



# THE MOKI MESSENGER

December 2021

San Juan Basin Archaeological Society

[sjbas.org](http://sjbas.org)

## President's Message

Dear SJBAS Members:

We are winding down another year. We have not let Covid stop us from holding monthly meetings with very interesting presenters, joining together at the summer picnic, and arranging some great field trips. Thank you to all the members who volunteered to make these events possible and fun.

It's time to renew your membership - Annual renewals are due by January 31, 2022. The Board has been working hard to plan several educational opportunities, field trips, and social events for our members for 2022. Information on renewing and a link to the [Membership Form](#) can be found in this email and at [sjbas.org](http://sjbas.org). There will be renewal forms available at the Brunch for those that are attending (bring your checkbook). Thank you for supporting SJBAS!

During the Annual Meeting on December 4th, members will vote for the SJBAS 2022 officers. The following members have volunteered to fill these positions. Nominations from the floor will also be accepted before the vote.

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President - Susan Hicks  
Vice-President - Hunter McCleary  
Secretary - Mary Rieke  
Treasurer - Mary Moorehead

I would like to thank our departing Board members. Randy Graham has been our Treasurer for 3 years and has kept us up to date with budgets and timely reports and has updated the SJBAS accounting procedures. Denise Galley has been our Membership Chair during the last 2 years and has contributed many thoughtful ideas. Thank you, Randy and Denise, for your service. We look forward to seeing you at SJBAS events in the future!

Please join us in welcoming Mary Moorehead as our new Treasurer. She come with lots of non-profit experience and expertise. We are glad to have you aboard the Board!

I hope you have a wonderful holiday and that 2022 brings the end of Covid.

Sincerely,  
Susan Hicks  
SJBAS President

## Annual Meeting and Brunch Covid Guidelines

The Board has been monitoring the Covid situation and the latest guidelines for gatherings. We want to provide an opportunity to socialize in person while following safe practices. We will require that all brunch attendees (members and guests):

- 1) wear a mask at all times, except when eating
- 2) are fully vaccinated
- 3) stay home if you have any symptoms or have been in close contact with someone who has symptoms, no matter how mild.

Thank you for helping us all stay safe.

## Volunteer Opportunities

**Membership Chair:** The Membership Chair is responsible for organizing recruitment of new SJBAS members, communicating with current members, and supporting Board members in encouraging active participation by members. The time required is approximately 1-2 hours per month and the ability to send emails. If you would like further information on the duties required or to volunteer, please contact Susan Hicks at [sc53hicks@gmail.com](mailto:sc53hicks@gmail.com) .

## SJBAS Board Meeting Highlights: Nov 4, 2021

1. The Board voted on the 2022 dues amounts. The dues for individuals were reduced to \$15 per year, all other dues amounts will remain the same. The updated Annual Membership Form is posted on [sjbas.org](http://sjbas.org) or see the December Moki for renewal information. Membership renewals are due by January 31, 2022.

2. Details for the December 4th Brunch and Annual Meeting were planned. Our two Fall Center of Southwest Studies student interns will attend and present a summary of their work. The Silent Auction will feature wonderful items from the Robinson collection. A slide show of 2021 Field Trips will be shown. If you would like to contribute a door prize, please bring it to the brunch pre-wrapped.

3. The 2022 Field Trip Planning meeting came up with several interesting trips. Look for the schedule on the website. The first trip will be held on January 11 - a behind the scenes tour of the Edge of the Cedars Museum in Blanding, UT. See [sjbas.org](http://sjbas.org) for more information.

4. The next Board meeting will be held on January 12th, 1:00-3:00pm. Location details will be announced in the January Moki.

**HAPPY HOLIDAYS!!!!**

## Your SJBAS Scholarship Dollars at Work

This fall the awarded funds from SJBAS were used to help process 80 boxes of artifacts collected from the Brougner Site in Montezuma County. This is a Pueblo I-III (AD 650-1250) site that was excavated by Metropolitan State College of Denver in the 1970s. In 2007, the Rimrocker Historical Society of Montrose donated the artifacts to the Center of Southwest Studies. Kegan H. Roady, a junior at FLC, was tasked with analyzing each artifact, recording the primary information associated with each item, attributing labels for identification, rehousing the artifacts for preservation purposes, and ultimately preparing the collection to be cataloged into the institutional database. In this picture Kegan measures groundstone artifacts.





This semester, the other supported intern, Rachel Morris, worked on two projects at the Center of Southwest Studies. Her work began with Ancestral Puebloan ceramics of the McLain Collection. The first task was to locate certain items and then scan accompanying catalog records. These records contained detailed information on the objects including location, description, and a rating of the condition. Often a photo or sketch was attached. Rachel also accessioned several

Mesoamerican

artifacts that are part of the Center’s Tupper Collection. She entered these objects into the collections management database and then photographed them. And finally, she labeled the objects with their item number and then stored them within the Center’s collections storage area. Pictured to the right are mostly bowls or pieces of bowls.



## Field Trips, Speakers and Events for 2022

While most of the speakers and events for 2022 will be unveiled with the January Moki we are getting a jump on January by announcing a day-trip to Edge of the Cedars State Park Museum in Blanding on January 11<sup>th</sup>. The trip is being organized by Lori Hansen. Lori has arranged for ten SJBAS members to have a backroom tour of the perishables collection as led by staff archaeologist Jonathan Till. The tour may also include a tour of their nearby ruins, weather permitting. The cost is \$5 admission plus a group fee of \$25 (\$2.50 each). After the tour those who want to can meet locally for lunch. Difficulty rating is easy. If you are interested in going on this day-trip please contact Lori at [Lmhansen39@gmail.com](mailto:Lmhansen39@gmail.com)

See [SJBAS.org](http://SJBAS.org) for details on each of these field trips or events. You must be a SJBAS member to participate in field trips. All are welcome to attend speaking events.

<b>Dates</b>	<b>SJBAS plans the field trips. Meetings will be offered through Zoom until further notice.</b>
<b>December 4</b>	<b>SJBAS Annual Holiday Brunch. <a href="http://SJBAS.org">SJBAS.org</a> for details.</b>
<b>January 1</b>	<b>The Full 2022 Trip and Speaker calendar will be announced.</b>

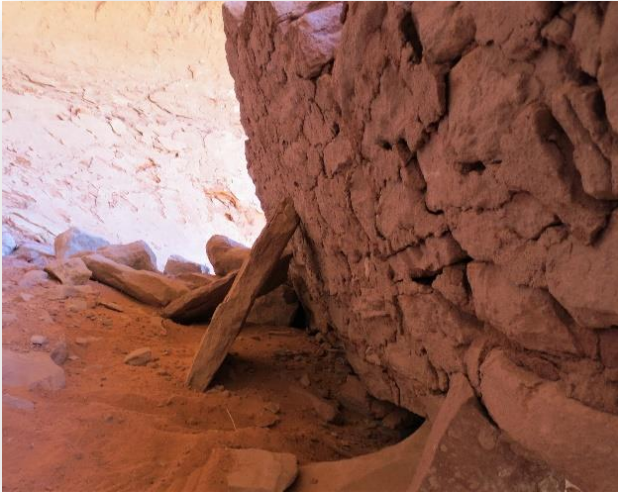
January 11	Day-tour of the Perishables Collection at Edge of the Cedars Museum.
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### Modified Field Trip Covid Policy

The SJBAS field trip policy remains the same as published in the [June Moki](#).

### A Closer Look

How does BLM decide when or whether to stabilize a deteriorating Ancestral Puebloan site? This wall to the right in Canyons of the Ancients National Monument (CANM) has been leaning for years. It shows an *ad hoc* effort to prevent complete collapse but should more be done?



For any work to be done CANM requires a resource management plan. The vast majority of CANM sites (30,000-plus) are rated as undeveloped. This means that in consultation with 26 local tribes their locations are not to be disclosed to the public and are to be allowed to weather naturally without human intervention. The agreement with the tribes, however, permits BLM to designate 12 sites as developed and may be used for educational purposes. These are the ones you see from the main trails and are identified on trail signs. The agreement allows for another dozen to be added to the list in the future. This particular wall has been identified as needing stabilization. Detailed baseline pictures have been taken and as funding and resources become available a team, probably from Mesa Verde, will come in to stabilize it.

### Briefs

**Chilling talk by former SE Utah Nat’l Parks superintendent.** Walt Dabney gave a talk to Durango Seniors Outdoors on Nov 9<sup>th</sup> about the State of Utah’s endgame for Bears Ears and other BLM holdings in the state. He said that they are using anti-government rhetoric and falsehoods to force the Federal government to surrender all public holdings that are not already one of the five national parks. He added that state officials have apparently ignored or have not even read the Utah Stathood Charter which expressly states that federal lands are not to be handed over to the state. Walt said that once the State controls the land they will find they cannot maintain these properties so will be “forced” to sell them off—to wealthy corporations and private citizens who will forever remove them from public access. He added, just look at his home state of Texas where there is very little public lands because they were all given away when Texas was a republic. That’s why so many Texans come to Colorado to recreate. They can’t do it down there.

**What does it mean to be a Pioneer?** In Colorado it seems to mean anyone who came to the state about 150 years ago, give or take. Maybe we need to broaden the definition a bit. An [article in Sapiens](#) reminds us that there were pioneers in North America maybe tens of thousands of years earlier. The article points to at least five sites in North America with solid scientific evidence of much earlier habitation.

**Chaco: Done in more by a degraded environment than political strife?** A new study out of the University of Cincinnati finds that Ancestral Puebloan activity in the centuries leading up to the classic Chaco era set the stage for collapse of the culture. David Lentz and colleagues use pollen and microbotanical tree samples to create a timeline of the health of the ecosystem surrounding Chaco. They found that after centuries of continuous extraction of slow-growing resources, especially juniper, local woodlands had become too decimated to recover.

**Southwest Turkeys: Not your average Butterballs.** An article in *Discover* magazine updates our idea of the role of the turkey in SW culture. For centuries they were mostly bred for their feathers and treated almost as pets. The authors report, however, that when deer populations declined around the year 1150 Ancestral Puebloans found a new use for the turkey. A millenia ago two subspecies existed. Merriam’s turkey is the same one you see nowadays roaming the Rockies and high deserts. The other was the Puebloan subspecies. Both were occasionally raised together and interbred. Neither subspecies descended to become your Thanksgiving dinner. That said, genetic traces of the Puebloan turkey live on in today’s wild turkeys. More intriguing, turkey DNA helped solve the riddle of where the Ancestral Puebloans migrated to. You can read more on this in [Discover](#) magazine.

**Ancestral potato eyes comeback as successor to modern spud.** Last year SJBAS had a Zoom presentation on how two archaeologists from Utah are exploring the role of an ancient potato species in Ancestral Puebloan culture. Since then scientists with a USDA lab in New Mexico have successfully cross-bred the heritage species with a “bridge” potato variety that could lead to a commercial product. This hybrid, while admittedly years from your local market, would be drought- and cold-tolerant and have a shelf-life of years. You can read the full article in [The Counter](#).

**BLM proposes a ban on new oil and gas leases within a ten-mile radius of Chaco Culture Historic Park.** The Biden administration will publish their proposed rule in a forthcoming issue of the Federal Register. One archaeologist estimated that there are over 4,000 undocumented indigenous sites in the buffer zone. The ban will stay in place for 20 years.

### SJBAS Elected Officers and Other Board Members

President	Susan Hicks	<a href="mailto:sc53hicks@gmail.com">sc53hicks@gmail.com</a>
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Programming chair	Janice Sheftel	<a href="mailto:janicesheftel@gmail.com">janicesheftel@gmail.com</a>
Publicity chair	Rusty Chamberlain	<a href="mailto:chambrke@aol.com">chambrke@aol.com</a>
Social chair	Michelle and Mark McKibben	<a href="mailto:michellemckibben56@gmail.com">michellemckibben56@gmail.com</a>
Webmaster	Lyle Hancock	<a href="mailto:lylehancock54@gmail.com">lylehancock54@gmail.com</a>

SJBAS Membership renewals are due by January 31<sup>st</sup> each year. If you need to renew a lapsed membership or join SJBAS, please complete the [SJBAS Annual Membership Form](#), make your check for \$15 (\$30 family, \$10 student) payable to 'SJBAS' and mail with the Annual Membership Form to: SJBAS, Attn: Treasurer, P.O. Box 3153, Durango, CO 81302.