

# HUNTING THE HAUNTED



CLARISSA VAZQUEZ, left, Talle Meehan and Candy Meehan are members of the Colorado Coalition of Paranormal Investigators, which maintains the old Potter's Field cemetery on Orchard Mesa.

## Group investigates area paranormal activity

By MELINDA HANWELLY  
melinda.hanwelly@gmail.com

The photograph that piqued Clarissa Vazquez's interest in paranormal activity is kept in a lockbox with her jewelry. It's a Polaroid picture taken in 2004 in a Grand Junction home. It shows a white cloud floating near one of Vazquez's friends. The cloud looks like mist or maybe smoke from the cigarette her friend is holding. But when the photo was taken, the cigarette was not lit, Vazquez said.

In fact, she added, the white cloud wasn't visible when she took the picture. It appeared after the Polaroid developed. Vazquez has tried to think of an explanation to dispel any notion that something paranormal was captured in the picture, but she can't. The photo was one of two incidents — the

other was an audio recording — in 2004 that prompted Vazquez to learn more about paranormal presences. And that is how the Colorado Coalition of Paranormal Investigators was born. CCPI, as members call it, was formed in 2004 to direct paranormal investigations. Originally, Vazquez and a friend were the only members. They spent hours reading books and practicing the process of investigating — they use audio and infrared video recording devices, for example — to investigate paranormal presences in Potter's Field, an old cemetery on Orchard Mesa. Now, the group's membership is nine. The members range in age from 30 to nearly 60 and include men and women from several areas around town.

CCPI received permission from the city of Grand Junction in 2009 to adopt and maintain Potter's Field, which had become overgrown. The group uses the cemetery as a training ground to investigate paranormal activity. Vazquez is a lead investigator with the group. She's also a nonmonumentalist, Protestant ordained minister whose faith in God has prepared her for encounters with demonic beings if the situation arises.

"It's good versus evil," she said. Because Vazquez takes the science of paranormal investigation seriously, she requires extensive training for every aspiring CCPI investigator.

See HUNTING, page 5C



A HEADSTONE MARKS the grave of a 3-year-old child in Potter's Field. The paranormal investigation group does some of its training at the cemetery.

### POTTER'S FIELD

Potter's Field is considered one of the oldest cemeteries in the Grand Junction area, which prompted the Colorado Coalition of Paranormal Investigators to inquire about adoption. The group thought the old cemetery had been forgotten. In 2009, the city gave permission for CCPI to maintain Potter's Field.



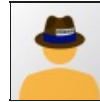
The group has cleared away weeds, brush and sprayed up the graves known to be there. CCPI isn't sure how many people are buried at the old cemetery. CCPI's next Potter's Field cleanup will be at 8 a.m. Saturday. The old cemetery is located near the Grand Junction Police Department firing range at 26 3/8 Road on Orchard Mesa. Volunteers interested in helping with the cleanup should bring work gloves, sunscreen and garden clippers. For information, call CCPI at 260-5164.

The Daily Sentinel's history columnist, Kathy Jordan, has spent months researching the history of some of the area's cemeteries, including Potter's Field. Jordan's series of columns about area cemeteries is printed in the History Here and Now columns published each Friday.

ROBERT GARCÍA/The Daily Sentinel

Photos by WILLIAM WOODY/The Daily Sentinel  
CLARISSA VAZQUEZ demonstrates the use of a thermometer powered by a laser. It is one of the devices used by the paranormal investigation group.

## Hunting the Haunted 23 May 2010



Clipped By:  
skarenm  
Wed, Jul 13, 2022