

# Happy New Year!

There is Nothing More Powerful Than The Truth



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# The HERALD

Truth or Consequences, New Mexico



50¢

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18 PAGES IN 3 SECTIONS • PLUS 2 INSERTS

## Herald News Run Ends Today

### 90-Year-Old Newspaper's Publishers Cite Declining Ad Revenue, Print Work

By Tony A. Archuleta  
HERALD Reporter

The beacon on the hill.  
A sentinel at city, county, village meetings.  
The journal of Tiger sports.  
A voice for citizens.  
The bearer of good news and of bad news, and of everything in between.  
A marketplace for ideas, products and services.  
The times of TorC, Elephant Butte, Williamsburg and Sierra County, to name but a few.  
A reporter at large.  
The Herald of Hot Springs, then TorC.  
No more.  
The Herald, 1204 N. Date St., Truth or Consequences, a 90-year trusted source for news locally, is closing effective today (Dec. 26, 2018).  
Second-generation Herald Publisher Mike Tooley announced to newspaper staff on Dec. 7 that The Herald's near-century run was coming to a close.  
Tooley said that like many a newspaper small and large across the country, The Herald was not immune to the market forces pummeling the modern-day publishing industry.  
They include the full emergence of desktop pub-

lishing, largely displacing the Herald Publishing Company's print shop, historically a major source of revenue, Tooley said.  
Herald Co-Publisher Cindy Haro – a third-generation newspaper publisher and granddaughter of Hot Springs Herald founders Paul & Alma Tooley – said she carefully took into account the marketplace's potential in a two-newspaper-town in general and the publishing industry's diminishing returns in particular.  
Even in the best of financial times, the business of newspaper publishing never was a Monday through Friday enterprise with a 9 to 5 clock.  
Haro, gratefully acknowledging her father Mike Tooley's lifelong dedication to both the newspaper and community, said her professional and personal horizons lie in new employment opportunities elsewhere and seeing to her own family, including a husband, children and grandchildren.  
For Mike Tooley, to the glamorous newspaper profession manor born – along with his late brother Robert Tooley – new prospects also await, including on both the semi-retirement and part-time employment fronts.  
Tooley, who earned a teaching degree at Western

New Mexico University, has been working part-time as a substitute teacher for TorC schools in recent years. He said he will pursue future employment opportunities along that line.  
Throughout its 90 years in business locally, The Herald employed scores of editors, reporters, newspaper carriers, and front office/business personnel, offering job security and serving as a key reference for countless employees who found new career opportunities elsewhere – whether in journalism or other fields.  
With two weeklies locally, readers frequently enjoyed the benefit of two different perspectives on any given issue, and if a citizen had an issue or concern that wasn't resolved by one newspaper, there was always the other one across town.  
The Herald's longstanding motto: "There is Nothing More Powerful Than the Truth."  
Today's truth:  
An iconic Truth or Consequences/Sierra County newspaper, The Herald, has left the proverbial building, and the loss will be consequential in ways large and small – a constellation of headlines representing a 90-year continuum of local history fading to black.  
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## County Manager Says Sales Tax Revenue From \$250K Virgin Galactic Flights Essential

### Legislative Tax Exemption Affects Spaceport America's Home County

By Tony A. Archuleta  
HERALD Reporter

With Spaceport America anchor tenant Virgin Galactic having reached space last week with its SpaceShipTwo space tourism vehicle, Sierra County Manager Bruce Swingle last week suggested the county needs to position itself to take financial advantage on the sales tax front.  
Virgin Galactic customers are paying \$250,000 per flight at the spaceport in southeastern Sierra County, and the county manager during Tuesday's, Dec. 18, county commission meeting said that translates to plenty of



**POTENTIAL REVENUE SOURCE** - Las Cruces is home to Spaceport America tenant Virgin Galactic headquarters, and this SpaceShipTwo replica on display next to city hall; Sierra County is hoping to realize sales tax revenue from commercial space flights currently priced at \$250,000 per astronaut. **HERALD photo/TONY A. ARCHULETA**

revenue potential for the county.  
Swingle acknowledged the county is already receiving a substantial benefit from the spaceport's presence, including recently when a film crew shooting a commercial at the iconic \$250,000 million dollar facility booked close to 50 rooms at a TorC hotel.  
The county manager,

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## TorC Commission Hires New City Manager Madrid

### Appoints Szigeti Interim Commissioner to Replace Resigning Green

By Tony A. Archuleta  
HERALD Reporter

The Truth or Consequences City Commission on Wednesday, Dec. 19, unanimously voted to hire Morris Madrid, a veteran local and state government administrator and financial specialist, as the new city manager.  
Madrid agreed to a one-year contract with a \$95,000 annual salary.  
Madrid, who formerly worked as public services director in San Miguel County, was touted as a top-flight hire capable of addressing many of the city's



Morris Madrid

critical areas of concern, including finance and infrastructure.  
"With all his experience and background, we feel it's the perfect leadership that we're looking for," Mayor Steve Green said.

Also Wednesday, the city commission voted unanimously to appoint George Szigeti to replace Green, who announced his resignation effective Jan. 1, 2019, on the commission.  
Szigeti, chairman of the Public Utilities Advisory Board, was deemed a dedicated and knowledgeable replacement, and the commission ultimately ignored Mayor Pro Tem Sandy Whitehead's entreaties about concerning themselves with the optics of Green voting on his successor.  
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## 2018 News Year

By Tony A. Archuleta  
HERALD Reporter  
JANUARY

\*Election season began in TorC, Elephant Butte and Williamsburg, including on the Truth or Consequences City Commission, where Position 1 incumbent Sandy Whitehead and Position 3 incumbent Josh Frankel were both seeking re-election. Only Whitehead returned to the commission after the March 6 election; Frankel defeated by political

newcomer Paul Baca. \*The Republican Party of Sierra County hosted a candidate forum on Jan. 15 with District 51 State Representative Yvette Herrell among the political hopefuls attending. Running for the 2nd Congressional District seat occupied by Rep. Steve Pearce – who vacated the office in an unsuccessful run for governor – Herrell went on to win the Republican nomination. Herrell lost the November general election to Xochitl Torres Small, a Democrat

who turned a traditionally red congressional district blue, thanks in large part to Dona Ana County, where Torres Small emerged as the clear winner after a delayed counting of absentee ballots. As of this writing, Herrell and her legal team had not yet conceded the election. \*The year ushered in a new alignment in sports for Hot Springs High School, which went from competing in 3A to 4A in District 3-4A

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## Steven Montoya Plea Deal Means 12-Year Possible Sentence for Murder

### Plea Deal Struck to Spare Youngest Witness From Testifying

By Carlos Padilla  
HERALD Reporter

In less than 40 minutes, a plea conference in the State of New Mexico v Steven Montoya held in Seventh Judicial District Court in Truth or Consequences on Tuesday morning, Dec. 18, ended with Montoya entering a plea of "No Contest" for the May 2018 murder of his wife, Miranda.  
Mr. Montoya was sworn in by Judge Mercedes

Murphy just after 9:26 a.m., and responded to the standard questions involved in criminal cases that meet the threshold of a felony level crime. The questions posed by Judge Murphy determined Montoya's state of mind, if he had been threatened, coerced or promised anything in exchange for entering into the plea deal, or if he was under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

**FELONY, 3 YEARS & RESTITUTION DROPPED**  
Although the maximum sentence allowed in New Mexico for a second-degree murder charge is 15 years, the plea agreement reached between Montoya and the District Attorney's Office will cap the maximum at 12 years. In addition, the State agreed to waive the \$12,500 restitution Montoya may

See Plea on Page A5

### WEEKLY WEATHER WATCH 8-DAY FORECAST

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 26	THURSDAY DECEMBER 27	FRIDAY DECEMBER 28	SATURDAY DECEMBER 29	SUNDAY DECEMBER 30	MONDAY DECEMBER 31	TUESDAY JANUARY 1	WEDNESDAY JANUARY 2	NEED PRINTING?
High 53 Low 33 10% Partly Cloudy WSW Wind: 11 mph Sunrise: 7:10 am Set: 5:08 pm	High 53 Low 33 Partly Cloudy WSW Breeze: 9 mph Sunrise: 7:10 am Set: 5:09 pm	High 49 Low 26 20% Partly Cloudy SW Wind: 14 mph Sunrise: 7:11 am Set: 5:09 pm	High 44 Low 24 10% Partly Cloudy NE Breeze: 9 mph Sunrise: 7:11 am Set: 5:10 pm	High 44 Low 26 20% Showers NNE Breeze: 8 mph Sunrise: 7:11 am Set: 5:11 pm	High 48 Low 29 40% Showers WSW Breeze: 6 mph Sunrise: 7:11 am Set: 5:12 pm	High 49 Low 27 Partly Cloudy SW Breeze: 8 mph Sunrise: 7:12 am Set: 5:12 pm	High 45 Low 28 20% Partly Cloudy N Breeze: 4 mph Sunrise: 7:12 am Set: 5:13 pm	Competitive Prices! Let Us Bid On Your Next Printing Job. The HERALD 1204 North Dale PO Box 752 TorC, NM 87901