



THE MOKI MESSENGER

March-April 2026

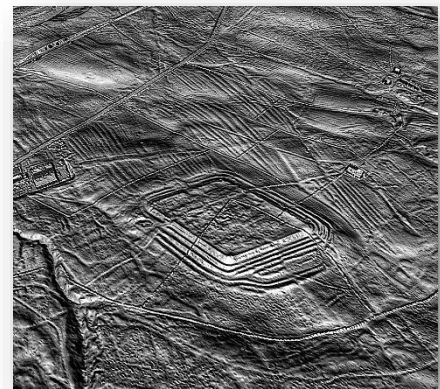
San Juan Basin Archaeological Society

sjbas.org

SJBAS Monthly Meeting: March 11

SJBAS Meeting – After a brief business meeting, Daniel Hampsen of the Crow Canyon Archaeological Center will present a talk on “Hidden on the Surface: Preliminary Findings from an ongoing Review of Southwest LiDAR Data” The presentation will be live-streamed on Zoom. See SJBAS.org for details.

A reception starts things off at 6:30 p.m. in the Center of Southwest Studies foyer and the presentation begins at 7 PM in the Lyceum.



President's Message

Dear Members and Friends,

It is an honor to serve as your new President. Since 1979, the San Juan Basin Archaeological Society has long played an important role in advancing understanding of the deep human history of our region, and I look forward to working with you to continue that mission.

A reminder that annual membership dues are now due, or in some cases overdue. Payment is necessary to continue receiving the *Moki Messenger*, the bi-monthly e-mail alerts and to participate in Society field trips and special programs. Our monthly lectures, however, remain open and free to members and to the public. We encourage you to invite friends and neighbors

who may have an interest in the archaeology and history of the Four Corners region. I will admit that I learn something new and fascinating at every lecture I attend!

The Board, with the significant assistance of Lyle Hancock, has reformatted our website to improve access to information. The revised site makes it easier to retrieve details about upcoming field trips, review past lecture topics, and consult the annual calendar. We believe these changes will make participation more straightforward and transparent.

SJBAS depends on volunteers. In the months ahead, we will need the help of our members as we continue educating both the public and ourselves about the archaeology of this region. The earliest inhabitants of this landscape arrived as many as 26,000 years ago, as suggested by the footprints discovered at White Sands in New Mexico. The responsibility to preserve and accurately interpret that record is ongoing.

We are working toward measurable improvements: increased membership, broader participation, and stronger collaboration with Fort Lewis College and the Center of Southwest Studies, and other educational institutions and fellow archaeological societies in the Region. We are also examining how to better educate, advocate, and communicate our mission across all cultures and communities of the San Juan Basin and the greater Four Corners area.

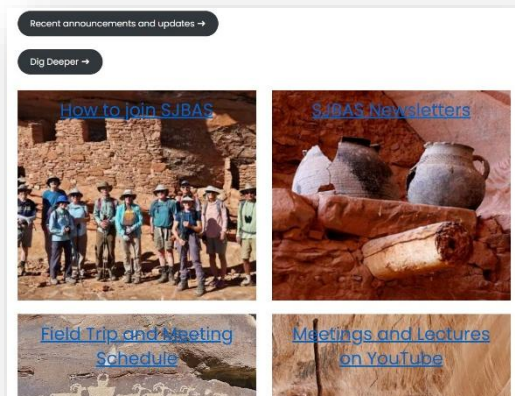
Thank you for your continued support. We look forward to seeing you at an upcoming lecture, field trip or social event.

Sincerely,

Thomas Polich
President, San Juan Basin Archaeological Society

SJBAS Revamps its Website

Our webmaster, Lyle Hancock, has been very busy this winter. He has totally redesigned our Home Page to make it an even better and more topical resource for not only members but the public. Its more engaging, even simpler format lets you easily find out about our trips, meetings, lectures, educational opportunities and support for FLC and the Center of Southwest Studies. Please take a few minutes to check it out. SJBAS.ORG



SJBAS Field Trip and Educational Opportunities Updates

Southern Ute Cultural Center Tour on March 24 has a few remaining lots. Many of us have been to the Southern Ute Cultural Center in Ignacio but few have seen it guided by a tribal member. If you want to take in this wonderful local resource contact Tammie Barger at tab2105@comcast.net.

PAAC Lithics Workshop, April 4. A day-long lithics workshop taught by the Assistant State Archaeologist at the Center of Southwest studies is now full. A second in-person course might be offered if there is enough interest. Contact the state archaeologist directly at hc_publicarchaeology@state.co.us to be put on a waiting list for a possible second course. Colorado State Archaeologist, Holly Norton is also offering a 5-part online course on "Introduction to Historical Archaeology." More information on this course is [here](#).

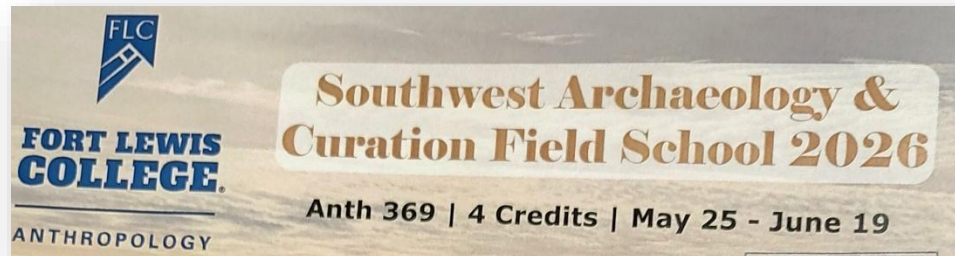
Dates Set for Second Field School Partnership with Crow Canyon. Following the success of last year's partnership with Crow Canyon, SJBAS members will have an opportunity on May 1-3 to volunteer at another dig in the Cortez area. This one will be at Champagne Springs and will also be overseen by professional archaeologists. Participating members will spend a day of orientation followed by one to two days of hands-on experience. For more information contact Thomas Polich at thomas.polich@gmail.com.

Field Trip to Paquimé added to the Calendar. SJBAS is offering a four-day guided trip to Paquimé historic site in Chihuahua, Mexico for the dates 14-18 October. As Moki goes to press the trip is almost full. The base cost is about \$1,400 per person with additional charges for US lodging and some meals. For more information contact Hunter at hunter.mccleary@gmail.com. This has a rated difficulty of Easy-Active so you must be able to hike two miles continuously, some of it over uneven ground and some of it up a steep, short hill.

Mesa Verde Deep Dive Museum Tour. By popular demand a second date was added for a guided backroom tour of the Mesa Verde Museum. Unfortunately, that second date in April is now also full and wait-listed. You may contact trip organizer Lorie Hansen at Lmhansen39@gmail.com to be added to the wait list. So there are no spoiler-alerts a write-up of this trip will not appear until the May-June *Moki* issue.

FLC Archaeologist Laying Plans for Field and Curation School for this Spring

Mario Borrero, assistant professor of Anthropology at FLC is laying the groundwork for a combination Archaeology and Curation Field School to be held this spring. The field school site has yet to be identified but the curation school will be held at the Center of Southwest Studies using existing collections that have yet to be cataloged. The intriguing part for SJBAS is that he welcomes participation by our members in either the field or curation. While the field school and curation modules require week's long commitments from his students SJBAS members may participate for as little as one day. You may learn more about this program by contacting Dr. Barerro at mrborrero@fortlewis.edu. SJBAS will alert members to further details as they become available.



SJBAS Welcomes Elena Piazzisi as New Membership Chair

Elena takes over membership chair from her mom, Tish Varney. Tish has done an amazing job over the years of attracting new members and retaining existing members.

SJBAS Board Meeting Reports Summary

January

The Board worked on the 2026 SJBAS budget. A final budget will be presented at the February Board meeting.

The Junction Creek Picnic Area has been reserved for our June 10th picnic and Semi-Annual Meeting. Mark your calendar! The Holiday Brunch will be held on December 5th.

Elena Piazzisi has volunteered to become our Membership Chair. The Board approved her appointment unanimously. Thank you, Elena.

Field Trips and monthly lectures are posted on the SJBAS website (sjbas.org).

The John W. Sanders Center of Southwest Studies Spring semester intern is Macy Robinson. She is especially interested in ethical legal factors in collections and care.

We are beginning to look into setting up the option to do membership forms, payments and donations online. The first step is to set up a PayPal account. If you have computer expertise in this area we would appreciate your help. Please contact Thom Polich

(thomas.polich@gmail.com).

February

Vice-President Andy Dennison submitted his resignation due to personal reasons he needs to attend to. Thank you for your service, Andy. Thom, with the help of the Board, will begin the search for a new VP.

The final 2026 budget was agreed upon. If you would like a copy, please contact any Board member.

SJBAS has a total of \$10,000 which was generously donated by Elaine and Michael Moravan. We are in the process of determining the best use of this money. Ideas being considered are: increasing SJBAS social media presence, fund a couple of tables at the Farmer's Market, and increasing student engagement and intern support. This will require further planning.

SJBAS has a Letter of Agreement (LOA) with Canyon of the Ancients National Monument. This allows us to do Field Trips at approved sites. Trip Organizers must carry a copy of the LOA. The next Board meeting is scheduled for May 21st, 1:30-3:30. All SJBAS members are invited to attend.

–Submitted by Susan Hicks, SJBAS Secretary

Upcoming SJBAS Events for 2026

[Contact trip organizers for details.
See sjbas.org for the latest version of the [full-year](#) calendar.
Dates and event descriptions may change]

March 11	SJBAS Meeting—Speaker TBA. 7:00 PM Lyceum at Center of Southwest Studies.
March 24	Southern Ute Cultural Center Tour. Contact Tammie Barger at tab2105@comcast.net .
April 4	PAAC Lithics Analysis Workshop – presented at the Center of Southwest Studies. This class is full but contact Betsy Moore if you'd like to see more offerings like this. bmoore5552@gmail.com
April 8	SJBAS Meeting— Angela Huster of Chronicle Heritage will talk about "The Hohokam Culture of Southern Arizona." 7:00 PM Lyceum at Center of Southwest Studies.
April 24-27	Zuni Pueblo Tour. This moderate level, 3-day trip will include tours guided by Zuni tribal members to places such as Badger Springs, Village of the Great Kivas, and more. Motel or camping. Limit 16. Trip is full, but you may contact Susan to be added to the wait list. Susan Hicks at sjbashicks@gmail.com
May 1-3	Champagne Spring dig (Dove Creek). See the above brief for more information. Contact Thomas Polich at thomas.polich@gmail.com

May 13	SJBAS Meeting— “Continental-scale faunal exchange event with Eurasia that produced the African fauna we know today.” This talk is by Dr. John Kappelman, emeritus professor at the University of Texas, Austin. 7:00 PM Lyceum at Center of Southwest Studies.
June TBA	Goodman Point Day Trip, Contact Rusty Chamberlain at chambrke@aol.com .

Educational Opportunities on Southwest Archaeology

As Compiled by Betsy Moore, SJBAS PAAC Coordinator
[If not offered nearby they can be seen on Zoom]

March 12	“Living Memory, Landscapes, and Connection,” A zoom presentation on the Pueblo of Acoma’s history that recall movement and collective Ancestral Puebloan memory. Hosted by Crow Canyon and moderated by Theresa Pasqual. 4 PM. You may register here .
March 14	“What the River Knows,” is a new documentary on what the receding waters of Lake Powell are revealing archaeologically. It was done in collaboration with Crow Canyon. 7 PM at the Durango Arts Center. More information is here .
March 19	“A Globalized Past? Long-Distance Exchange and Interaction in the US Southwest and Mexican Northwest.” Zoom presentation sponsored on Zoom by Old Pueblo Archaeology Center. 7 PM Pacific Daylight Time. More information is here .
April 4	“From Rocks to Tools: Basic Lithic Analysis Workshop,” put on by Sarah A. Allaun, Assistant State Archaeologist, Colorado Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation. This is an in-person, day-long workshop. Free and to be held at the Center of Southwest Studies. More information is here .
April 16	“Ghost Canals of the Phoenix Area.” Zoom presentation sponsored on Zoom by Old Pueblo Archaeology Center. 7 PM Pacific Daylight Time. More information is here .
May 13 – August 5	“The Mogollon Culture of the US Southwest.” A 14-session online adult education class with archaeologist Allen Dart, RPA sponsored by Old Pueblo Archaeology Center. More information is here . To register or for more information contact Old Pueblo at info@oldpueblo.org or 520-798-1201.
May 21	“Exposing Frauds, Busting Myths, and Solving Mysteries in American Southwest Archaeology” by archaeologist Kenneth L. Feder, PhD, sponsored by Old Pueblo Archaeology Center. A Zoom presentation at 7 PM Pacific Daylight Time. More information is here .

SJBAS Elected Officers and Board Members

President	Thomas Polich
Vice President	OPEN
Secretary	Susan Hicks
Treasurer	Mary Moorehead
Communications chair	Byron Kellogg
Membership chair	Elena Piazzisi
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	Tammie and Joel Barger
Webmaster	Lyle Hancock

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

If you would like to join SJBAS or need to renew a lapsed membership, just print and complete the Annual Membership Form; sign the membership form, Liability Waiver and Proper Etiquette forms; write a check payable to “SJBAS” for the appropriate amount; and mail the Annual Membership Form, the signed liability form and your check to our Chapter Treasurer. Please keep your signed *Proper Etiquette forms* for your records.