

FIRST DRAFT

'4,800 cubic feet of untold history'

The Daily Sentinel's long-time advertising manager, Al Look, had known Hannah Marie Wormington for more than a decade when, in 1950, he traveled to her office at the Denver Museum of Natural History to show her new Indian artifacts he had found.

Unlike those he had discovered near Cisco, Utah, in 1939, the new artifacts were from western Colorado — discovered on a ranch then owned by Alva Taylor near Unaweep Canyon.



BOB SILBERNAGEL

The artifacts were found near a rock overhang in a deposit that ran as much as 16 feet deep and would ultimately be determined to represent more than 6,000 years of human habitation.

Look, who initially dug up a few artifacts at the Taylor ranch with a man named Warren Bush, later said the Taylor site contained "4,800 cubic feet of untold history."

What he found and shared with Wormington is still drawing interest today. Recently, modern-day archaeologists reported that, "the Taylor site is both unusual and extraordinary, due to its great depth of cultural deposits."

"Most sites in the region are shallow, and usually have a long time period compressed into less than one meter of deposits," wrote Michael Piontkowski in a 2016 report titled, "A Reexamination of the Uncompahgre Complex: Reanalysis of the Taylor Site."

Piontkowski was the main investigator in the re-examination, and was co-author of the report with Carl E. Conner. Their work was conducted through Dominquez Archaeological Research Group in Grand Junction, known as DARG, of which Conner is president. Its work on the Taylor site was paid for with grants from Colorado's State Historical Fund.

The recent work involved some on-site inspection of the Taylor site, but most of DARG's effort involved re-examining artifacts collected at the sites by Wormington and University of Colorado archaeologist Robert Lister during their field work in 1951 and 1952.

Piontkowski spent many months cataloging those artifacts after separating them from similar artifacts collected at two sites near Montrose.

"An impressive number of artifacts were recovered during the (Wormington) excavation of the Taylor site which could add significant information about prehistory using modern analysis techniques," Piontkowski wrote.

Wormington and her crew excavated and collected several hundred items at the Taylor site. She later published a report with Lister about the work and wrote a doctoral dissertation about it — both of which are still available. But her field notes from the on-site work, unfortunately, are not.

"To date, the field notes and profile drawings have not been located," Piontkowski said in his report. "There is no record of the field notes at (the Denver Museum of Nature and Science), nor are they mentioned in the report or Wormington's dissertation."

Two fires — one at the Den-



Al Look studies an ancient animal skull. In addition to his interest in archaeology, Look was also an avid amateur paleontologist.

ver Museum in 1961 and the one that killed Wormington at her home in Denver in 1994 — may also have destroyed some papers, possibly the field notes.

Additionally, Piontkowski said, there are uncataloged Wormington files at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., that are marked "field notes," but the contents are unknown.

Wormington was adept at not only excavating and collecting,



Marie Wormington works at a field desk at the Frazier Site in Weld County, one of the archaeology sites she excavated, 1966-67.

but in placing her discoveries and those of other people in a broader context, he said.

Based on materials found at the Taylor and Alva sites, and those she had previously excavated at two sites near Montrose, Wormington used the term "Uncompahgre Complex" to describe specific types of artifacts, found in this region.

Although some archaeologists now dispute whether the Uncompahgre Complex is a valid designation, Piontkowski said the similarity of artifacts from the Taylor site, the nearby Alva site and two sites in Montrose County that Wormington excavated provide "an important step in archaeological history."

Additionally, he noted, the term Uncompahgre Complex "is still in use and viewed as a valid complex by many archaeologists."

Furthermore, he wrote, because there are so many artifacts from human activity over so many thousands of years — which represent eras now called the "Early Archaic" and "Middle Archaic" periods in Paleolithic development — the Taylor site may help answer questions regarding the progression from one period to another.

Under an agreement with the



Photos from MUSEUMS OF WESTERN COLORADO/Special to the Sentinel

Al Look examines ancient rock drawings at a site on the Uncompahgre Plateau. The date is unknown.

Denver museum, Piontkowski and others with DARG examined 195 artifacts recovered from the Taylor site.

That's far less than the 556 artifacts Wormington and Lister reported excavating. The remaining 361 have not been found.

Still, the artifacts available today are impressive: 71 projectile points, 10 drills, three ground-stone devices such as metates and 24 bone tools.

Also, six hearths were found by Wormington and Lister during their excavations, and two slab-lined cists, or protective chambers. The charcoal from those hearths has not been accounted for. If found, it could help to better date the site, using techniques that were only beginning to be used during Wormington's excavation.

The Taylor site is no longer the oldest site excavated in western Colorado, but it remains one of the most important in the region.

It appears to contain the best record of prehistory in Mesa County, Piontkowski said.

Moreover, the artifacts Wormington collected provide an excellent example of the value of "legacy collections," he said. "Artifacts from sites excavated and curated in museums," many years ago often can yield valuable new information "due to advances in

technology and analytical techniques."

None of this information would likely have developed as it did without Al Look's passion for history and archaeology, and his eagerness to contact Wormington when he came across sites of interest.

In 1955, Wormington wrote another report that included information from the Taylor and Alva sites, as well as the Turner-Look site near Cisco, Utah, and several other archaeological locations.

She dedicated the report in part this way:

"To Al Look, With Sincere Thanks for Invaluable Assistance in Archaeological Investigations in Western Colorado and Eastern Utah."

Sources: "A Reexamination of the Uncompahgre Complex: A Reanalysis of the Taylor Site, Mesa County, Colorado," by Michael Piontkowski and Carl E. Conner; "Archaeological Investigations on the Uncompahgre Plateau in West Central Colorado," by H.M. Wormington and Robert H. Lister; "A Reappraisal of Fremont Culture," by H.M. Wormington; the Museums of Western Colorado; Zeb Miracle of Gateway Canyons Resort.

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Rain helps with wildfires in two states

DURANGO — A welcome dose of rain helped in the battle against a wildfire that has blackened more than 50 square miles and forced hundreds of evacuations in southwest Colorado.

The remnants of Hurricane Bud slowed the growth Sunday of the 416 Fire, which is 25 percent contained. Butch Knowlton, director of La Plata County Emergency Management, says the storm that tracked through the Pacific provided the perfect amount of rain in Colorado, helping firefighters increase containment without causing flooding in the burn scar.

The fire started June 1 about 10 miles north of Durango and at one point forced the evacuation of 2,200 homes, none of which has burned.

Meanwhile, rain has helped keep in check a wildfire that has burned more than 30 square miles in southern Wyoming

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We're wearing jeans for charity at The Daily Sentinel. Ask me how you can help!

we've got heart!

The employees of *The Daily Sentinel* have joined together to adopt a local non-profit organization/charity of the month. We want to help raise awareness and badly needed funds for these organizations that are dedicated to helping people in our community.

JUNE JEANS FOR CHARITY ORGANIZATION: Super Rad Art Jam

Super Rad Art Jam started with a group of local artists who saw a need in the Grand Junction community to support the art departments in area schools.

Super Rad Art Jam expanded soon after with an annual high school art exhibition at the Mesa Mall. This encourages students to create portfolio work and provides experience for gallery exhibitions. Other annual events include Mural Jam, a Senior Show and Open House and Portfolio Review, a trip to Anderson Ranch Arts Center in the fall, Art Camp in the summer, Scholarship Program for students at Anderson Ranch Arts Center for summer workshops, and monthly middle school art exhibitions in the public library.

Beyond these events, Super Rad provides materials and supplies to the art programs as requested, art based workshops, and further support as needed.

Donations to support Super Rad Art Jam can be made by contacting Naomi Barlow at: Naomi Barlow @superradart@gmail.com

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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 Wednesday, July 4 to commemorate the holiday.

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BLOTTER

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Mother accused of abuse

A Utah woman received a summons on June 10 on suspicion of accidentally leaving her infant in a car seat inside a car while shopping.

Crystal Chapman, 27, of Provo, Utah, told officers she believed she was shopping inside Dollar Tree, 2401 North Ave., No. 16, for about 10 minutes. At noon, officers responded to a report of an unattended child screaming in a vehicle in the store's parking lot. Chapman was seen shopping inside the store for 20 minutes, according to video footage during which time, the temperature was 87 to 92 degrees.

Chapman received a summons on suspicion of child abuse with criminal negligence, not causing injury.

Assault suspects sought

Crime Stoppers of Mesa County is seeking the public's help in identifying two suspects who allegedly exited a vehicle, assaulted others and drove away.

Shortly after 1:45 a.m. April 28, two Hispanic men in their 20s to 30s were driving a gold-colored sports-utility vehicle with temporary license plate tags in the area of Belford Avenue and 28 Road when they got out of the vehicle and assaulted others, ac-

ording to Crime Stoppers.

The suspects returned to the vehicle and fled the scene.

Anyone with information in the case should call Crime Stoppers at 241-7867.

According to the Mesa County Sheriff's Office:

■ Lucas Terry, 26, was arrested Thursday in the 700 block of 26 Road on suspicion of prohibited use of a weapon, reckless endangerment and possession of a weapon by a previous offender.

■ Deputies responded to a report of an unattended death in the 200 block of 30 Road on Friday.

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