

FIRST DRAFT

History of Glade Park 'cave woman' a complicated tale

When Twila Crist's mother was pregnant with Twila in 1936, her parents went to visit her mother's twin sister on Glade Park. Twila's mother went into labor, and rather than make the treacherous drive back down to Grand Junction, her sister contacted the local midwife, who lived in a cave.

Laura Hazel, then 71 years old, handled the delivery without major problems, and presumably returned to her home constructed under a rock overhang west of the Glade Park Store.

Untangling the mystery of Laura Hazel is no easy task. In fact, her story becomes more complicated the deeper one digs.

In 1948, when The Denver Post published a photo spread on her titled "Modern Cliff Dweller," Laura Hazel told of having had two husbands, both of whom had died in wrecks.

But when she died in 1962, at the age of 95, The Daily Sentinel obituary listed four husbands. The obituary described her as "married and widowed four times." However, other information suggests at least two of her husbands lived long after their marriages to Laura ended.

Laura Hazel was born Laura Alice Lare in Boone County, Iowa, in 1866. She is believed to have arrived in Mesa County some time around 1908, with either her third or fourth husband.

Crist, whose maiden name was Jones, grew up primarily in Grand Junction, and knows little about the woman who presided at her birth.

Crist's cousin, Hazel Buffington, spent part of her childhood on Glade Park. Like Crist, her family was part of the large group of relatives named Miracle who moved to the area from Kentucky early in the 1920s.

"I remember she had goats

and lots and lots of chickens," Buffington said. These were housed under a separate rock overhang, right next to the one under which the woman lived.

The last time Buffington visited the site, Mrs. Hazel had moved out. All of her personal belongings were gone, but she had left behind stacks of magazines. "I remember my parents allowed me to take several of

them, including a Cosmopolitan," Buffington recalled. Hazel was known to walk the three miles or more to the Glade Park Store well into her 80s. She reportedly sold eggs

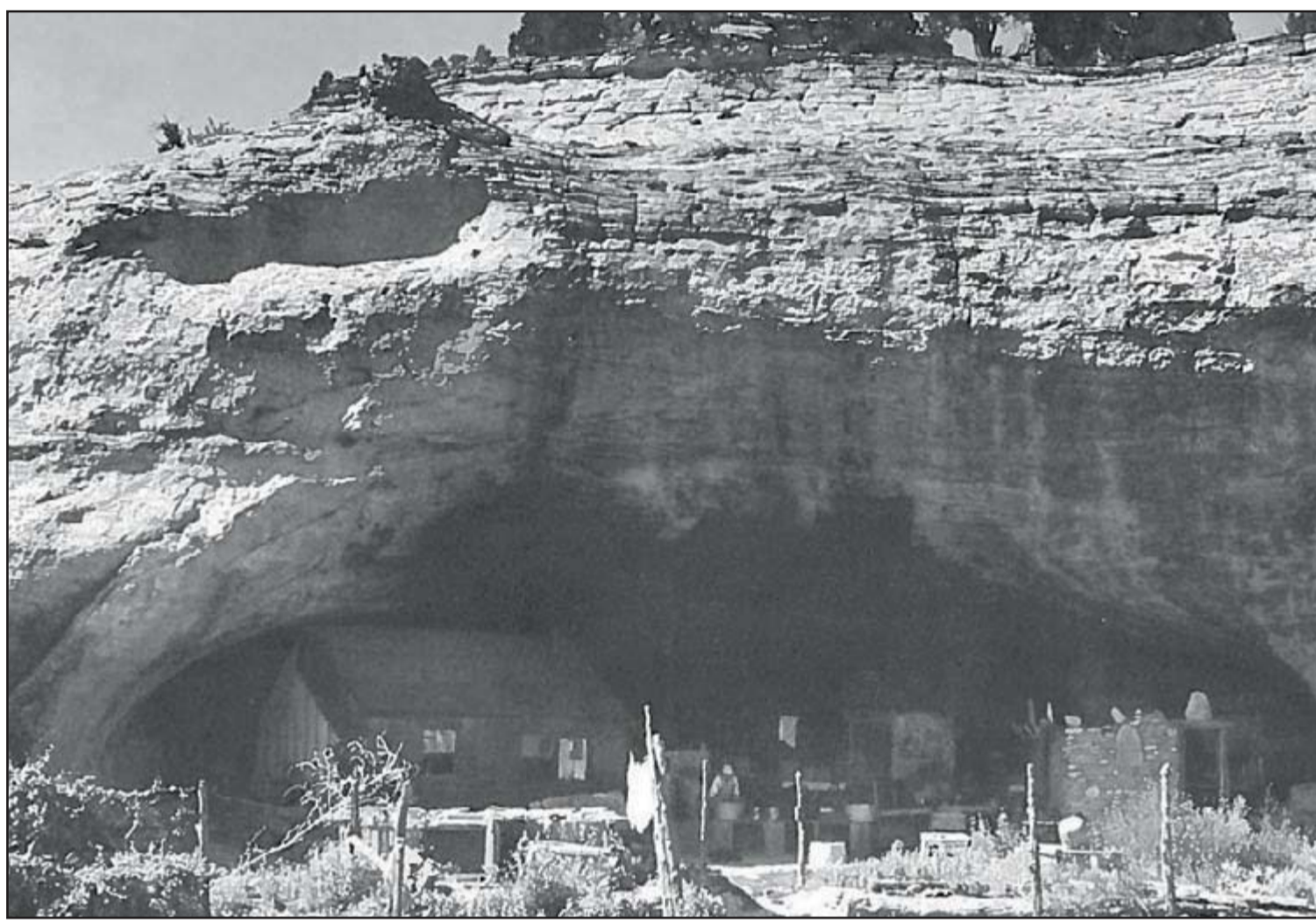
and vegetables there. Theresa Janssen, who has owned the Glade Park Store since the 1990s, said people come into the store every few years and ask about the woman who lived in a cave.

When she died, Laura Hazel had four surviving children, including a daughter named Lenore or Lenora Flucken of Grand Junction, with whom Mrs. Hazel then lived. According to the Jan. 26, 1962, obituary in the Sentinel, Mrs. Hazel also had five grandchildren, 16 great-grandchildren and 16 great-great-grandchildren.

There is no mention in her obituary of her former rock home on Glade Park, and it's not clear when she moved off the mountain to join her daughter at 137 West Ave. in Grand Junction.

The 1957 Grand Junction City Directory listed her as living at the West Avenue address in Grand Junction that year. However, the city directories for 1949 and 1951 both list her residence as Glade Park. There is no mention of her in the city directories for 1953, 1955 or 1956.

The 1948 Denver Post article said Mrs. Hazel moved to Mesa County in 1908 after her first husband was killed in a train wreck. But according to the Sentinel and ancestry.com, her



MUSEUM OF WESTERN COLORADO/Special to the Sentinel

Glade Park cave with the woman presumed to be Laura Hazel in the background. While a number of locals are familiar with Hazel and can recount memories of her, much of her background remains a mystery due to conflicting details — some by her own account.

first husband was William A. Hawks, and ancestry.com said he died in Kansas in 1938. He had at least two children by Laura Lare, one born in 1880 and another in 1883. He reportedly remarried in 1889.

Laura's second husband, George T. Slusser, also lived a long life. He reportedly died in Oklahoma in 1945, at the age of 83. He married Laura Alice Lare in Kirwin, Kansas, in 1888, and in the 1900 U.S. Census he was listed as married, the head of his household in Kirwin. By 1910, however, census records show him as a single head of a

household in the same town.

Laura's third husband, John Miller, who apparently lived in Oklahoma, had such a common name that I found scores of records, but none that tied them to Laura Lare or any of her other married names.

As for Pete Hazel — Laura's fourth and last husband — there is more confusing information. Peter Gilbert Hazel of Glade Park registered for the draft on Sept. 12, 1918, when he was 43. But his nearest relative was listed as his mother, then living in Iowa.

The 1922 City Directory listed

a P.G. Hazel as a farmer and landowner on Glade Park, with no mention of Laura. But the 1924 City Directory listed only Laura A. Hazel as a farmer on Glade Park, with the same estimated value of the property as for P.G. Hazel in 1922. There's no mention of Peter or P.G. Hazel.

The 1920 census listed Laura A. Hazel living on Glade Park, with two sons with the last name of Hazel. She was listed as a widow. There is no mention of a Pete, Peter or P.G. Hazel.

According to The Denver Post

article, Laura originally homesteaded on Glade Park following the death of her first husband. "When a flood washed away the original log cabin ranch house several years ago," the reporter wrote, "Mrs. Hazel chose the homesite under the cliff."

Information and assistance for this article came from Twila Crist, Hazel Buffington, the Museum of Western Colorado, The Daily Sentinel archives and ancestry.com.

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Rifle to use fishing grant to improve boat ramp

Repeat-offender bear hunted

By GREG RULAND
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A \$30,000 grant recently awarded to the city of Rifle by Colorado's Fishing is Fun program goes into a bucket of money city and county officials have cobbled together to build a bigger, better boat ramp.

For two decades, anglers gained access to the Colorado River near Rifle by putting in at the boat ramp at the Colorado Highway 13 bridge, city officials said last week.

When the Colorado River flooded there about four years ago, however, the river channel shifted, said Kimberly Bullen, assistant city manager.

The shift caused problems for boaters and anglers, who now have trouble with wakes of water that bridge pylons started throwing up.

"The current boat ramp is not in good shape and poses a significant safety risk to access."

LEVI ATWATER

District wildlife manager, Rifle

"There (were) several accidents in recent years that ... resulted in loss of life," she said.

The danger prompted city leaders to start planning the construction of a new boat ramp in an area west of the bridge.

"This project has been in the works for several years in order to complete the necessary studies," Bullen said.

These included the federal Threatened & Endangered Species Study and Class III Cultural Resource Inventory, among others, she said.

The total estimated cost of the project is \$227,000.

The city of Rifle requested \$160,077 from Garfield County's Conservation Trust Fund, which the Garfield County Board of County Commissioners has already approved.

"Commissioners agreed to include the project in their 2016 budget ... and asked that we provide them with some financial numbers to construct a soft surface trail with this project," Bullen said.

The city of Rifle has also been awarded \$30,000 from the

Fishing is Fun grant and has approximately \$37,000 in donations from a variety of sources.

"This is a great project that addresses a number of issues including safety, transportation, and recreation," Bullen said. "We really appreciate the county's generous support."

"The current boat ramp is not in good shape and poses a significant safety risk to access," said Levi Atwater, district wildlife manager for the Rifle area, in a news release. "The new boat ramp will ... make it easier for anglers to fish a significantly underused stretch of river."

"Despite financial challenges, the City of Rifle worked very hard to pull all the pieces together to make this new ramp possible," Atwater said.

Construction is expected to begin in September 2016.

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BOULDER — Colorado wildlife officers are on the hunt for a black bear that is out of strikes in the Boulder area and when they find her, they will kill her.

The bear, tagged No. 317, has had contact with humans too many times, and wildlife officials expect her to come back.

Wildlife officials say if they find her two offspring, they will

take them to a rehabilitation facility and release them miles into the mountains.

The Boulder Daily Camera reports there are about 250 adult black bears within a 40-mile radius of Boulder, and all of them need to eat about 20,000 calories a day in order to reach the amount needed for hibernation.

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BLOTTER COMPILED BY SENTINEL STAFF



Hit-and-run suspect sought

Witnesses to a hit-and-run accident Aug. 2 in the Walmart parking lot, 2545 Rimrock Ave., could earn a reward worth up to \$1,000 for information leading to the arrest of the male suspect, the Grand Junction Police

Department said.

The image of the man suspected of the crime was caught by a surveillance camera. He is described as being in his 20s or early 30s, 6-foot tall, medium build, with brown hair and a full beard, police reported.

He was last seen wearing a black T-shirt with blue jeans and a white baseball cap that was turned backwards. His vehicle was a white crew cab truck with black trim, according to police.

The photo of the suspect and a female he was traveling with can be viewed at www.241STOP.com.

Information about the identity or whereabouts of this man could earn a cash reward worth up to \$1,000. The identity of those who provide information will remain completely anonymous.

Call Crime Stoppers at 241-7867 or go to 241stop.com

According to Grand Junction Police Department:

■ Brett Tahquechi, 33, was arrested Thursday in the 1600 block of North Avenue on suspicion of possession of narcotics and

drug paraphernalia.

■ Someone took more than \$2,000 in cash Thursday from a 70-year-old man in the 2700 block of Arcin Avenue.

■ Ashleigh Allen, 28, was arrested Thursday on suspicion of shoplifting items valued at less than \$750 from a store in the 2800 block of North Avenue. Allen was booked into Mesa County Jail after further investigation resulted in her arrest on suspicion of controlled substances and drug paraphernalia.

■ Tessie Pope, 34, was arrested and released on a summons Thursday on suspicion of DUI and reckless driving.

■ Denise Perez, 22, was arrested and released on a summons Thursday for shoplifting items valued at less than \$200 from a store in the 600 block of Market Street.

■ Mandie Stratton, 30, was arrested and released on a summons Thursday on suspicion of shoplifting items valued at less than \$50 from a store in the 2800 block of North Avenue.

■ A burglar stole items of value from a house at 856 Colorado Ave. sometime Wednesday.

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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.
SEPTEMBER JEANS FOR CHARITY ORGANIZATION:
Wreaths Across America
Wreath Across America is a non-profit organization founded to provide Christmas wreaths for veterans' gravesites at Arlington National Cemetery. This 15-year observance has now spread across the country to include local veteran cemeteries. The Patriot Guard Riders of the Western Slope, in conjunction with Wreaths Across America are starting their fourth annual Christmas wreath drive for the gravesites at Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado. Last year a wreath cost \$15.00. More than 1,100 wreaths will be needed this year.
We invite you to join us by sending your tax-deductible check made out to:
Patriot Guard Riders of the Western Slope
c/o R. Edwards, 616 Lodgepole St., Grand Junction, CO 81504.