

SMASH: Thieves usually steal wallets, phones, keys left in plain sight

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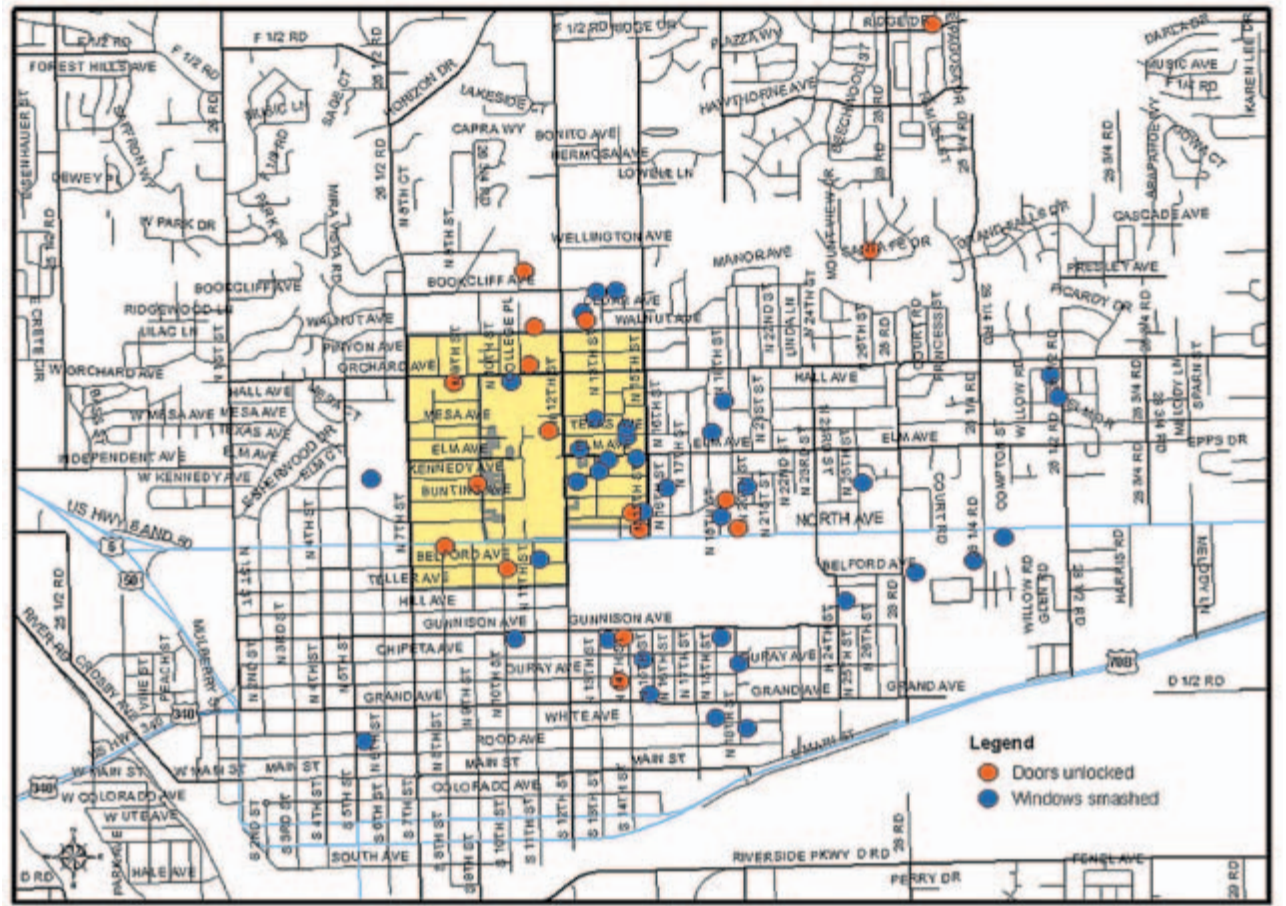
or thieves stole something that was left in plain view in a vehicle, including cash, purses, wallets, backpacks, phones, tools, laptop computers, house keys and golf clubs. The incidents tend to happen overnight and no particular type of vehicle has been targeted.

Half of the victims identified so far are Colorado Mesa University students. Most of the incidents happened within two miles of the university campus.

Police believe there may be more victims who have not contacted the Police Department because they either have not yet noticed items are missing from their vehicles or because they didn't want to make a report.

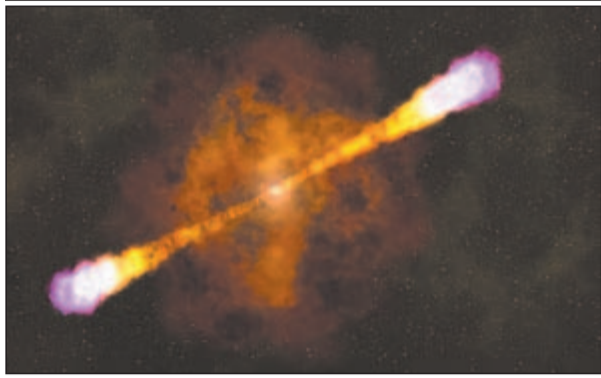
Additional reports can help in the investigation, according to the Police Department. Reports can be made by calling non-emergency police dispatch at 242-6707.

Anyone with information about a person or people involved in the break-ins can contact Crime Stoppers anonymously at 241-7867 or call non-emergency dispatch at 242-6707.



SPECIAL TO THE SENTINEL

Blue dots show vehicle break-ins during which car windows were smashed to gain entry. Red dots designate thefts from unlocked vehicles. Most of the burglaries happened overnight within two miles of Colorado Mesa University.



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

An artist's rendering shows how a gamma ray burst occurs with a massive star collapsing and creating a black hole and beaming out focused and deadly light and radiation bursts.

BLAST: It set records

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NASA telescopes in orbit have been seeing bursts for more than two decades, spotting one every couple of days. But this one, witnessed on April 27, set records, according to four studies published Thursday in the journal Science.

It flooded NASA instruments with five times the energy of its nearest competitor, a 1999 blast, said University of Alabama at Huntsville astrophysicist Rob Preece, author of one of the studies.

It started with a star that had 20 to 30 times the mass of our sun but was only a couple of times wider, so it was incredibly dense. It exploded in a certain violent way.

In general, gamma ray bursts are "the most titanic explosions in the universe," and this one was so big that some of the telescope instruments hit their peak, Preece said. It was far stronger and lasted longer than previous ones.

"I call it the monster," Preece said. In fact, one of the other studies, not written by Preece, used the word "monster" in its title, unusual language for a scientific report.

One of the main reasons this was so bright was that relative to the thousands of other gamma ray bursts astronomers have seen, the monster was pretty close by cosmic standards. A light-year is almost 6 trillion miles.

Most of the bursts NASA telescopes have seen have been twice as distant as this one. Other explosions could be this big, but they are so much farther away, they don't seem so bright when they reach Earth, the studies' authors say.

Astronomers say it is incredibly unlikely that a gamma ray burst — especially a big one like this — could go off in our galaxy, near us. Harvard's Avi Loeb, who wasn't part of the studies, put the chances at less than 1 in 10 million.

Our galaxy doesn't have many of the type of star that lends itself to gamma ray bursts, said Charles Dermer, a co-author of the studies.

RAID: Plants from several warehouses were hauled away in trucks

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The Justice Department said in August that it wouldn't stand in the way of votes in Colorado and Washington to legalize recreational pot but warned there needed to be effective controls to keep marijuana away from children, the black market and federal property.

At one of the raided dispensaries, VIP Cannabis, agents took boxes out of the business and loaded them into a U-Haul truck.

One officer wore a surgical mask.

In Boulder, agents raided a number of marijuana-growing warehouses, leaving a chest-high pile of marijuana plants on the side of a road before loading them into

"While everyone involved in these raids should be considered innocent until proven guilty, enforcement is a sign that this program is working and maturing."

MIKE ELLIOTT

Spokesman for the Medical Marijuana Industry Group

trucks, The Daily Camera reported.

Colorado's marijuana industry was quick to point out that the raids did not necessarily mean that the federal government was going back on its word or planning to interfere with Colorado's plans to a recreational market.

Mike Elliott, a spokesman for

the Medical Marijuana Industry Group, said the industry itself has pushed for "robust" regulations and expects industry compliance with lengthy state regulations on how the drug is grown and sold.

"While everyone involved in these raids should be considered innocent until proven guilty, en-

forcement is a sign that this program is working and maturing," he said in a statement.

Mason Tvert of the Marijuana Policy Project said it wasn't clear how many businesses were targeted in the raid.

Many dispensaries and growing warehouses were operating as usual Thursday.

"The Justice Department said it would respect states' rights to regulate marijuana, and that it would not go after businesses as long as they are complying with state laws," he said in a statement.

"We hope they are sticking to their word and not interfering with any state-regulated, law-abiding businesses."

JFK: Blaine hopes book becomes part of history

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Early that morning, Blaine and another agent had flown to Austin, Texas, to prepare for what was to be the next stop on the presidential swing through Texas.

For more than 40 years, Blaine and his colleagues who were members of the Kennedy detail didn't discuss what occurred in Dallas that day. It was just too painful.

But, after Blaine retired from security work for large corporations and moved to Grand Junction, and as conspiracy theories about the Kennedy assassination continued to pile up — in books, films and on the Internet — he decided he needed to get the agents' story out.

"The reason we wrote the book is that we didn't want to see history kidnapped by a bunch of theories that ignore the facts," he said.

Blaine is not alone in standing up for the single-gunner theory. Many others have also done so, including public figures and private observers.

Just this month, Fred Kaplan, an author and foreign policy expert, wrote an article for the online magazine Slate, explaining why he switched from an early believer in some sort of conspiracy to an "Oswald acted alone" guy.

Kaplan talked of reading a number of different books "that argued the case for a dark plot."

"Then one day, I looked up the footnotes in those books, most of them leading me to the multidocument hearings of the Warren Commission," Kaplan wrote. "I was shocked. The authors had taken witnesses' statements out of context, distorted them beyond recognition, and in some cases cherry-picked passages that seemed to back their theories while ignoring testimony that didn't. It was my first brush with intellectual dishonesty."

Additionally, Blaine noted, "Not one White House representative ever mentioned any conspiracy."

Eager to tell the story from the Secret Service perspective, Blaine began to contact other surviving members of the Kennedy detail. All but one of them agreed to speak with him. And he began working with a family friend, newswoman and author named Lisa McKubben to put all the information in book form.

"The Kennedy Detail" was



CHRISTOPHER TOMLINSON/The Daily Sentinel

John F. Kennedy's grave site at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia.

released in 2010 by Simon and Schuster, and has since sold more than 100,000 copies, according to Blaine's wife, Joyce.

"We have had so much interest from people all over the world," she said. Some of the most interesting trips they have taken to discuss the book have been at the invitation of high school teachers and college professors who want their students to understand what occurred 50 years ago, long before most of them were born.

"I hope this book will become part of our history," Blaine said.

The same with another book, released this week and written by McKubben and fellow Secret Service Special Agent Clint Hill, who was also part of the Kennedy detail. Hill was assigned to protect Jackie Kennedy and was walking next to the presidential limousine when the assassination occurred. He jumped onto the car and protected Mrs. Kennedy after the shots were fired that killed her husband.

Blaine said the Hill-McKubben book, "Five Days in November," will feature more photos and provide more information to debunk some specific conspiracy theories.

In a world of so many theories about what really happened, it's not surprising that some proponents of conspiracy theories are not fans of Blaine and his book. One author wrote a book claiming some members

of the Kennedy detail were complicit in a CIA-led plot to kill Kennedy, or in the cover-up. He didn't include Blaine or Hill among those he accused, but he referred to Blaine as the author of "a blame-the-victim" book because Blaine reported Kennedy didn't want Secret Service agents riding on the presidential limousine in Dallas or other locations.

Other conspiracy proponents have posted pictures on the Internet of Adolf Hitler, surrounded by smaller photos of Jerry Blaine.

Blaine shrugged it off. "I made an enemy," he said.

His greater concern is not for the personal attacks on him, but for damage he believes the conspiracy theorists have done to our political discourse and trust in government.

"In the long run, I think the conspiracies have increased the divide in our country," he said.

They also made it easier for later conspiracy buffs to claim intentional government involvement in events such as the destruction of the Twin Towers on 9/11.

Blaine hopes his book and Hill's will help people understand the truth of what occurred 50 years ago today. But he is under no illusion the conspiracy theories will simply disappear.

"There's still new theories all the time about the Lincoln assassination," he said.

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