



## 2 Paws Up

Grand opening for leash-free dog park Sunday in downtown TorC

**PETS • PAGE B6**



## Star-Bright

Cities of TorC, Elephant Butte lead way in holiday displays

**SEASONAL • PAGE A6**

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# The HERALD

Truth or Consequences, New Mexico



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16 PAGES IN 2 SECTIONS • PLUS 1 INSERT

## Floating Parade of Lights



**BOATS AND LUMINARIAS** – Elephant Butte Lake State Park saw a huge influx of visitors Saturday when the Annual Floating Light Parade and the Luminaria Beach walk were held. See additional photos on Page A6.

HERALD photo/MIKE TOOLEY

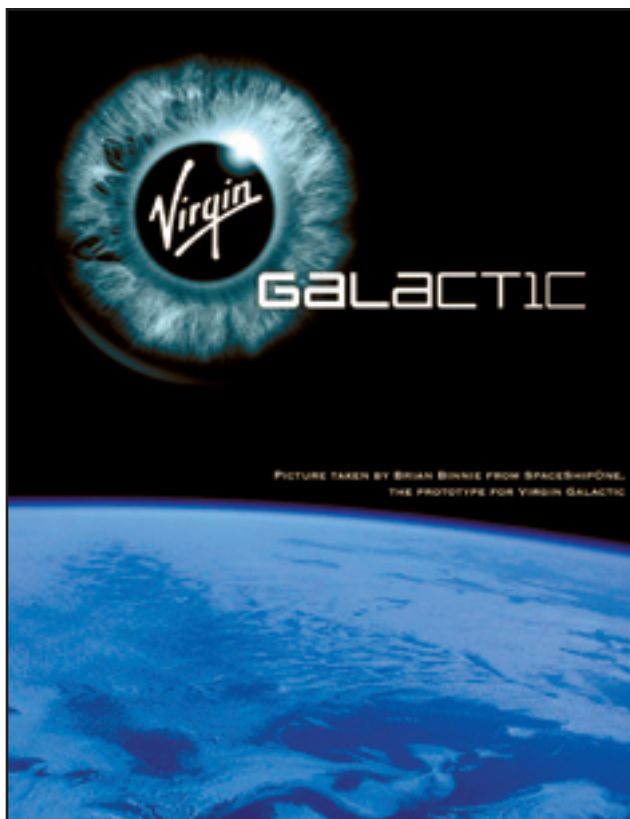
## Virgin Galactic Looks to Relocate Nearly 100 Mojave-Based Employees to Spaceport America

By Carlos Padilla  
For The HERALD

Spaceport America is preparing to make good on an out-of-this-world goal that's been in the works for over a decade. In late 2018, Virgin Galactic will start sending private citizens into low-Earth orbit aboard a spacecraft.

Sierra County, along with the rest of the region, and state of New Mexico, has been anxiously awaiting an announcement that the space tourism industry as a whole and Virgin Galactic specifically would begin transporting passengers into space, launching a long-promised era of economic prosperity to the area and state.

To date, Virgin Galactic has focused the lion's share of its work in Mojave, Calif., where it is manufacturing, building, and testing the spaceships that will take paying customers into space. Albuquerque Business First reported last week that the aerospace company will start to ramp up its commercial flight service in southern New Mexico next year, and plans to move 85 Mojave-based employees and their families to New Mexico, creating new jobs along the way, according to Business First Reporter May



PICTURE TAKEN BY BRIAN BINKIE FROM SPACESHIPONE, THE PROTOTYPE FOR VIRGIN GALACTIC

Ortega. An additional, undisclosed number of jobs in hospitality, facilities management, and operations will be created to support the company's commercial operations at the spaceport.

Business First reported that there are currently 27 full-time Virgin Galactic employees working at its Las Cruces office, adding that the aerospace firm will have at least 112 people on its payroll in New Mexico next year once all are relocated. Business First added that the Virgin Galactic jobs website last

week listed six positions for the Las Cruces area.

Spaceport America – located 30 miles southeast of Truth or Consequences – is the world's first purpose-built spaceport and the exclusive host for Virgin Galactic, the commercial aerospace company owned by British billionaire Richard Branson, and a major tenant at Spaceport America.

### THE NEW SPACE RACE

Virgin Galactic is locked in a race with Elon Musk's company, SpaceX, and

See **SPACE** on Page A5

## Last Minute Plea Deal Struck in Murder Case

Adams Pleads No Contest to Involuntary Manslaughter

By Betsy Phillips  
HERALD Reporter

The acceptance of a plea in the Kandi Adams case Monday, Dec. 11, was a stunner.

Originally charged with first-degree murder, tampering with evidence, forgery of a check, forgery of a will and seven counts of unlawful use of a debit card, the case has dragged on for almost two years.

Both sides said it was a case of circumstantial, complex evidence and apparently as the experts weighed in, the clarity of the perceived circumstances surrounding the death March 20, 2015, of Richard Harris blurred.

Adams was arrested in April 2016 and has spent the last 20 months in jail.

The deal was evidently agreed to near the end of last week – no time to reach all the 100 members of the jury pool. Some of those potential jurors showed up Monday morning.

Even some local witnesses came to court not knowing the trial had been cancelled.

The plea offered by the



**PLEA HEARING** - Defendant Kandi Adams enters the District Court in TorC Monday morning, Dec. 11, with her attorney Gary Mitchell.

HERALD photo/BETSY PHILLIPS

District Attorney's Office is involuntary manslaughter, the lowest level a first-degree murder charge

may be reduced to. Adams pleaded no contest to that charge and two fourth-degree felony charges of un-

lawful use of a debit card or ATM card.

She faces 4½ years on all counts.

The victim's family is unhappy about the plea. Eleven family members

See **ADAMS** on Page A5

## City Commission to Act on Special Election, Short Term Rental App Fees

By Tony A. Archuleta  
HERALD Reporter

The Truth or Consequences City Commission, meeting one time in December, was scheduled to convene at 9 a.m. Wednesday, Dec. 13.

Agenda items include business related to the Jan. 23, 2018, special election on the financing of the \$2.7 million renovation of the Lee Tafoya Building on North Cedar Street, formerly the National Guard armory, for use as a law enforcement complex for TorC Police Department.

Under consent calendar: designation of polling places (City Commission Chambers, 405 W. Third Ave. and absentee, Municipal Clerk's Office, 505 Sims St.), precinct board members (Mary Jo Montgomery, presiding judge; Jenny Chavez and Janice Sanchez, election judges/clerks/translators; Carole Wheeler, election clerk; and alternate, Kathleen Gurnsey); and Board Election School (2 p.m.



Jan. 18, 2018 in the Commission Chambers).

Under Ordinances/Resolutions/Zoning, a resolution setting recount/recheck fees for both the Jan. 23, 2018, special election and the March 6 regular election for Positions 1 and 3 currently held by Commissioner/ Mayor Pro Tem Sandy Whitehead and Commissioner Josh Frankel, respectively.

Regarding election-recount fees, City Clerk/Treasurer Renee Cantin, in a commission action form states, "New Mexico Municipal League has determined that one of the problems that can occur after an election is determining the cost of a recount/recheck. We are recommending the use of the recount/rechecks cost list from 2016, and adopt

See **CITY** on Page A5

### WEEKLY WEATHER WATCH 8-DAY FORECAST

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 13	THURSDAY DECEMBER 14	FRIDAY DECEMBER 15	SATURDAY DECEMBER 16	SUNDAY DECEMBER 17	MONDAY DECEMBER 18	TUESDAY DECEMBER 19	WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 20	NEED PRINTING? Prices! Let Us Bid On Your Next Printing Job. The HERALD 1204 North Dale PO Box 752 TorC, NM 87701
High 63 Low 33 Sunny NE Breeze: 3 mph Sunrise: 7:02 am Set: 5:03 pm	High 61 Low 31 Sunny NE Breeze: 9 mph Sunrise: 7:04 am Set: 5:03 pm	High 60 Low 33 Sunny S Breeze: 9 mph Sunrise: 7:04 am Set: 5:03 pm	High 64 Low 37 Mostly Sunny W Wind: 10 mph Sunrise: 7:05 am Set: 5:03 pm	High 60 Low 36 Sunny ENE Breeze: 4 mph Sunrise: 7:06 am Set: 5:04 pm	High 63 Low 39 Sunny ENE Breeze: 4 mph Sunrise: 7:06 am Set: 5:04 pm	High 63 Low 41 Sunny ENE Breeze: 5 mph Sunrise: 7:07 am Set: 5:05 pm	High 66 Low 42 Sunny SW Breeze: 9 mph Sunrise: 7:07 am Set: 5:05 pm	