



# The Uncompahgre Journal

November 2023 CHIPETA CHAPTER OF THE COLORADO ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Volume 40 Issue 9

## Our November Presentation

### Mark Your Calendar

**Nov 1:** [Montrose Historical Society](#) monthly meeting with Kevin Chesmire's video on Dave Wood Road. Montrose County Event Center, 7:00 pm.

**Nov 7:** [Hisatsinom Chapter](#) monthly meeting with Tom Windes on hard times at Bears Ears in the 13th century. First United Methodist Church, 515 Park St., Cortez, 7:00 pm. This presentation will also be on Zoom.

**Nov 8:** [San Juan Basin Archaeological Society](#) monthly meeting with Patrick Cruz understanding community in the Velarde Valley of New Mexico. Lyceum at the Center of Southwest Studies at Fort Lewis College, 7:00 pm. This presentation will also be on Zoom.

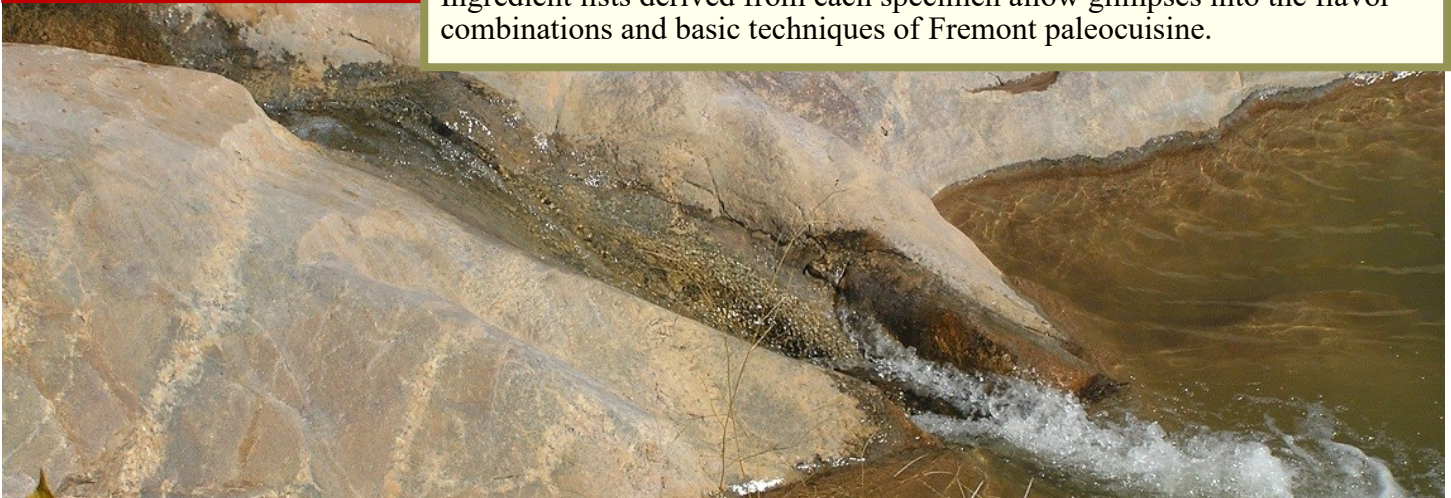
**Nov 15:** Chipeta Chapter CAS monthly meeting with Tim Riley on Fremont paleocuisine (*right*). United Methodist Church, 19 S. Park Ave, Montrose, 7:00 pm.

### Fremont Paleocuisine: Reconstructing Recipes from Rectal Remnants

by Tim Riley

The role of maize agriculture among the Fremont has been debated for decades. Archaeologists have organized dietary evidence from these widely dispersed communities, including faunal and floral debris, dental calculus studies, and experimental farming and foraging, to examine farming in the high desert. The Fremont farming/foraging frontier provides a framework to explore agriculture along the margins and the importance of diversified subsistence strategies across a network of rural communities.

Aside from the broad patterns of diet derived from skeletal stable isotope data, direct dietary evidence from Fremont communities remains scarce. Researchers have studied only a small number of Fremont coprolites from widely scattered sites. The coprolite record of neighboring Ancestral Puebloan communities is well-documented and contains specimens from maize-dependent nucleated pueblos and earlier dispersed farming villages. This coprolite data, along with specimens deposited by Archaic foragers across the Great Basin and northern Colorado Plateau, situates the Fremont data along a regional spectrum from foraging to agriculture. Framing each coprolite as a menu of consecutive meals yields insight into nuanced aspects of diet, including preparation and cooking techniques as well as deconstructed recipes. Ingredient lists derived from each specimen allow glimpses into the flavor combinations and basic techniques of Fremont paleocuisine.





## Our November Speaker

### Dr. Tim Riley



Dr. Tim Riley is the Director and Curator of Archaeology at the Utah State University Eastern Prehistoric Museum, located in Price. Tim was trained as an archaeologist, paleoethnobotanist, and palynologist (pollen scientist) under Vaughn M. Bryant. His primary research interests focus on how past human populations used the plant communities found along the Dinosaur Diamond Scenic Byway for food, medicine, and materials. One of his favorite artifact types is the lowly coprolite, or desiccated fecal material. These rare records of past diet provide a window into how one person combined different plant and animal components into a meal. Dr. Riley enjoys walking an audience through the ways we can understand “paleocuisine” and then serving a tasting menu of dishes based on the ingredients and cooking techniques identified through coprolite research.

Working on the northern Colorado Plateau, which preserves one of the richest rock art records in North America, Dr. Riley is also engaged in documenting rock art sites and works to educate visitors to the Diamond on the least impactful ways to visit these amazing cultural sites. Additionally, he is active in actualistic or experimental archaeology, where the original methods used to create artifacts are replicated. His favorite actualistic project to date was building several pit structures to assess the thermal insulation and other living conditions within the built environment.

Dr. Riley received his B.A. in Anthropology from the University of Chicago and his Ph.D. in Anthropology from Texas A&M University. Stop by the Prehistoric Museum to meet him and orient yourself to the cultural and paleontological landscapes that make the Dinosaur Diamond an incredible adventure for visitors of all ages and backgrounds.





## President's Corner

by Sally Johnson

*Photo by Sally Johnson*

November is here and the holidays are in full swing if you count Halloween. Next in a blink of an eye will be New Years, and we will be wondering where the year went. I want to thank everyone who stepped up to fill the board or continued to be a board member. It is always great to know that we have a strong membership that cares about the Chapter.

Here is a quick review of the business that was conducted as part of the October meeting. I will step down as President when the year ends. We needed to fill that position, and Alma Evans was nominated as Board President. As for the Vice President, Leigh Ann Hunt will stay on in that position.

We have created a subcommittee to help with the speakers or virtual guests. This will ease Leigh Ann's workload when she is out of state. Elizabeth Binder volunteered to take on the position of Secretary, if needed. For now, Susan Hendersen will stay in that position. Jim Douras and Nick Ard have agreed to stay on the board for another year as Treasurer and CAS representative, respectively. Another new replacement is Leigh Ann as the PACC representative. I will stay as the Membership Chair for next year. We will vote to confirm that slate of candidates at the November meeting, with the duties starting in January.

Again, I want to thank everyone for their continued support for the chapter.

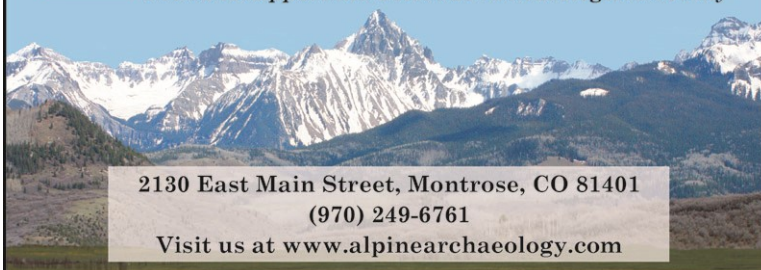
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## The Speaker Committee

At the October chapter meeting, our program arranger, Vice President Leigh Ann Hunt, proposed a different way to coordinate speakers for Chipeta's monthly meetings, because she will be unable to give it the time it deserves next year, and no one volunteered to replace her as VP. She proposed, and the membership approved, to create a new Program Committee of volunteers who would, as a group, contact and arrange speakers, decide on the schedule, and provide the information to our newsletter editor and our press releases. The Board would review their plans along the way at the afternoon board meeting. Our Bylaws specify only that the Vice President should coordinate speakers. This way, the Committee will be chaired by the Vice President but will be empowered to follow up on their own ideas for interesting and educational presentations, and the work load would be divided up among the group so that no one person shoulders it all. Thankfully, enough people stepped up so that we can try this out. Very exciting!

Another idea we will be pursuing is having speakers who are not present in person, but who can present using modern technology. When the lights go down in the hall after the speaker is introduced, all eyes would turn to the big screen, as usual. But there, they would see a speaker who is sitting in their own home or office, looking at our group through their computer screen. The speaker would cue their slides and discuss their topic with our group as usual, just on the screen instead of standing at the podium in the dark.

We believe that we could reach a much wider variety of speakers about a lot of new topics if we did not have to induce them to drive or fly to Western Colorado. Most of the other CAS chapters have been doing this for some time. If the Program Committee can make it work, we hope you, the membership, will enjoy "off-site" speakers as much as the traditional ones. We could also have pre-recorded presentations that were originally presented to another group, like Crow Canyon's webinars. Some speakers are just so popular, or expensive, that they need *big* audiences to attract them. If we were willing to watch a recorded presentation, we could still have a pleasant evening and perhaps have a discussion on our own.

So, if you, Dear Reader, have experience moderating Zoom presentations (or your grandchild does?), such as turning on the church computer, camera, and microphone, or typing audience questions out for the speaker to read and answer, please consider sharing your skills with the Program Committee to get this option off and running this coming year. Contact Leigh Ann or any board or committee member.

Leigh Ann sends a **big thank you** to the four members who have stepped up to help on the committee for 2024--Dennis Devore, Dan Elsner, Pat Reardon, and Alma Evans! Without them our programs would probably not be able to continue. And thank you to all members who are willing to forge ahead in the name of new and interesting archaeology talks.





## Wild Horse Field Trip

by Sally Johnson

We had a great field trip with George Decker in October looking for the wild horses. As always, George is full of knowledge of the Debeque area. George stopped at the little school house and gave some history of the pioneer families. Then we went to the rocks with cutting grooves (*left*), again George's knowledge is never ending. The next stop was the hoodoos that looked like a Mars landscape (*right*).



We started out with great weather, but then halfway through the trip it started to rain. At this point, we were heading into the wild horse preserve when George made a great call to turn around. It had really started to rain, and he knew that the mud would be awful. We did make a stop as the rain eased up for the moment and enjoyed lunch.



I just wanted to point out that most of our local trips are open to the Grand Junction Chapter to join us. This is a great way to meet other members—and what a small world we live in. (A couple of the members were related and grew up in Uravan. The history they shared over a sandwich and chips involved lightning in the West End area).



Most of the group had not been to the back roads of Debeque and were amazed at the wonders that were hidden there. We will make it back to the area in the spring just in time to see the wildflowers and the wild horse babies. As a side note, on the way back down the road we watched some rogue donkeys playing peek -a- boo. They were almost as good as seeing the horses. Thanks, George, for leading this trip.

*Photos courtesy of Sally Johnson*





## From the Editor

I saw a headline a couple of days ago, something about hundreds of Roman sites being discovered in Iraq and Syria, and I thought, “Ho hum, another lidar project. So what else is new? Fifty thousand sites identified in [*insert your favorite rainforest*].” Turns out it wasn’t lidar after all; instead, researchers were studying declassified satellite photos from the Cold War era. I should have noticed that it was Iraq and Syria: there aren’t that many rainforests in that part of the world, as far as I know.

But you do hear a lot about lidar these days, and it’s so repetitive. Seems like every few months there are headlines about the discovery of thousands of sites in the Amazon Basin, or in the Yucatan. Lidar is amazing, of course. You fly over an area and pepper it with many radar pulses every second and those pulses bounce back to a detector on the plane that measures the exact distance the pulse traveled. But that’s not the interesting part: what’s amazing about lidar is that it can somehow tell the difference between the ground surface and the vegetation canopy. For this reason, it’s especially useful for detecting sites in jungles.

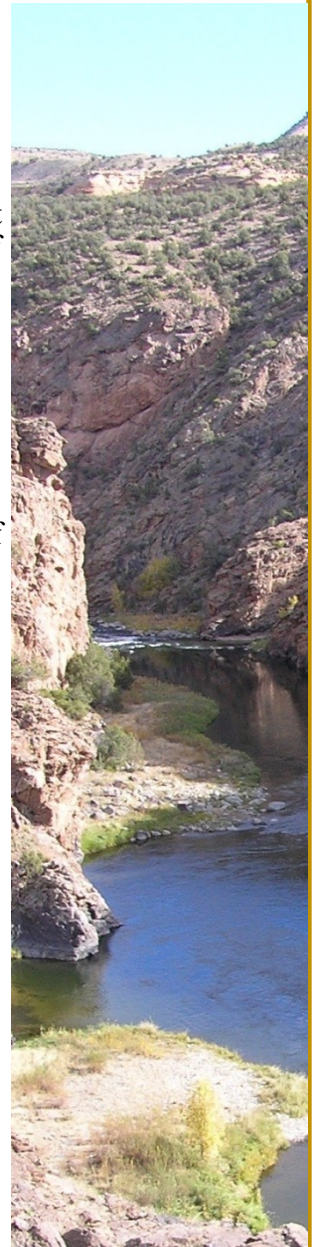
However, I’m here not to praise lidar but to make fun of it. I’m here to complain: where is the romance? Prospecting for sites is now just a matter of sending some professionals up in a plane with a fancy machine, then giving all that raw data to another bunch of professionals who turn it into 3D representations of sites on the ground. Where is there room in this brave new world for the Indiana Joneses and the Lara Crofts, or the real-life “explorers” like Stephens and Catherwood, Hiram Bingham, and Louis Delaporte, who hacked their way through the Yucatanian, Peruvian, and SE Asian jungles to (re) discover Chichen Itza, Machu Picchu and Angkor, with only a machete and a pistol (there’s that Indiana Jones imagery again!)—and an army of native guides. (Please ignore the fact that these rediscoveries didn’t really happen like that, as these sites were generally well-known to local people long before they were brought to the European and American public along with tales of hardship, danger, and derring-do.)

I mean, think of what we’re losing here. Think of the creativity that is lost, when we replace the fantasies and wild conjectures of the past with mere facts. When I was starting grad school, much of the older

literature on the Maya region emphasized the wild emptiness—and even the uninhabitability—of the landscape away from the large architectural sites. It was widely suggested that the Maya centers were lightly populated with elite priest/mathematicians, who were supported by an equally small population of nearby farmers, and spent their days apparently in pursuit of an extraordinarily exact mathematics of the stars.

That’s all changed now, I suspect. Where once there was a dearth of data that allowed archaeologists to either proclaim the area empty (Amazon basin) or develop fanciful stories about gentlemen scientists (Maya area), there is now a surfeit, and the challenges are just as great. Think of the poor archaeologist contemplating the new maps of Central America or the Amazon, or even of the Near East, wondering how they will ever get a handle on the embarrassment of archaeological riches they now face.

The fact is, they still have to figure out the same sort of stuff they’ve been worrying about all along: when were these structures and farmsteads settled? when were they abandoned? how many were occupied at one time and how long was each occupied, on average? and to what polity did they owe allegiance and did that fluctuate? These are the timeless questions that archaeology grapples with, and more data is never a serious problem. Thanks to lidar, we don’t have to worry about running out of sites to investigate any time soon.



**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: a .pdf is posted to Member365 for download. Effective soon, if you want a print copy, you will have to go to the state CAS website and pay an additional fee.

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



## CHIPETA CHAPTER BOARD MEMBERS

- **President:** Sally Johnson, [president@chipetachaptercas.org](mailto:president@chipetachaptercas.org)
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- **Secretary:** Susan Henderson, [secretary@chipetachaptercas.org](mailto:secretary@chipetachaptercas.org)
- **Treasurer:** Jim Douras, [treasurer@chipetachaptercas.org](mailto:treasurer@chipetachaptercas.org)
- **CAS Rep:** Nick Ard, [casrep@chipetachaptercas.org](mailto:casrep@chipetachaptercas.org)

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- **Membership:** Sally Johnson, [membership@chipetachaptercas.org](mailto:membership@chipetachaptercas.org)
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- **Library:** Linda Manske, [library@chipetachaptercas.org](mailto:library@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, visit:

<https://www.historycolorado/paac>

### PAAC Contacts

Sarah A. Allaun

Assistant State Archaeologist  
303-866-5746

### 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.*