once-bustling coal camp of 1500 people whose current residents, numbering fewer than 150, have lovingly brought the village into the 21st Century. Climbing its winding dirt roads, I was reminded of living in Madrid, New Mexico, when it was a similar size and before it turned into an artsy tourist trap. More recently I lived for thirteen years in Des Moines, New Mexico, with a population identical to Cokedale but lacking the latter's attractive compactness and thus, perhaps, its sense of community.

Continuing across a narrow bridge and up



Photos by Tim Keller / The Chronicle-News

From above Fisher's Peak Elementary School, a Front Range sunrise stretches to Trinidad, an inspiring start for a day trip up the Highway of Legends.

the canyon to another old coal camp, I found Boncarbo the opposite of Cokedale: I didn't actually find it at all. There was traffic coming down the canyon, presumably heading to work down in civilization, but all I found of Boncarbo was a community bulletin board, a spanking-new row of 180 locked mailboxes in ten pillar-mounted cabinets, and the Boncarbo Fire Department with an electric signboard out front that read "Love: Just Do It" with a red heart that matched the color of the large firehouse tucked back against the hillside. The driveway's road ruts were up to 12 inches deep.

I've made several friends from Boncarbo over the past year; they must all live over the hills and up the canyons. I turned around when CR 57.7 ended at the junction of CR 30.1 and CR 51.0.

Following the river up the Highway of Legends, I walked around Segundo, bustling at that hour as energy-company workers pulled their big pickups over at Ringo's Super Trading Post, the busiest retail business I saw between Trinidad and La Veta. The store a little farther along at Weston was only other business where I saw any customers.

Old churches provided the best photography subjects at that point. St. Ignatius Catholic Church is active in Segundo. San Isidro-St. Francis Catholic Church stands tall alongside Highway 12 as it approaches Stonewall. A wooden sign out front reads, "Sun. Mass 10:00 a.m. Confessions before mass. Vigil, Tercio, Stonewall, Monument Lake."

Between those churches are two abandoned churches, near Weston and Segundo, that provided different photographic challenges and pleasures. At Weston, distant Fisher's Peak could get into the frame but I opted to catch pigeons in flight around the belfry and cross, just missing the landmark peak.

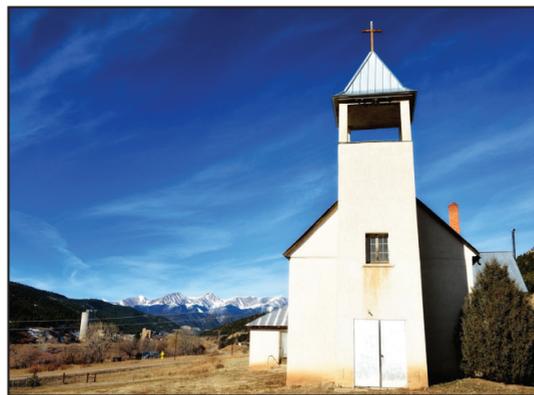
The highway curve at the old church north of Segundo added an attractive line but the road, church, and snow-capped mountains were too spread-out to work well together with a standard lens. Switching to a long telephoto lens and walking a couple hundred yards back down the highway, I was able to turn and get a photo that nicely compressed all the elements into a single attractive frame. The church steeple almost passes for one of the distant mountain peaks, though they're actually miles apart.

After Stonewall's stunning reddish rock walls, the highway climbs past Monument Lake and North Lake to Cuchara Pass, where this summer I look forward to taking the newer cutoff through Cordova Pass to Aguilar. At these higher elevations, up to 10,000 feet at the pass, there are fewer people and settlements; photography here focuses on the natural alpine beauty of ice-covered lakes and snow-capped peaks. Good photos are plentiful and easy to find: just line up the lines and the light—voilà!

I'd hoped to eat in Cuchara but everything was closed, including the Dog Bar & Grill, though it was well after their posted opening hour. Much smaller than I'd imagined, the village appeared to be closed for the winter.

Continuing down to La Veta, I stopped for a delightfully colorful sign taking up the side of a barn. "Bright and Early Coffee: Something to Crow About," it crowded, joined by a smaller sign that said, "Miniature Donkeys for Sale. By Appointment Only."

Reaching La Veta at noon, I ran into the same dining problem I'd found in Cuchara. TripAdvisor listed several restaurants that sounded inviting and opened at 11. They were all closed. Just as I thought I might have to continue to Walsenburg just to eat, I found Sammie's Restaurant and RV Park. Enough said. I was glad to find food.



Picturesque San Isidro-St. Francis Catholic Church stands tall alongside Highway 12 as it climbs toward Cuchara Pass. A wooden sign out front reads, "Sun. Mass 10:00 a.m. Confessions before mass. Vigil, Tercio, Stonewall, Monument Lake."

Downtown La Veta and its Francisco Fort Museum look promising for a return trip this summer, along with the promise of several attractive restaurant choices.

Retracing my path back along the Highway of Legends offered entirely different views and light, catching many afternoon sights that I'd missed in the morning. Mid-afternoon sunlight bounced off the north side of Stonewall's namesake rock formations to illuminate the Purgatoire River where it flows past the entrance to the Bar NI Ranch.

Even as I perched on rocks in the water for a photograph, I was still confused about the identity of the river I'd followed all the way up from Trinidad Lake. I've followed the Purgatoire northeast from Trinidad to Las Animas. Was this the same river, but flowing southeast from Cuchara Pass to Trinidad? Headed to the Arkansas River, it sure takes the long way around.

If there's a sign along the Highway of

Legends identifying the river that meanders along the route, I missed it. Even the bridge to Long's Canyon notes its 1998 construction and the name of every elected official and engineer involved, but not the name of the river running under it. The Purgatoire's unique name, history, and beauty merit better signage for the benefit of travelers.

Speaking of history, who are the legends celebrated by the highway? It turns out not to be who, but what. Colorado Tourism Office publications barely go beyond "the lore of this area is vivid." Colorado Department of Transportation's online Travel Center poses three somewhat vague historical questions, then concludes, "You may not find the answers on the Highway of Legends..."—but you'll enjoy the dramatic settings nonetheless.

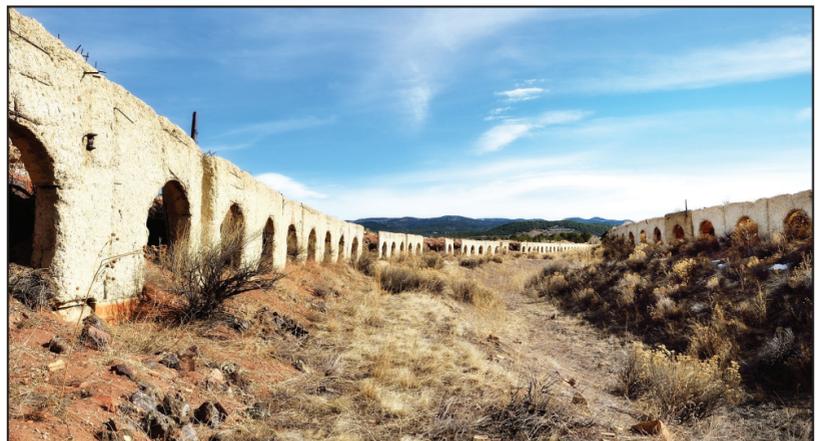
The name begs the question—what legends?—but even without clear answers, it's a fabulous name, good enough by itself to draw travelers up this gorgeous route that many would otherwise miss. Perhaps signage might someday be added, not only to identify the river, but to tell some of the stories that have grown along this route over the centuries.

At Cokedale in the morning, I'd looked unsuccessfully for the iconic coke ovens that I'd seen in photographs. They were hidden in plain sight. Returning toward Trinidad in late afternoon, there they were in the bright sun below the south side of the highway. A photographer's dream, the four long rows of decayed masonry arches now stood in dramatic afternoon light coming from low in the southwest and casting long sharp shadows. There were even attractive clouds in a deep blue sky, a perfect final touch for a photograph, and the perfect end to a daylong photo trip.

Read Tim's previous exciting travelogue stories "Chasing Billy the Kid" and "Exploring Bent's Fort" on his adventures through the region or view his other work, at Tim-KellerArts.com.



A long telephoto lens compresses distance, pulling snow-topped mountains in close to this old church near Segundo.



Afternoon light accentuates the spectral beauty of the old coke ovens just across the Highway of Legends from the village of Cokedale.