

FIRST DRAFT

Early hay balers used strength of horses

It's summer. Fields throughout western Colorado have been cut, and the hay baled, using various forms of modern technology — small bales, large bales, round and square bales, stack wagons and people power.

Every year, when I'm picking up hay for my horses — or, this year, supervising as two hard-working teenaged boys put it up — I wonder about haying in the old days.

For many decades, that meant using horses to put up loose hay.



BOB SILBERNAGEL

A horse-drawn mower would cut the hay, while another team would be employed to pull a rake to turn the hay into a windrow. Later, after the hay was sufficiently dry, the horses would push a buck rake to gather the hay from the windrow and carry or push it to the stack pile.

In the lower elevations of western Colorado and eastern Utah, the stack piles were often outside. The first photo on this page shows men stacking hay at the Colorado Pear Co., or COPECO, north of Grand Junction early in the 20th century.

On farms in the east, and many in the mountains of Colorado, however, the hay was stored in a barn. A wagon carrying the loose hay was drawn up outside the barn, and a hay grapple dangling from a rope would drop to the wagon, then



SPECIAL TO THE SENTINEL/Museums of Western Colorado
Workers at the Colorado Pear Co. northwest of Grand Junction pile loose hay in large stacks early in the 20th century.

pull up the hay to a loft on the second story of the barn.

The hay grapple, like every other piece of technology, was initially operated by horses. For many centuries, horses were the most important technology in agriculture.

Later, mechanized equipment such as steam engines, tractors and trucks took over the horses' roles.

Still, putting up loose hay was the preferred technology, especially in the West, well into the 20th century.

I have friends, not much older than my 64 years, who grew up on ranches in Colorado and Nebraska, who were still putting up loose hay when they were young.

Often, I have been irked when I read something that discussed using baled hay much earlier than I believed the technology existed.

Except I was wrong.

I came across the second photo on this page while visiting the Museum of Moab earlier this year. The caption with the photo describes it as an ox team hauling a large hay wagon on Main Street in Moab, Utah, in 1881. Those are clearly bales of hay on the wagon. I started doing some research.

The first baling machines, called hay presses, were constructed in the middle of the 19th century, according to a website called Farm Collector, at farmcollector.com.

"Most of the earliest hay presses were stationary units built into a barn and extending two to three stories into the hayloft," the site said. "Generally, a team of horses was used to raise a press weight, which was then dropped to compress the hay."

Often, these bales weighed as



SPECIAL TO THE SENTINEL/Museum of Moab
Oxen pull a wagon filled with hay bales in Moab, Utah, circa 1881.

much as 300 pounds, and were tied with up to five strands of wire.

Later in the 19th century, more portable hay presses were developed. They weren't like modern balers that travel through a field and bale hay as they go.

Instead, they were hauled to a field by teams of horses. Then the loose hay was brought to the hay press, then pressed and tied into bales.

Along with my wife, Judy, and some friends, I had the opportunity to see a late-19th century hay press at the Wyman Living History Museum outside Craig.

Owner Lou Wyman showed us how the press would have operated. A horse walking in a circle drove the pressing rod — an iron bar about a dozen feet long — which compressed the

hay into a bundle about the size of today's small hay bales.

In addition to the horse, it required two people, one on each side of the press to tie the wires on the bale once it was compressed. The horse had to step over the pressing rod — about 18 inches off the ground — with each circle the animal made.

I've seen photos of other early hay presses in which a horse walked on a treadmill to power the machine.

All this seems like an awful lot of horse and manpower, compared to just putting up loose hay.

Why bother with the additional effort of pressing and tying bales?

Several people who grew up ranching in the first half of the last century answered that question. The loose stacks were fine for feeding critters on the

farm or ranch. But loose hay was hard to transport any distance — either to feed animals that had been moved, or to sell. So it was baled for transportation.

By early in the 20th century, steam-powered balers were available, and many were hauled from farm to farm by custom operators.

But these machines still required that the loose hay be picked up and brought to the balers, and bales still had to be tied by hand.

It wasn't until the late 1930s that a couple of men in Iowa and Pennsylvania, working independently of each other, began constructing devices that could automatically tie the bales and could pick up the hay in the field.

The New Holland Machine Co. purchased the rights to one of those devices and began manufacturing the first modern balers in 1940.

Today, hay can be mowed, raked, baled, picked up and stored in a barn or haystack all by machines. But, if one doesn't have the latest equipment, it's good to have access to some strong teenagers who are willing workers.

Information for this column came from Farm Collector; bit.ly/hayhistory; from Lou Wyman and the Wyman Living History Museum in Craig; and from the Museum of Moab and the Museums of Western Colorado.

Bob Silbernagel's email is bobsilbernagel@gmail.com.



GRETEL DAUGHERTY/The Daily Sentinel

BURNING GARBAGE

Grand Junction Fire Department crews extinguished a half-acre fire burning on the surface of the Mesa County Landfill on Sunday afternoon. Smoke from the blaze that started shortly after 12:30 p.m. could be seen around the Grand Valley. Heavy equipment operators at the landfill moved debris to allow firefighters to battle the blaze, Fire Department officials said.

Utah to reduce treatment wait time for mentally ill inmates

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
SALT LAKE CITY — Mentally ill Utah inmates may see a reduction in their wait time for

treatment necessary for their cases to proceed.

The state would reduce wait times for forensic treatment for

people found incompetent to 60 days within six months of court approval. After a year, the required wait time would go down

to 30 days and after 18 months, it would go down to 14 days.

The settlement awaits federal court approval.

BLOTTER COMPILED BY SENTINEL STAFF

Assault suspect sought

Crime Stoppers of Mesa County is seeking the public's help to identify and locate a suspect involved in an assault at Bailey's Lounge on March 3. The incident occurred between 11:30 p.m. and midnight in the lounge of the Grand Vista Hotel, 2790 Crossroads Boulevard.

The suspect is a white male, with red or auburn hair, between the age of 23 to 27. The man is 5 feet 8 inches tall and weighs about 140 pounds. The man was wearing a red polo shirt with cargo shorts and tennis shoes. The suspect was seen leaving as

a passenger in a small, early 1990s model, gold-colored car.

A surveillance photo of the suspect and the vehicle can be viewed at www.241STOP.com.

Anyone with information about the incident is asked to call Crime Stoppers at 241-7867.

According to the Mesa County Sheriff's Office:

■ Darrell Dwane Baker, 59, was arrested Saturday on suspicion of second-degree arson, second-degree criminal trespassing, obstruction of a telephone, domestic violence and criminal mischief of \$750 or

more.

■ Deputies responded to the 2800 block of Orchard Avenue on a report of a verbal disturbance on Friday.

■ Richard Ogelsby, 48, was arrested Friday on suspicion of two outstanding warrants, third-degree assault and domestic violence.

According to the Grand Junction Police Department:

■ Adam Ward Pinales, 34, of Mapleton, Utah, was arrested Saturday on suspicion of harassment, domestic violence, menacing and child abuse not causing injury or death.

Training given on reports about campaign finances

By CHARLES ASHBY
Charles.Ashby@gsentinel.com

Anyone who plans to run for office, or work as a treasurer for such candidates or issue committees, should consider heading over to the Mesa County Central Services Building later this month.

There, employees for Colorado Secretary of State Wayne Williams will help instruct participants on the intricacies of dealing with campaign finance reports.

Those reports, which are filed with the Secretary of State or a city clerk depending on the race, can be hard to figure out.

Candidates who do them wrong, or make even simple mistakes, can face hundreds, or even thousands, of dollars in fines.

One error can amount to as much as \$50 a day for as many days as it hasn't been corrected.

The classes will cover every kind of candidate or issue committee, including small donor committees and 527 political or-

ganizations.

Mesa County Clerk Shiela Reiner said the time is now to learn about it.

"I'm looking forward to hosting another Finance Campaign Class here in Mesa County," Reiner said. "I benefit by brushing up on the laws and rules myself. Campaigning has already started for the 2018 election cycle."

Workers in Williams' office are planning a slew of such training sessions over the next three months. While most are at its offices in Denver, several are on location around the state.

The Mesa County event will be at 10 a.m. June 27 at the Central Services Building, 200 S. Spruce St., Room 40A.

To reserve space at the free classes or to learn more about them, go to the Secretary of State's website at sos.state.co.us/pubs/elections/CampaignFinance/CPFTtraining.html.

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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:

The House

At any given time, nearly 160 teenagers are homeless in Mesa County. They sleep in cars, tents and are at serious risk for many forms of abuse. Karis, Inc., with the support of the Western Slope community, operates **The House**. The only licensed shelter for homeless youth on the western slope, **The House** provides teens with warm meals, safe shelter, medical and mental health support, education, and a host of other services, supplied by caring adults. Please join with us and send your tax deductible contribution to **The House**, P.O. Box 2837, Grand Junction, CO 81502.

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