



CHAPARRAL GUIDE • MARCH 2018 • PAGE C2

St. Patrick's Day Celebration

The modern St. Patrick's Day celebrations that will take place on Saturday, March 17, at least in the United States, will likely be characterized by commercial lucky charms and green beer—all of which has very little to do with the historical figure of the saint. As it turns out, it took centuries for the holiday to accrue the elements that now seem crucial to its celebrations.

The March 17 celebration started in 1631 when the Church established a Feast Day honoring St. Patrick. He had been Patron Saint of Ireland who had died around the fifth century—a whopping 12 centuries before the modern version of the holiday was first observed. But very little is known about who he actually was, according to Marion Casey, a clinical assistant professor of Irish Studies at New York University (and a regular marcher in the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Manhattan).

"We know that he was a Roman citizen, because Britain was Roman then, and then he was enslaved and taken to Ireland, where he either escaped or was released," Casey says. "And then he became a priest and went back to Ireland, where he had a lot of luck converting the Druid culture into Christians."

Legend says St. Patrick was actually born Maewyn Succat, but that he changed his name to Patricius (or Patrick), which derives from the Latin term for "father figure," after he became a



priest. And that supposed luck of his is the root of all the themed merchandise for modern St. Patrick's Day.

It wasn't until the early 18th century that many of today's traditions were kicked into high gear. Since the holiday falls during Lent, it provides Christians a day off from the prescriptions of abstinence leading up to Easter, and around the 1720s, the church found it "got kind of out of control," Casey says. It was to remind celebrants what the holiday actually stood for that the church first associated a botanical item—customary for all saints—with St. Patrick, assigning him the symbol of the likewise lucky shamrock.





Modern-day celebrations and themes continued to take shape during the rest of the 1700s. In 1762, the first New York City parade took place. It wasn't until 1798, the year of the Irish Rebellion, that the color green became officially associated with the day, Casey says. Up until the rebellion, the color associated with St. Patrick was blue, as it was featured both in the royal court and on ancient Irish flags. But as the British wore red, the Irish chose to wear green, and they sang the song "The Wearing of the Green" during the rebellion, cementing the color's relevance in Irish history.

As for the green beer, that's an even later addition. In fact, it wasn't until the late 20th

Sierra County Tourism Continues to Increase

By Joey Perry, Secretary Geronimo Trails Scenic ByWay Visitor Center

Sierra County experienced a ten percent increase in visitors in 2017 continuing an 8year upward trend. In addition to the overall increase in visitation, visitors from New Mexico increased 8.7%. Albuquerque, Las Cruces and Santa Fe combined for over 1,100 visitors last year, weighing in at over 11% of total visitation.

Nationally, visits from other states increased by 14.7% over 2016. Western and neighboring states continued to provide the largest portion of our visitors: Texas, Colorado, Arizona and California, respectively. Other states with significant visitor center traffic included 'snow-bird' and coastal states. These include Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, New York, Washington, Oregon and Florida.

It might surprise people to know that we have a significant number of international visitors. The highest number of these visitors came from Canada and Europe. Only a handful of our visitors came from Mexico. Interestingly, this year we saw an increase in visitors from Australia and New Zealand.

We encourage guests to jot down their reason for coming to the area as they sign-in. Responses to the question 'What brought you here?' include hot springs, the lake, Spaceport America, ghost towns, and outdoor activities, as well as friends and family. Many visitors are just passing through; others lured to the area by our quirky names (some pronounced 'butte' as though it is the hind side of the elephant). The increased usage of social media also helped spread the word of our fascinating region: some foreigners have identified our area as a 'must see' place in America.



century that Ireland repealed a law that initially kept everything—pubs included—shut down for the day. Since then, thanks to a marketing push from Budweiser in the 1980s, downing beer has



become a common way to celebrate, regardless of how closely it's tied to the actually meaning of St. Patrick himself.

TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES

Truth or Consequences is a community of about 6,451 (2011 estimate census) people, situated on the banks of the Rio Grande. It is well known for its hot mineral waters which some claim to have healing qualities. There are several bathhouses and spas where one may soak in the pools, whether to ease the pains of the body or simply to achieve complete relaxation. Many offer professional masseuses on duty and some also offer sweat baths.

Several festivals and events are held each year, which bring many visitors. The Ralph Edwards Fiesta, held the first weekend in May, is a celebration of the change of name of the town in 1950 from Hot Springs to Truth or Consequences in honor of the Ralph Edwards radio program. There is a parade, rodeo, and activities throughout the town. The New Mexico Old Time Fiddlers have a contest the last weekend in April, and the State Old time Fiddlers Championship competition is held the third weekend in October. Fiddlers from all over come and compete for prizes and trophies. The Sierra County Fair held in October, showcases the local 4-H projects, school projects, and adult home arts, crafts, sciences, and agriculture.

There are two museums, both worth a

See TorC on Page C4

SIERRA COUNTY ARTS DIRECTORY

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CHAPARRAL GUIDE • MARCH 2018 • PAGE C3











TorC *Continued from Page C2*

visit, as well as many stores, restaurants, motels and campgrounds, and souvenir shops. Geronimo Springs Museum has several rooms, each with a different theme of the history and culture of the local area. The Apache room has a life sized wax statue of Geronimo, plus interesting information on him and on many well known Apache leaders of the time. The Hispanic Heritage room focuses on the Camino Real and the entrance of Spaniards who left their mark on the culture over the past 400 years. A chuck wagon draws your attention to the Ranch room, which has displays depicting the many facets of early ranching in the Southwest. The Wilson room focuses on the early history of Hot

Downtown TorC looking South from Water Tank Hill

Springs, which became Truth or Consequences in 1950. The military room contains artifacts from the old forts located along the river for the protection of early settlers and travelers from raiding Indians. Skulls of both a mammoth and a mastodon which were found in the county highlight the fossil and mineral room.

There is also a nice display of fluorescent rocks, as well as many minerals. The pottery room has one of the larger collections of Mimbres and Mogollon pottery dating from AD 200 to AD 1450, as well as a large collection of arrowheads and stone tools, effigies and other artifacts. An old miners log cabin was moved to the present site at the museum from the Gila National Forest and authentically restored to its original condition. The Ralph Edwards wing contains souvenirs and mementos from the life of the Hollywood producer/director. The Heritage room highlights the huge wall murals by Delmas Howe of the facets of the local culture: Indian, Spanish, Cowboy and Mexican. There are also bronze sculptures and intricate woodcarvings among other unusual artifacts. Admission is charged. The gift shop has a wide variety of southwest souvenirs and books on Southwestern New Mexico.

Ralph Edwards Park and Armijo Park have picnic facilities for enjoyable family outings, with picnic tables and playgrounds. Ralph Edwards Park also has a nature trail through some large volcanic rocks, which have holes

See TorC on Page C5



CHAPARRAL GUIDE • MARCH 2018 • PAGE C5 **Entire Truth or Consequences Valley Once Covered by Water**

Centuries ago the entire valley in which Truth been built. or Consequences is located was covered by a great body of water.

The now placid Rio Grande which meanders along the southeastern fringe of the city was once called by early Conquistadores "El Rio Bravo del Norte," (the fierce or savage river of the north). Barricaded from its onward rush by Carrie Tingley Mesa and the foothills of the Caballo Mountains, the mighty waters eventually eroded a channel through which the river now flows.

As the turbulent river deepened the channel, the level of the waters fell. Seepage, evaporation and a minimum of rainfall have combined to make the natural footing where the city now has

TorC

Continued from Page C4

in the stone where Indians ground their grain. A walk through the downtown area introduces one too much of the depression era architecture of the 30's, and there are many unique shops to browse through.

There is a fine golf course, several community tennis courts, and a bowling alley for recreation. There is also a very active Senior Citizens center for the mature visitors.

Vapors rising on the northern shore of the lake where the city now lies, during the colder season of the year, caught the attention of hunters who bathed in the warm waters and found them beneficial to the relief of many ailments.

The exact date when primitive man first began to utilize the hot springs will probably never be determined; however, deep mortar holes in the boulders north of Main Street, and fire scarred rocks in the same area, indicate that the springs were visited by aborigines.

In 1605, Santa Fe was chosen as the seat of the Spanish government. At this time the route from the new capitol to Paso del Norte (El Paso, Texas) leading over the Jornada del Muerto (the journey of death), was designated as the Camino Real (King's Highway). The government was over-thrown in 1680, and it was not until 1692 that the Spaniards succeded in reconquering the territory.

It was during this period that the Santa Rita copper deposits were exploited and the ingots transported by mule and burro pack-trains through Palomas Gap, seven miles south of Truth or Consequences, where they met the main caravans to Mexico City and Vera Cruz. This pass had been used for ages by the Indians in their annual migration to the buffalo hunting

grounds of the prairie.

The mission of Las Palomas was established to provide shelter and protection for the men and animals of the pack trains when they were unable to ford the Rio Grande during flood stage. Often the trains would be forced to wait for weeks.

The houses were built around a large plaza, presenting a continuous wall, with one large gate through which the animals could be driven for safety in case of Indian attacks. The men would then guard the roofs to prevent the enemies from scaling the walls.

Palomas Ojo Caliente, or Palomas Hot Springs, as it was then known, eventually became an important trading post. Passing this trading post, and on through Palomas Gap, went caravans on their way to Mexico, taking sheep, hides, pelts, ores and other native products. On their return, the caravans were laden with supplies and provisions for the missions, settlers, and garrisons. The trips were fraught with danger, both from lack of water and numerous Indian attacks. It was for that reason that the road came to be called "the journey of death," Jornada del Muerto.

During this time the Indians used the Hot Mineral Springs to treat their wounds as they hid in the marshy banks of the river. It is said that See WATER on Page C6



CHAPARRAL GUIDE • MARCH 2018 • PAGE C6

WATER

Continued from Page C5

what is now Water Tank Hill was once used as a frequent look-out post by the Indians to spot a foe or a victim

When the United States gained possession of the territory from Mexico in 1846, progress made rapid strides. However, the trepidations committed by hostile Apaches in the southwestern section hampered progress in this area.

Records of the War Department are filled with accounts of bloody engagements and battles. One particularly bloody battle was fought on March 30, 1854, on upper Animas Canyon. The troops had been besieged by bands of hostile Indians for several days prior to a pitched battle which was held at the head of the canyon. Traces of stone barricades and breastworks are still visible where the soldiers took their battle positions. During the battle it was reported that 22 soldiers were killed. The number of Apaches slain is unknown.

Nearly every mining camp or town of any importance had its own volunteer regiment to cope with the Indian outrages. Several forts were constructed by the government, mainly as bases of operation. Fort McRae, now covered over by waters of Elephant Butte Lake, and Fort Ojo Caliente at the head of what is now known as principle strongholds to protect this area. The post office at this fort was called Cherryville, and it was here that Indian agent, John P. Glum, captured Geronimo. Geronimo was soon released to again go on the warpath killing many more people in the territory.

During the early part of 1877 rich floats of gold ore were found along the Percha creek. Twelve men placed twelve names in a hat to choose the name of the town where the miners and prospectors were flocking. "Hillsboro" was the first name drawn, and this town 32 miles west of Truth or Consequences, colorful in mining history, still bears the name and was once the county seat of Sierra County.

In the 1880's Sierra County was a part of Socorro county. This was during the days of mining booms. Travel by horseback or buggy was slow. In the small communities in which mines and claims changed hands almost daily for fabulous prices, a clamor for a separate county arose. It required trips of several days for the miners to visit the county clerk's office in the county seat in Socorro. On petition of the

citizens, the legislature in 1884 created Sierra County from parts of Socorro, Dona Ana and Grant counties.

According to records, this period of Sierra County's mining camps reads like a page out of the Arabian Nights. About one fourth of the 12x12 foot boulder of mallable silver ore, found in the Bridal Chamber Mine of Lake Valley, netted 70,000 ounces of pure silver. Lake Valley's smelter melted over eight million dollars worth of silver for shipment to the Denver, Colo. Mint. A railroad spur was built from Nutt Station to Lake Valley to transport all the treasure.

Two years after the railroad first entered the Territory approximately 800 miles of travel was provided by 38 different stage lines, largely serving the mining centers that were then flourishing.

A visitor to Kingston paid \$5.50 for a round trip in the "Mountain Pride" operated by L. W. Orchard from the Santa Fe railhead at Lake Valley. He was allowed 50 pounds of baggage, but paid ten cents a pound for extra weight. The rails reached Lake Valley from Rincon in 1884 and ventured no farther.

The Percha District, extended about 10 miles across the headwaters of the Percha in the Black Range, opened when the first strike was made in 1881. The Solitaire Mine marked the northern boundary with the outcrop assaying sixty percent silver. One specimen of solid silver was found that weighed over 100 pounds.

The Bullion was one of the rich mines near where the town of Kingston blossomed forth in 1883. At a depth of 166 feet, a rich vein was struck in the Bullion which yielded \$5,000 in less than 24 hours.

Favorable to the prosperity of the county was the Sherman Act of 1890 fixing the amount of silver to be purchased by the treasury at four million dollars per month.

Then came the crash of 1893, the repeal of the Sherman Silver Act. Banks, mercantile houses, mining companies, hotels and all other enterprises went down in a heap. Merchants closed their doors. The fires in the smelters ceased to burn. No longer could the throbbing of the stamps in the mills be heard.

The bonanza was ended. Today in Hillsboro, Lake Valley, Kingston and in the Caballo mountains, traces of the great strike still remain as skeletons of the golden gas light era of Sierra County.



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Rachel Woodard

100 Erie Ct at the Seller hates Lake. to leave this newly constructed home BUT has a new job to relocate to! Built in 2016, home offers an open floor plan with 1500 sq ft of over



open living area, 3BR, 2BA, vaulted ceilings, laminated wood floors, spacious kitchen with stainless steel appliances, granite counters, plenty of cabinets, formal dining area, large master suite with curbless entry shower, guest bedrooms share a roomy 2nd bath, refrigerated air. 2 car attached garage. Corner lot on a cul-de-sac, low maintenance yard with plenty of room for toys! Area of nice homes. Close to Marina's, golf, lake. Priced at 196,000. Call Cathy. MLS MLS 20176111n.

108 Michigan, Elephant Butte: Looking for a house with lots of garage space? Must see this property! Home offers over 2200

ft of



livina area, 3BR,2BA, Den/Family room, refrigerated air, lake view from upstairs living area. Garages total over 2500 sq. ft, oversized door, lot is fenced. Priced at \$184,000. Call Cathy. MLS 20175454

502 Pike Rd. great property with Elephant Butte as neighbor! your 3BR. 1 3/4 BA over 1450 so ft lake with rustic, house country charm and unobstructed views. Home was built in the 1960's with updates performed



in 1995 and 2008. Roof new in 2006, modern kitchen that opens to a family room with lots of windows for natural light and views. Living room with fireplace. Refrigerated air. Enjoy the evenings and entertain on the patio - privacy wall. Two garages - one measures 20 X 20 and the other is a 30 X 40 garage with oversized doors for large boat. Lot is .62 ac with room for all your lake toys. Must see. Priced at \$255,000.00. Call Cathy. MLS 20170542.

369 Hot Springs Landing, EB. If you are looking for a property with a fantastic view of the Lake, this may work! Steps away from the beach, this property offers over 1340 sq ft of living area, 2 spacious B/R's and baths. Large



living room, dining room, cabinet filled kitchen, separate utility room, ref. air. Covered deck, .6 acre fenced lot - plenty of room for all toys. Priced to sell at 169,000. Call Cathy. MLS 20180445



514 Pike Rd. A magnificent view of the Lake from the deck of this very well cared for Mfg. home offering over 2100 sq ft of living area, 3BR, 2BA, dining room, cabinet filled kitchen with island, family and living room, large pantry/ utility room, tape and textured, ref. air., new carpet and flooring in almost every room. Oversized 2 car garage, carport, RV port. Approx 1/2 ac manicured lot. Call Cathy. MLS 20180743.



708 Erie. A unique log home constructed property in Elephant Butte. Over 2480 sq ft of living area, 3BR, 2BA, spacious kitchen with eating area. Large family room, sunroom, office. Refrigerated air, metal roof. Well manicured corner lot, mature trees, oversized garage, carport, 13 X 40 RV garage. Home has been very well cared for. Update to your likes and needs. A lot of house for this price. \$199,000. Call Cathy. MLS 20180771.



Glines Way: INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY: 12.23 acres parcel in the Historic Gold town of Hillsboro NM. Perfect place for solitude and peaceful living. Seller will Owner Finance \$136,000. MLS 20180625



905 Myrtle: Pride of Ownership shows through out this beautiful 1-acre property. Multiple out buildings Main home offers 3 bedrooms and 2 baths, large open living area beautiful Knotty pine ceiling and walls. Manufactured home offers 3 bedroom 2 baths. Property is zoned commercial, live where you work. \$195,000. MLS 20180518.



507 Van Patten: Don't Miss this one, priced to sell in the Historic Hot Water District. Drill your own Hot water well. Cute 2 bedroom 1.5 bath, manufactured home on large 50X120 lot. \$58,000, MLS 20180264.



509 San Andres: 2 bedroom 2 bath manufactured home with attached over sized 2 car carport. \$69,900. MLS 20180037



304 Ocotillo: 0.24 Acre lot ready for manufactured home. Just minutes from Marina Del Sur. \$15,000. 20175949.





offers newly remodeled kitchen with granite counter tops, and tiled back splash. Open living area with lake views, 2 bedrooms and 2 full baths upstairs. Downstairs offers full apartment with large kitchen, living area and bathroom. Plenty of room for all your friends and family. Property offer a large 0.57 acre lot with multiple carports and RV carport. This is a must see beautiful home. Call Rachel for more information 575-740-0012 \$229,000. MLS 20174589