

UTAH MINERS

Map Search May Have Saved Lives

BY MIKE GORRELL

THE SALT LAKE TRIBUNE

For Utah coal miners, it was a chilling sight: Water was seeping through the walls of a tunnel they had been cutting deep inside the Dugout Canyon Mine.

They were all too aware of what happened recently in Pennsylvania. Nine men had been trapped when a subterranean flood was unleashed by coal-mining machinery that broke into the water-filled tunnel of an old, adjacent mine — a tunnel not on their maps. Their rescue after more than three days in a small air pocket was the summer's feel-good news story.

So, when miners spotted the seeping water in early August, cautious officials at Canyon Fuel Co.'s Carbon County mine called for their maps. Initial results were inconclusive.

The maps outlined an array of tunnels last excavated some 40 years ago, but nothing really close to current operations.

Still, the continuing seepage stirred a gnawing fear of a repeat of the near-tragedy of Pennsylvania's Quecreek Mine.

Mining officials next contacted the Bureau of Land Management, which controls the mining lease, to see if the federal agency had more recent maps. It did, and sure enough, one showed one particular old tunnel much closer to the new workings than previously suspected.

If that old tunnel had been breached, water built up over four decades would have produced "an immediate inundation" of Dugout Canyon's new section, said Jim Kohler, chief of Utah BLM's solid minerals branch.

"A likely scenario would have been loss of life, the mine shut down [federal Mine Safety and Health Administration] folks hitting them with a citation," he added.

"But in this case, the mine did absolutely nothing to compromise the safety of their workers and they averted a problem from happening.

"One thing the Pennsylvania incident pointed out was that sometimes the accuracy of old mine maps is not as good as you'd like it to be," Kohler said.

Speaking Monday to the National Association of Abandoned Mine Land Programs, current MSHA boss and Utah native Dave Lauriski said the Dugout Canyon incident underscored threats posed by old mines and unreliable maps.

Lauriski has ordered all of the nation's mines to assess their risks of coming into contact with old workings.

BLM's Kohler is hoping this happy ending will help free up some money to computerize more mining maps.

"In an ideal world we wouldn't have had to go to an old file cabinet to find a map," he said. "We should be able to pull it up with the click of a key stroke."

Airport security at Salt Lake City International Airport is turned over to the feds.

In Utah, D-2

LDS, Evangelicals Nation's Fastest

BY PEGGY FLETCHER STACK
THE SALT LAKE TRIBUNE

It will come as no surprise to most Utahns that their state is the most religion-saturated place in the United States, with 74.7 percent of the population affiliated with a faith.

Of those, 89 percent are members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, according to a new study of U.S. religions by Glenmary Research Center of Nashville, Tenn. Just over 25 percent of Utahns are "unclaimed," or not affiliated with the religious groups the center surveyed.

Utahns will not be startled to learn that the state is among the least religiously diverse places in America. The LDS Church was the fastest

growing church in America — increasing by 19 percent — with the Pentecostal denomination Assemblies of God following closely at 18.5 percent, according to Glenmary's research.

The LDS Church now is the sixth-largest religious body in the nation, with 4,224,026 members, inching just ahead of the the Presbyterians, with 3,141,566.

"We have not seen the report," LDS Church spokesman Mike Otterson said Tuesday, but he did note that "close to 300,000 individuals over the age of 8 have joined the church every year for more than a decade."

At the same time, several liberal Protestant denominations, including Episcopal, Lutheran, Methodist and Presbyterian churches, continued a

States With the Highest of Adherents

Rank State

1. Utah

2. North Dakota

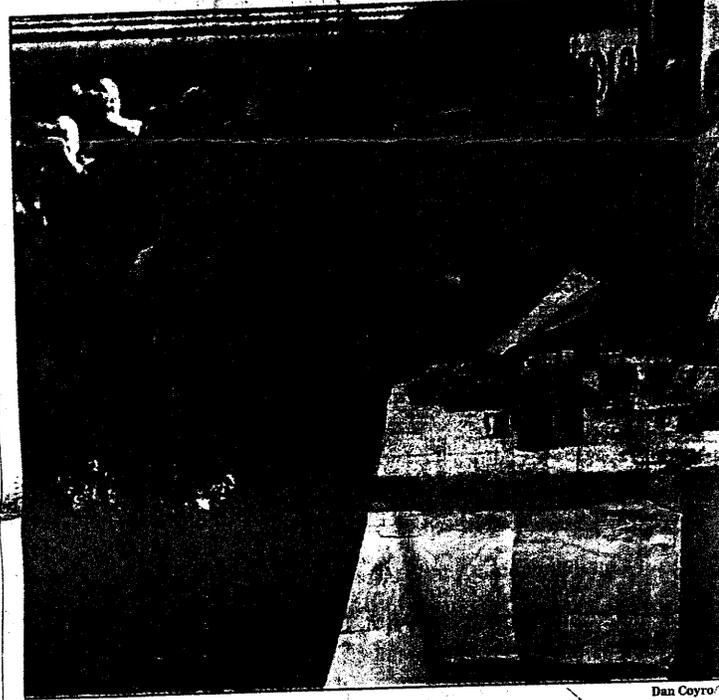
4. South Dakota

Source: Glenmary Research

slow decline in membership.

But some other figures released Sunday, "Religious Ties & Membership in the States: 2000," are less encouraging. For example, there are

A MARIJUANA 'SANCTUARY'



Dan Coyro

Wayne Meyer, 50 of nearby Boulder Creek, Calif., accepts a ration of marijuana from the World Health Organization for Medical Marijuana at City Hall in Santa Cruz on Tuesday, Sept. 17, 2002. Declaring Santa Cruz a "sanctuary" from federal authorities, medical marijuana advocates, joined by city leaders, passed out a dozen sick and dying patients.

Iraq a Veteran of Cat-and-Mouse

Offer to readmit inspectors paying off for Saddam on world stage

BY TOM RAUM

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Iraq is well practiced in playing cat-and-mouse diplomacy. Baghdad's promise to give weapons inspectors unfettered access at least buys Saddam Hussein time by delaying the likelihood of U.S.-led military action. It also complicates President Bush's efforts to build international support for ousting him.

If Saddam's offer sounds familiar, it is. From the time arms inspectors went into Iraq in 1991 until they left ahead of U.S. and British airstrikes in 1998, the Iraqi leader alternated between promising greater access and frustrating the work of the inspection teams.

Bush responded sharply to what he suggested was an empty Iraqi

gambit, challenging the United Nations on Tuesday to choose between being "a force for good and peace or an ineffective debating society."

But Iraq's gesture appeared to be taking a clear toll on the international momentum that had been building behind the U.S. effort just a day earlier.

ANALYSIS

France, Russia and China — all permanent members of the Security Council with veto power — praised Iraq's overture and voiced skepticism over whether a new U.N. resolution was now needed.

Key Arab governments that had been beginning to show support for a tough new resolution seemed content to return to the sidelines while the inspections issue plays out. "Concentration should now be on the

WAR ON T

U.S. intelligence agencies are assessing possibility of a Sept. 11

agreement to implement has accepted," said U.S. Minister Ahmed Ma

One big problem with the administration is that "regime change" in the rest of the international arena appears more important than weapons inspectors in the country, at least for

Saddam understood shrewdly attempting to gain an advantage, analysts say. Former weapon

See INSPEC

Ideological Brawl Over Utah Nominations