

The Uncompahgre Journal

January 2023

CHIPETA CHAPTER OF THE COLORADO ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Volume 40 Issue 1

Mark Your Calendar

Jan 4: [Montrose County Historical Society](#) monthly meeting with Sally Johnson on the Alferd Packer incident. Rooms 1 and 2, County Events Center, 7:00 pm.

Jan 11: [SJBAS monthly meeting](#) with Gretchen Gürtler on "Unique Artifacts of the Gallina Culture." Lyceum, Center of Southwest Studies, Fort Lewis College, 7:00 p.m.



Our January Presentation

Community, Ritual, and Violence: The Early Pueblo I Settlement of Florida Mesa, Colorado, as Revealed by Recent Excavations

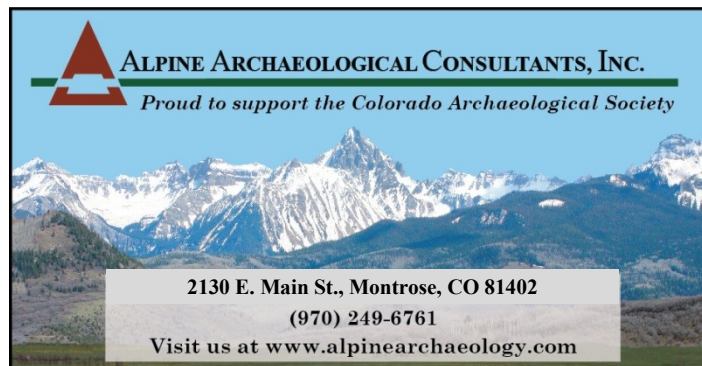
by Rand Greubel

Alpine Archaeology conducted extensive excavations on seven prehistoric sites on Florida Mesa, near Durango, Colorado, in 2018 and 2019 for the Colorado Department of Transportation. The sites were in the path of the new alignment of US Highway 550 currently being constructed south of Durango. Three of the sites were Ancestral Puebloan hamlets dating to the early Pueblo I period, approximately AD 750-850. The excavations revealed 12 pithouses, multiple burials, and evidence for at least one episode of extreme violence. One of the pithouses is among the largest ever discovered for the early Pueblo I period in the Durango area and is interpreted as a possible ceremonial structure. The investigations add to the accumulating evidence that the Durango area was one of the most densely occupied and socially dynamic regions of the Southwest during this time period.



Our January Speaker: Rand Greubel

Rand Greubel has worked as an archaeologist in Colorado and the western US for almost 40 years. He has a BA in Anthropology from the University of Colorado and an MA in Archaeology and Heritage from the University of Leicester, UK. He is a principal investigator at Alpine Archaeological Consultants in Montrose, where he has worked for over 33 years. He began his archaeological career working under Dr. William Buckles on the Dallas Dam (Ridgway Reservoir) project in 1980 and in addition to Alpine, has worked for Nickens and Associates, Metcalf Archaeological Consultants, and the US Forest Service.



The Squint and Juanita Moore Scholarship

Created in honor of Chipeta Chapter founding member Carlyle "Squint" Moore and his wife, the scholarship is awarded each year to a deserving high school senior or college student intending to enroll or already enrolled in an Anthropology or Archaeology program. Students can apply online at collegeXpress—and note that the deadline is April 1.

The scholarship is managed by the Montrose Community Foundation. If you wish to donate, please send your tax deductible donations to the Montrose Community Foundation, PO Box 3020, Montrose, CO 81402. Please put "Moore Scholarship" in the memo line.

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President's Corner

by Sally Johnson

Photo by Sally Johnson

Here we are ending the year 2022 on a cold and snowy last few days. We would like to thank everyone for their continued support for this past year and hope to see you in the upcoming year. I want to thank everyone who joined us at the holiday gathering at the Silver Basin Brewery in December. The Silent Auction (*below*) raised over \$100.00 for the Scholarship fund (thank you, members, for the items for the Auction). We met some new members, and we encouraged the patrons playing cards to join the society. Nick Ard supplied a wonderful slide show during the event.

Leigh Ann has some wonderful speakers lined up for the next couple of months (*see page 7*) and we

will start planning the field trips for the year. I plan on doing another trip to the Vernal area and 9-mile area next year. I would also like to get to Cortez and Moab for another wonderful trip. We would love to have someone suggest an area or even lead a trip: just let us know.

See you in the new year of 2023, I cannot believe we are 23 years past the space age of 2000. Who would have thought of even imagining being alive in 2023 with no flying cars like the Jetsons?



Chipeta Holiday Party at the Silver Basin Brewery



Photos of the Chipeta Holiday Party, including the one on page 3, courtesy of Leigh Ann Hunt.

From the Editor

I noticed in the last few months a confluence of research related to the origins of the alphabet. I'll start with a recent study that is very specific and tightly focused, and then get to a work of larger scale. The first includes my old friend, the louse.

This very fun study has to do with the discovery of the earliest complete sentence written in the Canaanite language, dating approximately from the 17th Century BCE. I know what you're thinking: was it a description of the Canaanite religion or a profound philosophical truth? Or a record of an important political decision?" Nah, get real. What proportion of our daily discourse is profound? This inscription falls under the category of the most mundane, but that's what I like about it. It was inscribed on the base of a comb, made from ivory, and the translation reads "May this tusk root out the lice of the hair and the beard." The comb is just like yours and mine, with one half having larger, wider spaced tines, and the other half having finer, more closely-spaced tines (who knew that this idea could be so old?). It has been interpreted, on the basis of this inscription, I assume, such that the larger tines are for looking good, and the finer tines are for combing out the lice. (Note that the authors looked for—and found—body parts of lice on the comb).

So much for the mundane. What's so important about this study? I think that it reveals something held in common by the rich, who could afford louse combs

made of ivory, and the poor, who certainly could not. We know that these early literate societies were hierarchies, and there was much that separated the wealthy and politically important from the poor and expendable. But we can assume that they all shared a susceptibility to the prevalent diseases, inadequate hygiene, and pests, such as lice.

In the larger-scale work, Johanna Drucker argues in a new book, that the alphabet—as opposed to glyphs—was invented “by Semitic speakers in the ancient Near East. Alphabetic scripts all derive from the same root; as they spread, their letterforms were modified (Drucker 2022, cited in Hayes 2022).” The Canaanite alphabet is at or near the beginning of this long line of descent. For this reason, as the only complete sentence known from one of the world's first alphabetic scripts, the short piece of advice inscribed on an ivory louse-comb is a very big deal.

References:

Hayes, Brian

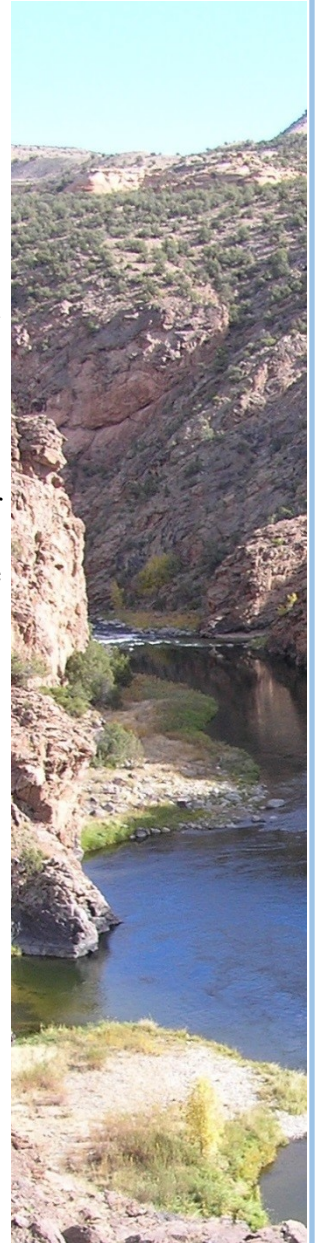
2023 Writing History. *American Scientist* 111(1), January-February. (A review of Johanna Drucker's *Inventing the Alphabet: the Origins of Letters from Antiquity to the Present*; University of Chicago Press, 2022).

Nalewicki, Jennifer

2022 One of the oldest written sentences on record blasts hair and beard lice. Live Science, November 14, 2022. Accessed January 1, 2023. https://www.livescience.com/canaanite-lice-comb-inscription?utm_campaign=0CFA9D5B-9285-47DF-A018-5ED9E96C0C0B

Vainstub, Daniel, Madeleine Mumcuoglu, Michael G. Hasel, Katherine M Heslerr, Miriam Lavi, Rivka Rabinovich, Yuval Goren, and Yosef Garfinkel

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Chipeta Chapter
Colorado Archaeological Society
P.O. Box 593
Montrose, Colorado 81402



Membership Application

Date: _____

Name: _____

Street or RR Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

(email required to receive Chipeta Chapter newsletters & field trip info)

Check One:

☐ New

☐ Renewal

Annual Dues* (includes state CAS dues): Check one

☐ Family (2 or more members same household)\$40

☐ Individual\$35

☐ Student (Circle if Individual or Family)\$25

☐ Secondary (Circle one) Individual (\$10) or Family... (\$15)

☐ Opt out of printed *Southwest Lore*

**Southwest Lore* is the journal of the Colorado Archaeological Society: print copies are mailed quarterly, and a .pdf is posted to Member365 for download.

Photos by Dennis DeVore



Code of Ethics

As a member of the Colorado Archaeological Society, I pledge to:

- Uphold local, state, and federal antiquities laws.
- Respect the property rights of landowners.
- Report vandalism to appropriate authorities.
- Support only scientifically and legally conducted archaeological activities.
- Conduct field and/or laboratory activities using professionally accepted standards.
- Not condone the sale, exchange, or purchase of artifacts obtained from illegal activities.
- Be sensitive to the cultural histories and spiritual practices of groups that are the subject of archaeological investigation.
- Accept the responsibility, if serving as principal investigator, to publish the results and make the collection available for further study.

Signature: _____ Other Family Signature: _____

Make checks payable to "Colorado Archaeological Society" and mail the signed application to:

Chipeta Chapter
P.O. Box 593, Montrose, CO 81402

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- **Scholarship:** Jon Horn / Bill Harris / Fred Henderson, scholarships@chipetachaptercas.org

CHIPETA CHAPTER WEBSITE

- <https://www.chipetachaptercas.org>

TO JOIN OR RENEW:

- Go to the Chipeta Chapter website and follow the membership links.

Program for Avocational Archaeological Certification (PAAC)

For information on On-Demand PAAC courses, visit:

<https://www.historycolorado/paac-event-schedule>.

PAAC Contacts

Rebecca Simon

rebecca.simon@state.co.us

Assistant State Archaeologist/
303-866-4671

Upcoming Speakers

February TBD

March Tentatively Dr. Dudley Garner, Western Wyoming Community College

April Dr. Tim Riley, Price museum

Want More?

Archaeology Southwest is a great link to find out about current issues and events relating to Southwest Archaeology.

Field Trip Committee

Leigh Ann Hunt, Joe Oglesby, and George Decker

For more information on upcoming field trips and to sign up, please contact the Field Trip Leader

Masthead photo courtesy of Carol Patterson. All other unattributed photos are by the editor.