

## FIRST DRAFT

# Adventure down the Green and Colorado takes turns for the worse for Powell, crew

*Editor's note: This is the second of three columns about Jack Sumner, who accompanied John Wesley Powell on one of his famous trips down the Colorado River.*

Catapulting through rapids in wooden boats was an adventure for the men on John Wesley Powell's first expedition down the Green and Colorado rivers, at least at the start of that 1869 trip.

"When we have to run rapids, nothing is more exhilarating (sic) ... and as a breaker dashes over us, as we shoot out from one side or the other, after having run the fall, one feels like hurrahing," wrote O.G. Howland in a letter to The Rocky Mountain News dated June 19, 1869 (sent



BOB SILBERNAGEL

from the Uintah Indian Reservation in Utah, the last chance to send mail).

By the end of August, however, the situation would be much different. Howland, his brother and one other man would be gone. The remaining crew would be struggling with meager rations, fearing starvation as well as rapids. And John "Jack" Sumner would write about the canyons: "I never want to see it again, anywhere."

When the 10 men who started the journey signed on, they knew there were serious risks. Indians and white settlers had told them the river canyons were impassable.

Even so, they were eager to go. The small group that pushed off from Green River, Wyoming, in four boats on May 24, 1869, included Powell, his brother, Walter, Sumner, Howland and his brother, Seneca, George Bradley, William Dunn, Frank Goodman, William Hawkins and Andrew Hall. Goodman would abandon the group and walk to the Uintah Indian Agency following the first major mishap, in Lodore Canyon.

That occurred June 8 when the No Name, carrying the Howland brothers and Goodman, failed to make it to shore ahead of what the group named "Disaster Falls."

Powell, watching from the shore, said he saw the boat "strike a rock and, rebounding from the shock, careen and fill its open compartment with water. Two of the men lose their oars; she swings around and is carried down at a rapid rate, broadside on, for a few yards, when, striking amidships on another rock with great force, she is broken quite in two and the men are thrown into the river."

The Howland brothers both made it safely to an island, while Goodman was left clinging to a large boulder.



Figure 28.—Running a rapid

SPECIAL TO THE SENTINEL

This engraving made by artist R.A. Muller circa 1873 illustrates part of John Wesley Powell's second expedition through the Grand Canyon. In June of 1869, the men on Powell's first expedition saw catapulting through rapids in wooden boats as an adventure, but after some serious setbacks, they grew to fear them.

Sumner jumped in another boat and raced to their rescue. "Right skillfully he plies the oars," Powell wrote, "and a few strokes set him on the island at the proper point." The men scrambled into the boat and arrived on shore, bruised and scraped, but not seriously injured.

Far worse was the loss of supplies, some 2,000 pounds of food, plus clothing and equipment, according to O.G. Howland. Some of the lost food would be replaced when Powell went with Goodman to the Uintah Agency and hired Indians to bring food to the crew camped where the Uintah River enters the Green. But the expedition would have much shorter rations the remainder of the trip, and would nearly run out of food before reaching the Virgin River.

This was hardly the only mishap. Winds on June 16 whipped up sparks from a campfire that became a roaring blaze among the willows, and the men lost more supplies as they scrambled to their boats and to the safety of the river.

Powell, climbing rocks to take scientific readings, got caught on a ledge where having only one arm made it impossible for him to move. Bradley rescued him, using his drawers

as a rope.

Most of the men became violently ill when they ate unripe potatoes and beets taken from a garden near the Uintah River. "We all learned one lesson — never to rob gardens," Sumner wrote in his journal for July 6.

There would be rain, excessive heat and swarms of mosquitoes. They would see miles and miles of spectacular canyon country and ride through hundreds

of rapids, sometimes barely making it through, but never losing another boat.

By far the worst event occurred Aug. 28, when the Howland brothers and Dunn decided the remaining rapids were too dangerous to make it through, and opted to try to walk out to Mormon settlements at the Virgin River. They were never seen again alive, although bodies believed to be theirs were found within a month, where they apparently had been killed by a Shivwit band of Paiute Indians.

If they had stayed with the boats, they would likely have made it to the Virgin River two days later, as the rest of the group did.

There, Powell and his brother left the group and headed for Salt Lake City. Sumner and the others, with fresh provisions, continued on to Yuma, Arizona.

They had conquered previously untraveled portions of two great rivers. Some called it the last great exploration of the continental United States. But it had come at great cost and would leave bitter feelings simmering for decades.

■ *Most information in this article comes from Utah Historical Quarterly, Volume XV, 1947, which published documents from the 1869 expedition. It's available online at <http://heritage.utah.gov/history/quarterly>. Other information is from "The Exploration of the Colorado River and its Canyons," by J.W. Powell.*

■ *Next: Sumner becomes a critic.*

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SPECIAL TO THE SENTINEL/Utah State Historical Society

John C. "Jack" Sumner with his wife, Alcinda Jane Norris, at their wedding on June 30, 1873, in Muscatine, Iowa. Sumner wrote that he "never (wanted) to see" the canyons again.

## Club 20, Action 22 implore feds to expand broadband

By GARY HARMON  
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It looks on some maps as though much of the Western Slope has access to broadband, but appearances are deceiving, says Club 20.

The Western Slope advocacy organization is asking the Federal Communications Commission to do more with programs aimed at providing telecommunications in rural areas.

Club 20 and a similar organization, Action 22, which represents southern Colorado counties, are asking the FCC to use money from its Connect America Fund to pay for what could be expensive projects, such as running expensive fiberoptic cable instead of providing less-expensive wireless coverage, Club 20 said.

"It is imperative that rural Colorado communities have access to robust broadband service and that all of those living and doing business in that community have access to that service," Club 20 Executive Director Bonnie Petersen said in a letter to the FCC. "This technology has become a significant component in the areas of health, education, safety and welfare."

Given the difficulties presented by western Colorado's landscape and other issues, the organizations said a 10-year time frame is a reasonable period in which to build out the broadband framework.

Maps showing the presence of broadband overstate its availability in western Colorado by wireless Internet service providers, Petersen said.

"Given the varied geography of the Western Slope, an area can be identified as served by a (wireless Internet service provider) yet customers that live below a mountain ridge, in a canyon or a heavily forested area will not be able to access that wireless broadband service," Petersen wrote to the FCC. "In many cases, this wireless service in the mountains is subject to extreme weather, morning and afternoon shadows, and high winds, along with other conditions that can diminish service."

Simply put, the new rules need to take into account the needs of rural, remote customers, many of whom have been mistakenly identified as having broadband coverage, Petersen said.

Residents in Delta County and others around Nuclea, Naturita and Norwood in Montrose County need broadband coverage, Petersen said.

The FCC is now considering comments on its rules governing the use of the Connect America Fund, which is intended to provide broadband service to as many as 18 million Americans without robust broadband service.

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**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:  
**WESTERN COLORADO Suicide Prevention Foundation**

**Western Colorado Suicide Prevention Foundation (WCSPF)** was founded to help reduce suicides in one county, but has expanded to twenty-one counties. **WCSPF** attempts to reduce suicide, stress, depression, anxiety, suicidal ideation, suicidal behaviors, alcohol use, and many other issues in our communities by sharing key knowledge with individuals, workplaces, and in community settings. The need is dramatic. The local suicide rate has remained nearly twice that of the United States rate since 2000. If you would like to join with us and help this committed organization, please send your donation to:  
**Western Colorado Suicide Prevention Foundation,**  
P.O. Box 4329, Grand Junction, CO 81502-4329

## BLOTTER

COMPILED BY SENTINEL STAFF

### Two suspected of possession

Sheriff's deputies arrested two men Thursday on suspicion of possessing illegal drugs, including methamphetamine and psilocybin mushrooms, the Mesa County Sheriff's Office reported.

In the first case, deputies responded to a report of domestic violence in the 3000 block of Hill Court. After arresting the suspect, Gary Labor, 29, of Grand Junction, deputies located suspected psilocybin mushrooms and a glass pipe with methamphetamine residue, according to the Sheriff's Office.

Labor was booked into Mesa County Jail on suspicion of domestic violence, resisting arrest, possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of methamphetamine and possession of psilocybin mushrooms, the Sheriff's Office said.

Deputies also arrested Dustin Scott, 34, of Clifton, on an outstanding warrant and for possession of suspected methamphetamine, his seventh booking at Mesa county Jail since 2013, the Sheriff's Office reported.

**According to Grand Junction Police Department:**

- Three known juvenile males, ages 17,

16 and 14, were arrested and released on a summons Tuesday on suspicion of smoking tobacco while under 18 years of age in the 1400 block of North Fifth Street.

■ John Ross, 35, was arrested Wednesday on suspicion of possession of a stolen bicycle and methamphetamine.

■ Kevin Amy, 29, was arrested and released on a summons on suspicion of theft after being contacted in the 2900 block of North Avenue in possession of an alleged stolen bicycle.

■ Someone stole items valued at more than \$300 from a vehicle located near the 600 block of Ouray Avenue.

■ Someone issued several bad checks to a business out of state June 20, causing a loss of less than \$5,000. An investigation is ongoing.

■ Zackery Couron, 20, was arrested and released on a summons Thursday on suspicion of shoplifting items valued at less than \$100 from a business at 2881 North Ave.

■ Someone unlawfully entered a residence in the 500 block of Heidel Street and removed items valued at less than \$2,000.

**According to Garfield County Sheriff's Office:**

- Animal control received a report Thurs-

day of a dog bite in the 500 block of Bald Eagle Way that occurred in May. The parties involved will be contacted.

■ Deputies responded to a found dog, a black and silver colored border collie mix puppy, in the Silt area. The dog was transported to a local animal shelter for impound.

■ Deputies responded to a cold burglary call in the New Castle area. At this time, the case is inactive and closed pending further leads.

■ Deputies were dispatched to a sexual assault incident in the Parachute area. This case is open and under investigation.

■ Deputies were dispatched to a theft that had taken place in the New Castle area. At this time the case is inactive/closed at the victim's request.

■ Shaun Vanderpool, 35, of Glenwood Springs was issued a summons Thursday on suspicion of harassment.

■ Michael Wadyko, 65, was issued a summons Thursday on suspicion of harassment.

■ Alfredo Castillo, 40, of Glenwood Springs, was arrested on suspicion of violating a restraining order, obstructing a peace officer and criminal mischief.

**Cash 5 Sunday: 5-18-20-26-29**

**Pick 3 Sunday: 8-9-0**

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