



THE MOKI MESSENGER

November 2024

San Juan Basin Archaeological Society
sjbas.org

SJBAS Monthly Meeting: November 13

“**SJBAS meeting** – “Recent Insights into the Fremont People of Uinta Basin, Utah” by Elizabeth Hora, Public Archaeologist with the Utah State Historic Preservation Office.

A reception kicks things off at 6:30 p.m. in the foyer of the Center of Southwest Studies with the zoom presentation starting at 7 PM. Details are on sjbas.org.

President’s Message

Greetings fellow members:

The end of the year is fast approaching and we are all busy with holiday planning. Please include attending the annual brunch in your activities. As usual, there will be door prizes and a silent auction as well as good food and conversation. If you have items for the auction, please bring them.

As you can see from this issue, we have had a number of great trips recently. Trips help SJBAS a great organization by providing real world examples of the things described and discussed in our monthly presentations. Rusty Chamberlin hosted a meeting of trip coordinators recently and we have a list of proposed trips scheduled for next year. Stay tuned as the schedule is finalized.



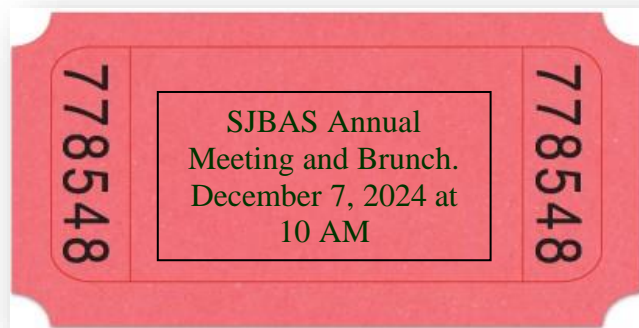
This will be the last event organized by Mark and Michelle McKibben and we wish to thank them for their years of service and also welcome their replacements, Tammie and Joel Barger.

See you at the brunch.

Paul Landrum
President

Annual Meeting and Holiday Brunch Set for December 7th

Once again, we are planning our in-person Annual Meeting and Holiday Brunch! The event will take place on Saturday, December 7th, 2024 at 10:00 am in the Vallecito Room at the Fort Lewis College Student Union.



The festivities will feature a catered brunch, a review of our 2024 field trips, introduction of new members, door prizes, a special archival slide show of SJBAS's early years and our Annual Meeting with election of officers.

The per person cost for the event is \$26.00. The cost covers the caterer, room rental, and use of the AV equipment with a technician. You may download a reservation form [here](#) and complete and mail it in. The check (Payable to SJBAS) goes to: SJBAS, Attn: Mary Moorehead, PO Box 3153, Durango, CO 81302. Please return your reservation form and check by November 20, 2024.

Please bring checks to pay for your 2025 dues. The new and renewal membership form is [here](#).

If you have an item that you wish to donate as a door prize this year, please bring the item wrapped. Come prepared for some holiday fun and let's look forward to 2025!

Volunteers are welcomed to help with set-up and clean-up. To volunteer or for additional information, contact Michelle McKibben at: michellemckibben56@gmail.com or 219-921-6791

Bargers Take over Social Chair Duties as McKibbens become Emeritus

In 2025 SJBAS social activities will be honcho'd by Tammie and Joel Barger. Mark and Michelle stepped down after five years and some amazing social functions that have helped bring us together. They will still be around to offer guidance.

Tammie and Joel moved to Durango from Houston where they raised three sons. One of them had moved to Durango some years back and they decided this would be a great place to retire. Tammie had worked in the oil and gas industry and Joel, a mechanical engineer and later software developer, worked on various power generation and pipeline projects. Joel said they were drawn to the Four Corners because of the geology. "There are no rocks in Houston, only sand," he said. And then came the fascination with Archaeology...



Trip Report: Mud Springs Pueblo and Ismay Trading Post Area, October 4

On Oct. 4, 13 intrepid SJBAS members met with Diane McBride, to explore Cortez area sites. Diane is a former SW Alliance site coordinator, supervising volunteers monitoring sites in Sand Canyon NM. She also worked with Hisatsinom Archeology Conservancy, evaluating private property archeological sites with her late husband.





Our first site was just west of the Cortez airport at Mud Springs Pueblo that was purchased for preservation by The Archeological Conservancy in 1982. Diane is its site monitor. A series of large room blocks, 60 of which are kivas, hug the Mud Springs canyon.

Two towers were present at this P3 site, but now just foundations are seen. The larger tower is tri-walled (three concentric rings) similar, but larger than the one at Aztec. Remnants of a check dam



span the small canyon. A smaller P2 site is further up a small hill.

After exploring the area and its sherds, we drove to Sutcliffe Winery for a shady lunch. We then proceeded to Ismay trading post. We saw the Ismay rock panel along route 160 and then walked up to the larger panel on a rock down the road from the trading post. We then drove a bit down the road to access a trail

leading up the rock formation behind the panel.

We hiked up to Boulder House site, a large boulder with adobe remnant walls and a small panel. Above us on the mesa top a Pueblo I site taunted us and since had run out of time many vowed to return. We concluded our trip with wine tasting at Sutcliffe Winery.

Members on the trip included; Lorraine and Hunter McCleary, Cindy Werland, Tish Varney, Elena Piazzisi, Bart Womack, Randy Graham, Libby Shafer, Mary Ann Nelson, and new members, Teresa Wright and Jan Moraczewski and Tammie and Joel Barger. *—Lorraine McCleary*

Trip Report: Cedar Mesa Backcountry Sites, October 8-10

Eleven SJBAS members took part in this three-day, car-camping field trip to Cedar Mesa in SE Utah. Everyone arrived late Tuesday morning and set up camp at our usual camping area near Comb Wash and Highway 95 on public lands administered by the BLM. Except for one other camper, we

had the whole camping area to ourselves, a rare treat. After lunch, we carpooled to the trailhead in Lower Mule Canyon and hiked about 6 miles to visit several Ancestral Puebloan sites from the 1200's CE.



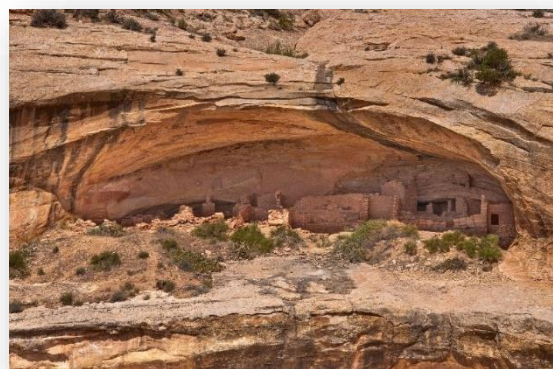
On Wednesday, we carpooled to one of the trailheads in the Slickhorn Canyons complex and hiked a challenging route to reach a rarely visited remote site. Lyle assured the group that the hike was much easier 12 years ago. We did not visit the other sites as originally planned because we ran out of time and energy.

On Thursday, we decided to forego any hard hikes (did I mention mutiny) and visit sites with better accessibility. We broke camp and drove to the trailhead for the unique Cave

Towers site, a 1250 CE village with multiple towers

situated on the edge of Mule Canyon on Utah school trust lands. The hike to the site was less than a mile, and we spent an enjoyable morning exploring the various towers, flowing spring, and nearby cliff dwellings. It was obvious that this site was most important for its reliable and plentiful source of water, even in a 30-year drought. Then we visited the Mule Canyon Interpretive Site where a large kiva, 2-story tower, and 12-room block occupied from 1000 – 1150 CE had been excavated and preserved. This site was much less defensive in design than the later cliff dwellings built in the 1200's.

Finally, we hiked the developed half-mile interpretive trail to view the Butler Wash Cliff



Dwelling, a defensive site from the 1200's. It was another beautiful day, and everyone appreciated the easier hiking.

Participants were Holly Hagan, Barry Spear, Barb Hancock, Chris Anderson, Mary Moorehead, Sherry Suenram, Cindy Werland, Lorraine McCleary, Tom DeHudy, Denise Lane and trip leader, Lyle Hancock. *—Lyle Hancock*

Trip Report: Chaco Archaeo-Astronomy, Sept 16-18

With most participants arriving on the 26th we mapped out an itinerary for the next day. Former Park rangers GB Cornucopia and Dr. Cherilynn Morrow came by in the morning and we decided to visit Una Veda glyph panel and ruins. Kirk Peterson, a new member and former interpretative ranger at Chaco conducted the tour and explained some of the things we saw. We



returned to the visitor center to meet up with GB



Cornucopia (Chaco Ranger for 34 years) and Dr. Cherilynn Morrow (a NASA PUNCH member; see [here](#) for a description of this science program) who led us to the sun site where she explained her research on an odd sun petroglyph. It appears

as a circular sun with the penumbras extending out from the perimeter, which could only be seen at an eclipse during the solar maximum. She and other astronomers calculated that the last time such an event occurred at Chaco was during its occupation by Ancestral Puebloans. In addition, she found that a spiral on the back side of the boulder was split by shadows during other solar or lunar events and a nearby triangular promontory on a ridge also exhibited an interaction with the spiral during lunar and solar events.

Later that evening we attended a performance by Jemez flute maker and player Marlon Magdalena. He also provided an explanation of the cosmology associated with the traditional symbols included on his instruments. His mastery of both the craftsmanship in making the instruments and in playing them was amazing.

The next morning, we awoke at 0-dark thirty and arrived at the gate before it opened at 7:00 AM to take advantage of the cool morning for the 3.8 mile hike to Penasco Blanco and the Supernova glyph site. The sunrise was spectacular and we stopped at several glyph panels. We also found several animal tracks including elk and a possible mountain lion. The recent wet monsoon produced a “second spring” and many plants took advantage to blossom.



By the time we reached the supernova site it was late morning and the heat was increasing. Dr. Morrow and GB provided some insights into the super nova event. Several members continued on to Penasco Blanco, seeing a huge plaza enclosed by curved walls of surrounding structures. There were examples of fine masonry, kivas and (unfortunately) several museum rocks above the midden. Kirk pointed out a Chacoan road leading toward Pueblo Bonito. The hike back to the visitor center was a brutal 3.5 miles in the sun, but everyone survived.

After recovering from the mid-day hike, we returned to the visitor center where an astronomy club from Albuquerque had dozens of telescopes set up. After listening to a lecture on Chaco alignments and archeo-astronomy, we got to see various planets and other celestial bodies. Upon returning to our campsite a fire was built and people gathered for a while but soon faded away after a long day. The next day people broke camp and drove away to Durango, Albuquerque, Phoenix and Reno.

Participants were: Mary and Art Rieke, Rick and Rae Moeller, Paul Landrum, Mary Moorehead, Jean Walter, Chris and Kay Anderson, Betsy Moore, Phil Bruckbauer, Misha Mohr, Kirk Peterson, Rita Jo Anthony, Jim Holway, Tom DeHudy, Denise Lane, Randy Graham.

For more information on the work of Cornucopia and Morrow you should [watch this video](#).

–Paul Landrum

Upcoming SJBAS Events for 2024

[Contact trip organizers for details.
See sjbas.org for the latest version of the full-year calendar.]

November 13	SJBAS meeting – “Recent Insights into the Fremont People of Uinta Basin, Utah” by Elizabeth Hora, Public Archaeologist with the Utah State Historic Preservation Office.
December 7	SJBAS annual meeting and holiday brunch

Upcoming non-SJBAS Events

November 5	“Early Research on Sand Canyon Pueblo,” by Bruce Bradley. 7 PM, Cortez. Hosted by Hisatsinom Chapter. More information is here .
November 7	“The unique importance of archaeology in Colorado,” CEO of Crow Canyon Archaeological Center Elizabeth Perry explores little-known aspects of Southwest archaeology and their significance. Part of the FLC Lifelong Learning Series. 7 PM Ft Lewis College.
November 21	“Continuity through Creation: A living culture through the art of the Zuni people,” a Crow Canyon webinar. More information is here .

Additional SJBAS Volunteer Opportunities

Program Co-Chair: We are looking for a volunteer to work with our Program Chair, Janice Sheftel. The Program Chair secures speakers for regular membership meetings and works with other SJBAS members to organize other lectures, such as the John W. Sanders Lecture. This is a Board position. Please contact Janice at janicesheftel@gmail.com for more information.

Membership Co-Chair: The co-chair will work with Tish Varney and, eventually, move into the chair position. The Membership Chair is responsible for organizing recruitment of new SJBAS members and supporting Board members in encouraging active participation by members. This is a Board position. Please contact Tish Varney (tishvarney@att.net) for more information.

Webmaster Assistant: If you know your way around a computer, please consider volunteering to assist our Webmaster, Lyle Hancock, when he is unable to access a computer. The Webmaster is responsible for maintaining and updating the SJBAS website- www.sjbas.org. Please contact Lyle for more information, lylehancock99@gmail.com. Training and support will be provided for all positions.

We look forward to working with you! We need you!!

SJBAS Elected Officers and Board Members

President	Paul Landrum
Vice President	Thomas Polich
Secretary	Susan Hicks
Treasurer	Mary Moorehead
Communications chair	Byron Kellogg
Membership chair	Tish Varney
Field Trip Program coordinator	Rusty Chamberlain
Education/PAAC representative	Betsy Moore
<i>Moki Messenger</i> editor	Hunter McCleary
Programming chair	Janice Sheftel
Publicity chair	Rusty Chamberlain
Social chair	Michelle and Mark McKibben
Webmaster	Lyle Hancock

SJBAS Membership renewals are due by January 31st each year. Individual dues drop to \$15 after June 30. If you need to renew a lapsed membership or join SJBAS, please complete the [SJBAS Annual Membership Form](#), make your check for \$25 (\$50 family, \$10 student) payable to 'SJBAS' and mail with the Annual Membership Form only to: SJBAS, Attn: Treasurer, P.O. Box 3153, Durango, CO 81302.