

## FIRST DRAFT

# Japanese bombs struck Collbran, Delta as World War II came to end

By June of 1945, World War II in Europe was over. Germany had surrendered the month before. But Japan was still fighting, and it was continuing its aerial bombardment of the United States mainland.

Few Americans knew about that bombardment because, instead of airplanes, the Japanese used specially constructed paper balloons that drifted across the Pacific Ocean on the jet stream at more than 30,000 feet, then lost altitude as they reached U.S. shores. Each balloon carried at least two incendiary bombs and one anti-personnel bomb.

Even when they landed and people reported them — as a Collbran cattleman did in June of 1945 — the public heard little or nothing about them.

The late Daily Sentinel employee and author, Al Look, said he was present in 1945 when the cattleman brought remains of the Japanese balloon into The Sentinel office. He had found no bombs with the balloon, he said. Then-editor Frank Reeds quickly escorted the man into his office, telling him to keep quiet, then called the Mesa County Sheriff.

Ultimately, the information was turned over to the military, and Reeds informed the rancher that the newspaper was under specific orders from the War Department not to print or discuss anything related to the balloons.

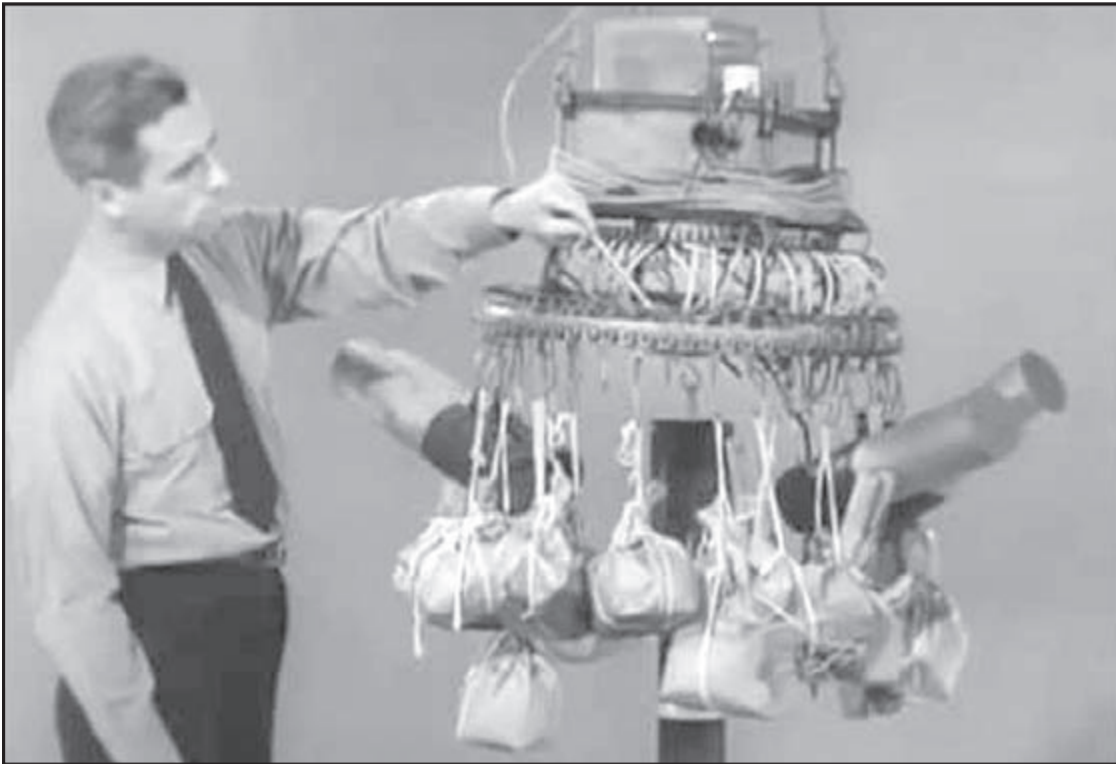
“Strict censorship in the newspapers and on radio concerning the paper bombing balloons prevented this vital intelligence information from reaching the Japanese,” wrote author Robert C. Mikesh in a 1973 publication for the Smithsonian Institution. “It also kept many Americans uninformed of the possible hazards associated with this unusual weapon.”

It wasn't until 31 years after the rancher appeared at the paper's offices that Look wrote about the incident in The Daily Sentinel.

Today, one can find information online and in print sources about the 9,000-plus balloon bombs the Japanese launched in November 1944, when they were losing and desperate to disrupt U.S. war efforts.

It is estimated that as many as 1,000 of those balloons reached the U.S. mainland and Canada, but only 284 were positively recorded, including the one in Collbran, on which no bombs had been found. Another fell near Delta in March 1945, and in that case a bomb exploded, but no one was injured.

The balloon bombs did kill six people — five children and the wife of a minister — who were on a church outing near Bly, Oregon, on May 5, 1945.



A U.S. military official examines the explosive elements of a Japanese balloon bomb. The photo is from what is believed to be a U.S. military training video about the balloon bombs, now available on YouTube.



BOB SILBERNAGEL

They found the balloon tangled in trees, and its bombs exploded as they were examining it. Those were the only known enemy-inflicted casualties on the U.S. mainland during the entire war.

Most of the balloons that were found landed in Oregon, Washington, Alaska and British Columbia. In addition to the two in western Colorado, one was found near Fort Collins. Five landed in Utah and seven in Wyoming. A couple of balloons made it to Kansas and Nebraska, and one sailed as far east as Iowa.

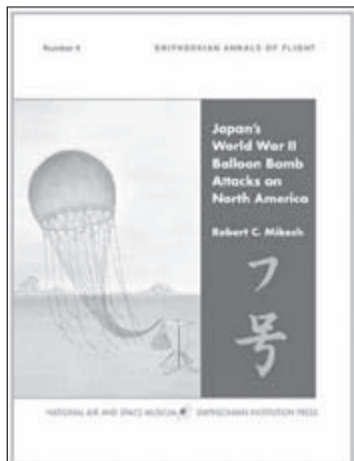
The War Department kept a lid on publicity about the balloons for several reasons. Initially, when the first balloon bombs were discovered on the West Coast, they didn't know what they were.

Authorities soon confirmed — through writings found on some of the balloons or bombs and with early-day forensic geology that traced sand fragments found on the balloons — that the devices came from Japan. But they didn't want Japanese officials to know that the program was successful in getting any of the balloons to reach this country.

The publicity blackout was so good that, until well after the war was over, the Japanese were aware of only one balloon that reached the United States.

Finally, U.S. authorities didn't want the balloon bombs to create just what the Japanese hoped for — widespread panic in this country. That was especially true because officials here originally feared the Japanese would use the balloon bombs to carry biological weapons.

If the balloon-bomb program was unsuccessful in the war effort, it did succeed in one respect: It proved that the high-altitude jet stream did exist and could be utilized for



GOOGLE BOOKS/Special to the Sentinel

The cover of a book published by the Smithsonian Institution in 1973 regarding Japanese balloon bombs.

human activities.

Record comparisons of when the balloons landed here and when they were launched in Japan showed they usually spent just two or three days aloft crossing the Pacific. Until then, U.S. authorities were reportedly unaware of the jet stream.

Moreover, the balloon bombs demonstrated Japanese ingenuity in dealing with changes in atmospheric pressure. A system of batteries and gauges released sandbags used for ballast if the balloons began drifting too low. But enough weight was left to bring the balloons down as they reached this continent.

Additionally, the bombs had detonation devices that were supposed to set them off as the balloons touched down.

It was fortunate none exploded in densely populated urban areas.

By the end of July 1945, the Japanese had abandoned the balloon-bomb effort, apparently because the hydrogen used to fly them had become too scarce.



U.S. ARMY PHOTO/Special to the Sentinel

A Japanese balloon bomb after it was re-inflated and sent aloft by U.S. Army officials in California.

The last two balloons were found in Oregon and Nevada on July 20.

On August 15, 1945, the Japanese surrendered after two atomic bombs were detonated over Hiroshima and Nagasaki. There were no more concerns about balloon-bomb attacks on the United States.

Information came from the Museums of Western Colorado, The Daily Sentinel, “Japan’s Secret WWII Weapon, Balloon Bombs,” published in the National Geographic on May 27, 2013, and “Japan’s World War II Balloon Bomb Attacks on North America,” by Robert C. Mikesh, published in the Smithsonian Annals of Flight, 1973.

Bob Silbernagel’s email is [bohsilbernagel@gmail.com](mailto:bohsilbernagel@gmail.com).

# Pot shop security guard killed during robbery

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

AURORA — Aurora police are looking for two men suspected of fatally shooting a security guard at a marijuana dispensary during an armed robbery.

Officers were called to the Green Heart Marijuana Dispensary on Saturday night on a report of shots fired and a robbery. When officers arrived at the scene, they found the security guard who suffered multiple gunshot wounds.

The guard was pronounced dead after being taken to a hospital.

The identity of the guard killed in the shooting has not been released.

Green Heart is one of three retail-licensed marijuana stores in Aurora’s sixth ward. The dispensary is staffed by both posted security personnel and security cameras. Police are reviewing the surveillance footage.

The Daily Sentinel (ISSN 1445-8962)  
Published every morning at 734 S. Seventh Street, Grand Junction, CO 81501.  
Periodical Postage paid at Grand Junction, CO.  
Carrier home delivery prices: 13 weeks - \$65.00, 26 weeks - \$130.00, 52 weeks - \$260.00.  
Weekend delivery packages: Wednesday thru Sunday - \$244.40, Friday thru Sunday - \$197.60, Saturday & Sunday - \$163.80, Sunday only - \$163.80.  
Weekend delivery includes the following date in 2016: Nov 24.  
Single Copy: \$1.00 daily and \$2.00 Sunday.  
Mail (USPS): \$5.00 per week, \$260.00 per year. \*POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Daily Sentinel, P.O. Box 668, Grand Junction, CO 81502.\*

**Brown's Shoe Fit Co.**  
"Better Shoes Since 1911"  
**YES, We Have...**

Free Gait Analysis

Mon. - Fri. 9:00 - 6:00  
Sat. 9:00 - 5:30  
Sun. 1:00 - 3:00

Your locally owned store and remember parking in the back.

**425 Main St. • 242-7690**

**My Listings Are SELLING Fast!!**

I am happy to provide a FREE market valuation of your property, & then tell you my plan to get it SOLD!  
I've been helping buyers & sellers in Mesa County since 1994

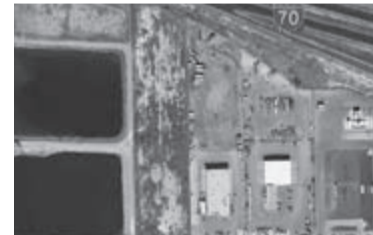
**Tina Harbin**  
970-234-3808  
www.realestatewestonline.com  
tinaharbinhomes@gmail.com

**Real Estate West**

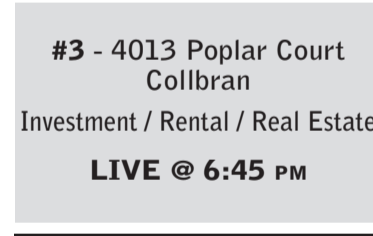
## THREE COMMERCIAL / INVESTMENT Real Estate Auctions TUESDAY JUNE 28<sup>TH</sup>, 2016



**#1 - 1600 & 1610 S. Hwy 50, Grand Junction - LIVE @ 10:30 AM**  
2 Buildings, 3 rentals, + Artesian Well  
Partnership & Estate Liquidation



**#2 - 853 Raptor Road Fruita**  
4.88 Acres adjoins I-70  
Exit 19, next to truck stop, motel, 2 truck dealers  
**LIVE @ 1:30 PM**



**#3 - 4013 Poplar Court Collbran**  
Investment / Rental / Real Estate  
**LIVE @ 6:45 PM**

**Info & Terms:**  
**Steve Hunt Auction Service, LLC**  
970-270-8744 / [www.whitleyauction.com](http://www.whitleyauction.com)

## BLOTTER COMPILED BY SENTINEL STAFF



### Motorcycle stolen in May

Crime Stoppers of Mesa County is seeking the public's help to identify a male suspect who stole items from Modern Classic Motors, 975 Independent Ave., sometime May 21 or May 22.

According to Crime Stoppers, the man stole electronic office equipment, a red two-stroke generator, an orange Husqvarna chain saw and a black 2007 Harley Davidson Sportster motorcycle.

Video surveillance shows the suspect as a white male wearing a face mask, a camouflage jacket and baseball cap.

Total estimated property damage and stolen items are valued at more than \$20,000. A photo of the suspect can be viewed at 241.stop.com.

Anyone with information is encouraged to call Crime Stoppers at 241-7867.

### 42 ticketed at Country Jam

A third day of Country Jam on Saturday saw fewer minors receiving summonses for underage drinking or attempting to obtain alcohol, according to the Mesa County Sheriff's Office.

Deputies ticketed 42 people for alcohol-related offenses on Saturday. That number is less than the 69 people ticketed on this day for alcohol offenses in 2015, and also fewer than the 66 people ticketed for alcohol offenses the same day in 2014.

The majority of summonses on Saturday, or 35, were issued to minors who had obtained alcohol either on the festival grounds, in the campgrounds or in the parking lot, the Sheriff's Office said.

### According to the Grand Junction Police Department:

■ Derek Wayne Parker, 40, was arrested Saturday on suspicion of violation of a protection order and a parole violation.

■ Timothy James Doty, 54, was arrested Saturday on suspicion of shoplifting items valued at less than \$50 and second-degree burglary.

### According to the Mesa County Sheriff's Office:

■ Deputies arrested a person Friday in the 500 block of 32 Road on suspicion of stealing items at the Clifton City Market.

■ William Wayne Fish, 18, was arrested Saturday on suspicion of criminal impersonation and violation of a protection order.

■ Patricia Elaine Marie Spencer, 21, was arrested Saturday on suspicion of third-degree assault and domestic violence.

All contents copyright © 2016 The Daily Sentinel. All republication rights are reserved. Material in this publication may not be published, broadcast, rewritten for broadcast or publication or redistributed directly or indirectly in any medium.

**How to reach us: 242-5050.** Business hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. Circulation phones are open 7 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. on weekends.

**CIRCULATION**  
Subscription and delivery questions:  
..... 242-1919 or (800) 332-5833

**ADVERTISING**  
Retail advertising..... 256-4289  
Classified advertising..... 242-1313

**Pick 3 Sunday: 6-6-3**  
**Cash 5 Sunday: 8-10-20-25-28**  
For information, go to [www.coloradolottery.com](http://www.coloradolottery.com).

**NEWSROOM**  
Managing editor..... 256-4252  
City desk..... 256-4213

Features and entertainment..... 256-4224  
Sports..... 256-4203  
Commentary..... 256-4236

coloradopress ASSOCIATION



2011 • 2012 • 2013  
2014 • 2015

4TH OF JULY ADVERTISING DEADLINES

## ATTENTION ADVERTISERS

The Daily Sentinel's advertising deadlines will be moving up to accommodate the 4th of July Holiday!

This early deadline schedule is designed to help you plan your advertising around the holiday.  
**The Daily Sentinel will be closed Monday, July 4 to commemorate the holiday.**

**Display Advertising**

Publication Date	Deadline
7/2, Saturday .....	6/29, Wednesday, 12 Noon
7/3, Sunday .....	6/29, Wednesday, 12 Noon
7/4, Monday .....	6/30, Thursday, 12 Noon
7/5, Tuesday .....	6/30, Thursday, 3 PM
7/6, Wednesday .....	7/1 Friday, 12 Noon
7/6, Sentinel Weekly .....	6/28 Tuesday, 12 Noon
7/7, Thursday .....	7/1, Friday, 5 PM
7/8, Out & About .....	7/1, Friday, 3 PM
7/10, Real Estate Weekly.....	7/1, Friday, 12 Noon

**Classified Liner Ads (Private Party & Commercial)**

7/3, Sunday .....	7/1, Friday, 2 PM
7/4, Monday .....	7/1, Friday, 3 PM
7/5, Tuesday .....	7/1, Friday, 3 PM

**Legals**

7/3, Sunday .....	6/28 Tuesday, 12 Noon
7/4, Monday .....	6/28 Tuesday, 12 Noon
7/5, Tuesday .....	6/28 Tuesday, 3 PM
7/6, Wednesday .....	6/28 Tuesday, 4 PM

**THE DAILY SENTINEL**  
GRAND JUNCTION, COLORADO

734 South 7th Street, Grand Junction, CO 81501 • Advertising 256-4289