

FIRST DRAFT

Bottles and insulators all that's left of Salt Lake Wagon Road

When searching for remnants of the first roads through this region, telephone insulators are helpful. So is Budweiser. No, not a cooler of modern beer, as welcome as that might be after a hot day tramping in the desert.

Old Budweiser bottles, those manufactured by Carl Conrad & Co. from 1876 to 1883, helped John Horn of Alpine Archaeological Consultants Inc. in Montrose track part of the Salt Lake Wagon Road through the desert between Delta and Kannah Creek. The wagon road once ran from Salt Lake City to Fort Union in north-eastern New Mexico.

Glass telephone-line insulators that were part of a telephone line installed along the wagon road in 1900 helped Horn and his colleagues identify other portions of the route. The remains of rock cairns

and eroded gullies created by the rolling of wagon wheels also provided evidence of the road.

The Salt Lake Wagon Road predated Budweiser beer and telephone insulators by several decades. It was built under the direction of Col. W.W.



BOB SILBERNAGEL

Loring in 1858. It closely followed the Northern Branch of the Old Spanish Trail, which was used primarily by fur traders such as Antoine Robidoux. Getting wagons over this terrain was no easy task. One early traveler described "ascending from the river bottom ... over a district of pulverulent clay ... our animals sinking in it to their fetlocks."

Horn and his crews searched for remnants of the Salt Lake Wagon Road and the Northern Branch of the Old Spanish Trail from 2010 through 2012 as a subcontractor for the Bureau of Land Management.



SPECIAL TO THE SENTINEL

A drawing from the Beale Expedition of 1853 shows the Gunnison River, then called the Grand, just below its confluence with the Uncompahgre River near present-day Delta.

On May 29 of this year, Horn led a small group of people to view portions of the trail and wagon road. The trip was put together by the Interpretive Association of Western Colorado, a Delta-based nonprofit group that now manages Fort Uncompahgre in Delta, the replica of Robidoux's fur-trading post.

The trip was an effort to become more familiar with parts of the trail and wagon road and to determine how to provide interpretive information about them for visitors, said Chris Miller, executive director of the Interpretive Association.

The northern branch of the Old Spanish Trail ran north from Taos, New Mexico, over Cochetopa Pass and on to the Uncompahgre River. Downstream from the junction of the Uncompahgre and Gunnison rivers was the site of

Robidoux's trading post. From there, it traversed the high desert to Kannah Creek, the next place with water and grass easily accessible. The trail was used primarily from the 1820s through the 1840s.

It wasn't until 1853 that there is documented evidence that wagons were used in this region. They were part of efforts to find a route for a transcontinental railroad.

The E.F. Beale expedition came in the late spring and summer. It used pack animals, not wagons, and continued on to California.

Late in the summer came the expedition of Capt. John Gunnison, with 20 wagons and about 50 men. They referred to the Gunnison River and the Colorado as the Blue River.

On Sept. 17, 1853, "We crossed the point of land lying between the Uncompahgre

and Grand rivers, reaching the latter at Roubidoux's old trading fort, now entirely fallen to ruins," wrote Lt. E.G. Beckwith in a report to Congress. Beckwith became expedition leader after Capt. Gunnison was killed by Paiute Indians in Utah in October.

From Robidoux's trading post, the Old Spanish Trail ran in a nearly straight line to Kannah Creek. That made sense when traders were using pack horses and mules, seeking the most direct possible route from one good watering and grazing spot to the next.

Capt. Gunnison was afraid to veer far from that route, Horn said. As a result, wagon ruts believed to be from his journey run straight up steep grades to mesa tops, often leaving deep ruts behind.

The Salt Lake Wagon Road, built five years later, follows

that route closely but curves around the steepest grades or crisscrosses up them.

Gunnison's journey was difficult. Arriving near the Uncompahgre Valley on Sept. 7, Beckwith said, the expedition was obliged to provide "relief for our jaded animals, which had been eleven hours in making fourteen miles ... one of our wagons had broken an axletree in the passage of the first hill in the morning, and did not arrive at camp until late in the evening."

Still, by Sept. 17, the expedition had arrived at a small stream at the base of Grand Mesa. "This little stream the Indians who visit us call Kannah. The grass, though not abundant, is sufficient for our stock."

Although the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad would prove him wrong less than three decades later, Beckwith was convinced that the Gunnison River route was a poor one for trains. "It is evident that a railroad, although possible, can only be constructed in the vicinity of this section ... at an enormous expense," he wrote. "It would be a waste of labor to add even a rude estimate of the cost of so impracticable an undertaking."

But the wagon route he helped pioneer would be used for many decades, including by people who left empty beer bottles and telephone insulators in their wake.

Fort Uncompahgre in Delta will host an open house with free admission to the public this Saturday and Sunday, June 13 and 14. Thanks to John Horn and Chris Miller for their assistance with this article.

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SPECIAL TO THE SENTINEL/Bob Silbernagel

John Horn stands at Wells Gulch, near the base of Fools Hill on U.S. Highway 50, with ruts of the Salt Lake Wagon Road behind him to the left, and the Gunnison Expedition behind him to the right.

Colorado, New Mexico renew tuition agreement

By SENTINEL STAFF

The Colorado Commission on Higher Education on Thursday renewed a reciprocity agreement between Colorado and New Mexico that allows students from both states to attend public colleges and universities in each other's states for the same price they would pay for tuition if they were residents of the state in which they're enrolled in school.

The agreement, which began in 1981, was set to expire later this month but has been renewed through June 30, 2018. The agreement allows the equivalent of 500 full-time students from Colorado to attend New Mexico schools and an equal number of New Mexico students

to attend school in Colorado for in-state rates. The goal of the agreement is to expand educational opportunities for students in both states.

Rarely are all 500 slots used by either state. In 2013-14, the equivalent of 378.3 full-time students from New Mexico took advantage of the program. The same year, 330 full-time equivalent slots were used by Colorado students to attend school in New Mexico.

The Colorado Commission on Higher Education has proposed allocating 455 full-time equivalent spots reserved at specific Colorado schools for New Mexico transplants each year between 2015-16 and 2017-18. The remaining 45 slots will be held in

reserve.

Eight Colorado schools participate in the partnership: Adams State University, Colorado Mesa University, Colorado State University in Pueblo, Fort Lewis College, Lamar Community College, Otero Junior College, Pueblo Community College and Trinidad Junior College. Colorado Mesa will have room for the equivalent of 10 full-time students through the agreement in 2015-18 but it only used 5.4 slots in 2012-13 and 7.4 in 2013-14.

Not surprising given their location in the southern part of Colorado, Fort Lewis, Adams State and Trinidad State get the most use out of the program, with 111.4, 102.6, and 104.4 spots used, respectively, in 2013-14.

The most popular destination for Colorado students taking advantage of the agreement in New Mexico is San Juan College. Located not far from the New Mexico-Colorado border in Farmington, New Mexico, San Juan used 143 of the 330 slots in the agreement in New Mexico in 2013-14.

Eight other New Mexico schools participate in the agreement: Central New Mexico Community College, Eastern New Mexico University, New Mexico Highlands University, New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology, New Mexico State University, Northern New Mexico College, the University of New Mexico and Western New Mexico University.

Hundreds attend vigil for 4 victims of Utah boat accident

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

HARRISVILLE, Utah — Hundreds of people gathered for a vigil to remember four people, including three children, who died in a boating accident on a Utah lake.

The event was held Saturday night at Harrisville's Orion Junior High School, which two of the victims, Kelsey Capener, 13, and Siera Hadley, 14, attended. Utah doctor Lance Capener and

another of his daughters, Kiley, 7, also died.

Lance Capener, 46, took a ski boat out with his wife, Kathy, 42, their two daughters and three of the girls' friends on Monday when violent winds capsized their boat, throwing all seven people into the cold water of Bear Lake.

Three survived, including Tiffany Stoker and Tylinn Tillely, both of whom are 14 and attended the vigil. Kathy Capener

remained hospitalized.

Attendees wrote messages for the victims and some held candles. Friends shared memories of the victims, and some of the victims' favorite songs were played.

Ashlee Walter, 13, who had been a friend of Siera Hadley and Kelsey Capener since second grade, said she came to the vigil to show support for the families.

"It was really hard for me to

go through that (tragedy)," she told The Standard-Examiner newspaper of Ogden. "I think that all the family and friends are here to just show comfort and say goodbye."

Organizer Yvonne Tams said the purpose of the vigil was not to dwell on the accident but to remember the victims.

"We want to celebrate not the tragedy and those hours, but we want to celebrate those beautiful lives," she told KUTV-TV.

BLOTTER

COMPILED BY SENTINEL STAFF

Bank text message a scam

Grand Junction Police Department received reports of a scam hitting the West Slope last week. The scam comes in the form of a text message that reads, "Wells Fargo Notification: 541-595-3388."

When a victim dials the number, an automated message says, "Your debit card has been compromised, please enter your Social Security number and press one."

This message is a scam and not authorized by Wells Fargo, police said.

"If you become a target, do not call the number and enter your Social Security number and immediately delete the message," police advised. "It is important to never give out your personal information, such as your Social Security number or

bank information without knowing that the agency seeking such information is valid and trustworthy."

Call 970-549-5000 for more information.

According to Grand Junction Police Department:

■ Someone committed fraud, forgery and theft May 31 when they presented less than \$300 in counterfeit cash for payment in the 2500 block of Broadway.

■ Craig Heartsill, 52, was arrested on the west side of the city and released on a summons Wednesday on suspicion of criminal mischief and harassment after he allegedly harassed a victim and punched the window of the victim's truck.

■ Someone committed a burglary on the east side of the city around noon Wednes-

day.

■ Michael Knapp, 32, was booked into Mesa County Jail on Thursday on suspicion of driving under the influence, reckless driving, having no proof of insurance, and driving on a revoked driving status.

■ Deitrich Bostelman, 30, was arrested Thursday at 555 Ute Ave. on suspicion that he harassed a victim and brandished a deadly weapon, causing fear of imminent, serious bodily injury.

■ Two juveniles were arrested Friday after they allegedly crashed a stolen vehicle into a house in the 400 block of Rockaway Avenue.

■ Emilio Matta, 26, was booked into Mesa County Jail on Saturday on suspicion of possession of a controlled substance in the 400 block of Main Street.

4TH OF JULY ADVERTISING DEADLINES

ATTENTION ADVERTISERS

The Daily Sentinel's advertising deadlines will be moving up to accommodate the 4th of July Holiday!

This early deadline schedule is designed to help you plan your advertising around the holiday.

The Daily Sentinel will be closed Friday, July 3 to commemorate the holiday.

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7/6, Monday	7/2, Thursday, 3 PM
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