

FIRST DRAFT

Utes visited valley into early 1950s

Jim Tomlinson remembers playing with young Ute Indians on a knoll above the railroad stockyards in Mack in the late 1940s.

Some of the Ute youngsters had never seen a train, he said, so when the locomotive pulled in and blew its whistle, “they would whoop and holler, they were so excited.”

Many current residents of the Grand Valley know that some Ute Indians who were forced out of Colorado in 1881



BOB SILBERNAGEL

regularly returned to visit in the late 19th and early 20th century.

The Daily Sentinel frequently reported on the visits of these Utes, as when it told of Chipeta’s final visit to Colorado in September 1923.

Chipeta, the wife of the late Ute leader Ouray, was the most famous of the Utah Utes who regularly visited Colorado. She died in 1924 at her home at Bitter Creek on the Uintah-Ouray reservation in Utah.

But other Utes continued to come to the Grand Valley on a regular basis, particularly those from the Bitter Creek area. They arrived every fall with several hundred head of cattle to ship to Denver from the railroad center at Mack, Tomlinson said.

A look at a map of the Bitter Creek part of the reservation shows why. Located just north and east of Green River and north of the Bookcliffs, from Bitter Creek it was easier for the Indians to trail their cattle over the Bookcliffs and down into Mack than to take them north to Vernal for shipping. Wagons carrying women, children and supplies traveled over Baxter Pass.

“Those Bitter Creek Indians were a good bunch,” Tomlinson said.

Now 76, Tomlinson was a young boy when the Utes regularly visited his father’s ranch — where Tomlinson still lives — on 8 Road.

The Utes, along with Jim’s father, Dick Tomlinson, and other area ranchers, built a reservoir near the ranch so they could water their cattle before trailing them into Mack, he said. Without the reservoir, the cattle might go several days without water as they came off the Bookcliffs and then were penned in the stockyards in Mack, he said.

Virginia Nelson also remembers the Utes visiting Mack in the early 1950s. This was after her father-in-law and mother-in-law, Charlie and Grace Nelson, established Harold’s Desert Inn at Mack, a club named after one of their sons who was killed in World War II.

The Utes would come down out of the Bookcliffs, she recalled, and her father-in-law “always had a special place made up for them and cooked up special dishes. He had one of the first televisions that came



Courtesy of the Museum of Western Colorado

This photo of a Ute family was taken south of Ouray. The date is unknown.



Courtesy of the Museum of Western Colorado

Chipeta, the wife of the late Ute leader Ouray, was the most famous of the Utah Utes who regularly visited Colorado. This photo likely was taken in 1905. The inscription on the back says it was taken at “the fairgrounds in Grand Junction.”



BOB SILBERNAGEL/Special to the Sentinel

Jim Tomlinson, 76, a rancher near Mack, remembers playing with young Ute Indians in the late 1940s. Their fathers brought cattle to ship to Denver from the railroad center at Mack.

out and he made up a special room where the Ute kids could watch TV.”

Ute women carried their babies in traditional Ute carriers on their backs, she remembered.

She also said that one older Ute man liked to play the piano and liked to tease her mother-in-law about looking like she was part Indian.

Although some residents of the area didn’t like the Utes, and considered them “heathens,” Nelson said, “The Utes never bothered anybody. They bought a lot of goods when they were here, just like anyone else.”

Another longtime Mack resident, Paul Gene Wells, told Fruita author Kathy Hurt about watching the Utes go by the New Liberty school on 8 Road in the early 1940s.

“They were coming from Atchee (just south of Baxter Pass in Colorado) to the sagebrush flat west of Mack southwest of 10 Road to camp

for the winter. They would get jobs with farmers or cowboys.” Hurt quoted him as saying in her 2011 book, “Way Points Along the Book Mountains.”

Wells continued, “The teacher said, you may be the last students to watch this: teams and wagons with tents (teepees); men riding horses; sheep cattle and quite a number of women and children walking.”

Wells’ class wasn’t the last group of Grand Valley residents to witness the annual arrival of the Utes, but they were close. By early in the 1950s they stopped coming.

Nelson attributed that change to the arrival of more and more people in the Grand Valley who “didn’t understand the Indians and didn’t want them around.”

But Tomlinson suggested a more pragmatic reason for the end of their annual visits. By the early 1950s, trucks had begun to replace trains as a means of shipping cattle, and the Utes no longer had to trail their cattle over the mountains



Courtesy of the Dan Roth Collection at Fruita Community Center

Bitter Creek Utes traveled over Baxter Pass.

to the nearest rail center.

By the late 1950s, most of the Utes had moved out of the Bitter Creek area and to other parts of the Uintah Reservation.

Jim Tomlinson, Kathy Hurt and Virginia Nelson assisted with this column. Email Bob Silbernagel at bobsilbernagel@gmail.com.

2015 THIS WEEK IN THE LEGISLATURE

DENVER — The Colorado Senate will begin debating the \$28 billion proposed budget for the 2015-16 fiscal year, which begins July 1. Senators will take today and Tuesday poring over it, and vote on it Wednesday and Thursday.

■ **Today:** The House Agriculture, Livestock & Natural Resources Committee will hear HB1278, a bill that attempts to clarify that agricultural water can be used for the cultivation of retail and medical marijuana without a change in water rights regardless of whether the water is used indoors or outdoors.

■ **Tuesday:** The House Judiciary Committee will hear HB1285, a bill to create a grant program to help law enforcement obtain body cameras.

■ **Wednesday:** The House Local Government Committee will debate HB1257, a measure that would eliminate a prohibition on local

governments from assessing fees or taxes on cigarettes without jeopardizing cigarette taxes they receive from the state.

■ **Thursday:** The House Judiciary Committee will hear a couple of law enforcement-related measures, including HB1291 to prohibit police officers’ use of chokeholds.

■ **Next week:** The Colorado House will get its turn at debating next year’s budget, following the same format: two days discussing it among themselves, and two days of voting on various provisions in it.

All floor action and committees can be watched or heard on the Legislature’s website at www.leg.state.co.us. Check that website to see which measures are available for remote testimony, and how to register to speak.

— Charles Ashby

IN BRIEF SENTINEL STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS

Roadside spraying for weeds begins

Mesa County’s Transportation Department, in cooperation with Mesa County Noxious Weed and Pest Management, will begin today applying herbicides along roadways throughout Mesa County. The county contracts with a licensed commercial applicator to apply the herbicides to control weeds.

Roadside and right-of-way weed treatment will be conducted several times throughout the county through September.

If property owners do not want herbicide sprayed along their property line, they can request to be added to the “No Spray” list. Those property owners will need to clearly mark their property lines with signs or bright flags and manage the weeds in and along that area themselves.

To be added to the “No Spray” list or for other weed identification or treatment questions, call 255-7121 or email weed.pest@mesacounty.us.

For questions about roadside vegetation mowing, call 244-1807.

Former water manager arrested

COLORADO SPRINGS — The former manager of the Cascade Metropolitan District has been arrested on suspicion of embezzlement and theft.

Terry Malcom was booked in the El Paso County jail on \$1 million bond.

In 2013, the district’s board of directors asked the El Paso County District Attorney’s Office to launch an investigation after it was believed about \$800,000 was embezzled from the agency.

Almost \$500,000 of the money was earmarked to pay for the district’s treated water provided by Colorado Springs Utilities.

Malcom is accused of committing two felonies, embezzling public property and theft between \$100,000 and \$1,000,000.

Motorcycle forced off highway

AURORA — Aurora police arrested a man after witnesses said he was in a car that forced a motorcycle off the highway in a road rage incident.

Police said a passenger in the car was having a dispute with the motorcycle rider when the passenger jerked the wheel of the car, crashing into the motorcycle and forcing both vehicles to roll over.

The motorcycle rider suffered serious injuries. The driver of the car was also injured.

Police say the passenger, 25-year-old Michael Hall, was arrested on suspicion of assault and attempted homicide. He was not injured.

Authorities said they don’t have details on the dispute.

Improved fire shelter in development

BOISE, Idaho — The U.S. Forest Service said it’s picking up the pace on developing a new fire shelter after the deaths of 19 firefighters in Arizona where officials said flames and heat went beyond the current shelter’s protective capabilities.

National Director of Fire and Aviation Management Tom Harbour said that’s one aspect of a plan to help firefighters who are facing increasingly ferocious wildfires complicated by home building in wildland areas.

He said the 2013 fire that killed the Arizona firefighters fit that description.

Harbour said the federal agency is working with the U.S. Marine Corps to learn strategies for coping with stress and making good decisions under pressure.

The agency hopes to have a new fire shelter by 2016.

The current shelter, last updated in 2002, weighs 4.5 pounds in its smaller size and 5.2 pounds for larger firefighters. Each shelter costs about \$260.

BLOTTER COMPILED BY SENTINEL STAFF

Child abuse suspected

Lorinda Applegate, 37, of Moab, Utah, was arrested Friday afternoon on suspicion of child abuse.

According to the Grand Junction Police Department, at 12:50 p.m. Friday witnesses reported that a woman who appeared intoxicated was trying to get a crying child into her vehicle at Loco, 1904 N. 12th St. Witnesses said she put the child in the vehicle and tried to leave the parking lot, but hit a concrete barrier, according to police.

One witness removed the child from the vehicle, according to police, while another removed the keys from the ignition. The Department of Human Services was called, according to police.

Applegate was taken to the hospital for medical clearance, then arrested on suspicion of child abuse, driving under the influence, failure to use a child restraint, careless driving and having an open container.

According to the Grand Junction Police Department:

■ Danielle Sylvia, 30, was arrested and released on a summons March 14 on suspi-

cion of shoplifting merchandise valued at less than \$500 from a business in the 2400 block of U.S. Highway 6&50.

■ Michael Wallace, 53, was arrested and released on a summons Wednesday afternoon in the 400 block of 28 1/2 Road on suspicion of drinking an alcoholic beverage in public.

■ Property valued at less than \$750 was stolen from an unlocked vehicle parked in the 200 block of North Avenue on Wednesday afternoon.

■ Items valued at less than \$2,000 were stolen from a residence in the 1300 block of Rood Avenue on Wednesday night.

■ Todd Sommerville, 51, was arrested Thursday evening in the 2900 block of Summerbrook Drive on suspicion of harassment.

■ Jeremy Sheek, 31, was arrested and released on a summons early Friday morning at Pitkin Avenue and Ninth Street on suspicion of driving under the influence of alcohol.

■ Gabriel Rivera, 28, was arrested early Friday morning in the 1000 block of North Avenue on suspicion of driving under the influence of alcohol, violating a protection

order and driving with a revoked license; he initially was contacted on suspicion of a traffic violation.

■ Shelly Meade, 33, was arrested and released on a summons Friday morning in the 2800 block of North Avenue on suspicion of vandalizing property, causing a loss of less than \$300.

■ T.J. Carney, 30, was arrested and released on a summons Friday evening at Main and Fifth streets on suspicion of driving under the influence.

■ Jarett Towles, 25, was arrested and released on a summons Friday night at North Avenue and 25th Street on suspicion of driving with a denied license and driving a vehicle not equipped with tail lamps.

■ Lee Brewer, 26, was arrested and released on a summons Saturday morning in the 500 block of Grand Avenue on suspicion of trespassing.

■ Jesse Love, 18, was arrested Saturday evening on suspicion of violating a protection order by consuming alcohol.

■ Ronald Erwin, 31, was arrested Saturday night in the 100 block of Vista Grande Drive on suspicion of violating a protection order.

Cash 5 Sunday: 1-10-21-28-29

Pick 3 Sunday: 4-8-0

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coloradopress

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.

APRIL 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.