

‘Junkyard Bomber’ suspect to be focus of NBC expose

Kim Huggett
Sacramento Union Staff Writer

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A nationwide search for a man believed to have planted 12 bombs in nine years will get an assist with the release this week of a new sketch of the suspect and an NBC documentary in September.

The television show will offer a reenactment of the December 1985 explosion that killed 38-year-old Hugh C. Scrutton in the parking lot behind his RenTech computer rental store on Howe Avenue.

Sheriff's homicide Lt. Ray Biondi said the segment of "Unsolved Mysteries" is expected to get a nationwide prime-time television audience of up to 30 million viewers.

"They're going to film the segment about the Scrutton murder on the spot where he died," Biondi said.

"The producer has already been out here and interviewed the RenTech employees, and he'll be back in August for the filming."

The bomber's targets consist of computer businesses, the airline industry and university campuses.

He has wounded 21 people in nine states, most recently last February when a computer store employee in Salt Lake City was injured under conditions nearly identical to the Scrutton case.

"We're always trying to think of new ways of getting someone out there to make that one phone call that will be the big break," said FBI agent John Bertram, spokesman for the multiagency Unabom Law Enforcement Task Force based in Salt Lake City.

"We're hoping the documentary will be just the right angle we need."



SKETCH OF SUSPECT

When it gets on television we expect all 59 FBI field offices will have to be on alert to handle the calls.”

Bertram said the task force office has already received 25 calls from police agencies after a previously unreleased sketch of the suspect appeared in the FBI’s monthly magazine.

The sketch was actually drawn last March by portrait artist Robert T. Exter, a former Sacramento resident Biondi has used to help solve several cases.

“I spent a whole day with a witness who saw the suspect,” Exter said in an interview with The Sacramento Union last March.

“My final watercolor showed things that the FBI’s artist missed. It produced an important lead in the case.”

Biondi’s contributions to the task force include a briefing document that concludes the suspect is probably proud of his homemade bombs, but generally feels inadequate and is afraid of confrontations.

Although the task force calls the suspect “Unabom,” Biondi’s detectives originally labeled him the “Junkyard Bomber” because of the common materials used to make the explosive devices.

'Junkyard Bomber' suspect to be focus of NBC expose

By KIM HUGGETT
SACRAMENTO UNION STAFF WRITER

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