

The Uncompahgre Journal

April 2025 CHIPETA CHAPTER OF THE COLORADO ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY Volume 42 Issue 4

Our April Presentation

Mark Your Calendar

Apr 2: [Montrose Historical Society](#) monthly meeting with Julie Jackson on the Shavano Gateway Recreation Area Project. Montrose County Event Center, 7:00 pm.

Apr 9: [San Juan Basin Archaeological Society](#) monthly meeting with Leigh Marymor on "Faux Native American Picture-Writing" in Colorado and the West. Lyceum, Center of Southwest Studies, Fort Lewis College, 7:00 pm.

Apr 16: [Chipeta Chapter](#) monthly meeting with David Hyde on a rural Maya village (**right**). United Methodist Church, 19 S. Park Ave, 7:00 pm.

Apr 23: [CAS-GJ](#) monthly meeting with Bob Silbernagel on Loring's Road, a pioneer road on the Colorado Plateau. Redlands United Methodist Church, 527 Village Way, 6:30 pm.

Twenty Years Researching a Hinterland Maya Village: A Katun at The Medicinal Trail Community

by David M. Hyde

The 2024 field season at the Medicinal Trail Community marks the end of 20 years of research at this ancient Maya hinterland farming village located in the northwest corner of Belize. Beginning in 2004, as a grad student, and continuing after completing my doctorate at The University of Texas at Austin, research conducted at the site has led to many important discoveries and insights into the life of ancient non-elite Maya. Thirteen architectural groups have been identified and mapped with eleven of them excavated. Additionally, numerous agricultural and irrigation features have been mapped and investigated. I have run twelve field schools, totaling well over 100 participants, many returning for multiple seasons. Nine peer reviewed journal articles, one book chapter, dozens of interim reports, including two stand-alone volumes, and dozens of conference papers and posters presented, many with student co-authors, have been produced from this research. This talk presents an overview of the project's history and details some of the more interesting research produced by the Medicinal Trail Hinterland Communities Archaeological Project.



This Month's Speaker

Dr. Hyde is the Moncrief Distinguished Lecturer of Archaeology at Western Colorado University, in Gunnison Colorado, where he has taught since 2011. He has been excavating in the Maya area since 1997, and has also done field work in Colorado, Texas, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Montana. He received his MA from Washington State University, and his PhD from The University of Texas at Austin.



Photo courtesy of David Hyde

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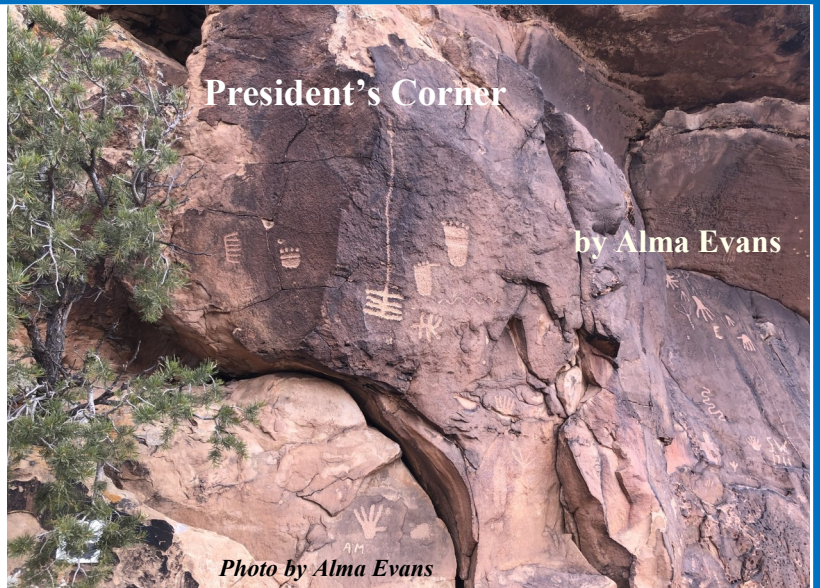
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Webmaster Transition

Anne Cable is stepping down as Chipeta webmaster this month. She has served the Chipeta Chapter of CAS for over a decade as our webmaster. She began taking care of our website in 2015. Meeting monthly deadlines consistently, Anne has shared her expertise and professionalism with our Chapter.

In addition to her fine work, she is also a wonderful, caring person, making our Chapter stronger by just being a member.

Thank you seems inadequate. However, Thank You, Anne, for the high standards given to the Chipeta Chapter of the Colorado Archaeology Society.



President's Corner

by Alma Evans

Photo by Alma Evans

Anne will be succeeded by Jay Johnson. Jay first attended a monthly Chipeta Chapter CAS meeting after seeing an announcement that local Ouray native Rick Trujillo was going to speak about dinosaur tracks in the mountains around Ouray and he has been attending ever since. He really enjoys seeing and learning about the artifacts and thinking about those who came before us. Jay looks forward to going on more field trips and getting to know all the wonderful members of the Chipeta Chapter. Jay lives in Montrose, CO. When he is not outside enjoying all Colorado has to offer, he works as a software engineer providing software and services to ski resorts around the world.



Gypsum Gap, Far West Field Trip

by Leigh Ann Hunt

Chipeta members studying the imagery at Gypsum Gap on the Far West field trip March 23. Although vandalized due to its location next to an old segment of the highway, the panel has petroglyphs of anthropomorphs, sheep, elk, and various other figures plus historic horses with riders and other faint images. It is inside of a sheltered habitation area with easy access to what once must have been a lush flowing creek.



Photo by S. Baldwin

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From the Editor

I read an interesting article recently about the comparative impact that the arrival first of Neandertals and their ancestors and then of early modern humans had on the scavengers of Europe between the Marine Isotope Stages (MIS) of 6 through 3. It made perfect sense to me that the arrival of a new apex predator into Europe would shake up the existing suite of predators and scavengers (note that humans probably did their share of scavenging also). And it seems reasonable that over time, the smaller-bodied scavengers increased in proportion to the larger-bodied ones, who would have been a threat to humans and thus not tolerated. But what's with these Marine Isotope Stages? To the best of my knowledge, Europe is not an ocean, and anyway, why not just say from 200,000 years ago to 29,000 years ago? What are marine isotope stages, and why are they used as a method of measuring time?

Of course, historically, it was very difficult to measure time into the past, so proxies for time were developed from the geological and paleontological records. Foraminifera are one-celled sea creatures that form tiny shells. These shells are made of calcite, which is a carbon compound that includes oxygen. Oxygen isotopes O16 and O18 are included in these shells in the proportion that the isotopes are found in the oceans during the life of the organism. When foraminifera die, their shells drop to the bottom of the ocean, so there is a constant "rain" of tiny shells that cover the ocean floor and have accumulated over hundreds of thousands (and probably millions) of years. Geologists studying this record of deposition found that over time the ratio of oxygen isotopes to each other in the layers of the ocean floor varied, because O16 tended to evaporate into the atmosphere much more readily than O18. Thus, the layers of foraminifera that had greater proportions of O18 indicated a period of time of lower

sea levels. That is, a larger proportion of the evaporated water was not being returned to the oceans by rivers, which indicated that more water was retained on the land surfaces in the form of snow and ice, which in turn indicated a cooler climate. So before geologists got a good handle on geologic absolute dating, MIS became a way of tracking time and climate.

It seems then that the question I asked at the beginning of this piece was the result of a misunderstanding. The MIS stages do represent periods of time, and it's a quick reference to provide relative dates—MIS 5 is older than MIS 3, for example. But more importantly, the marine isotope stages also present climatic information (warmer vs cooler), so it makes sense to provide these stages along with the absolute dates. And if you want to know more about how early humans reconfigured the makeup of the "guild" of scavengers active in Pleistocene Europe, feel free to consult the original article cited below.

References

Baumann, Chris, Andrew W. Kandel, Shumon T. Hussain, 2024 Evidence for the catalytic role of humans in the assembly and evolution of European Late Pleistocene scavenger guilds. *Quaternary Science Reviews*, Volume 349, 0277-3791. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.quascirev.2024.109148> .



Chipeta Chapter
Colorado Archaeological Society
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Membership Application

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Photos by Dennis DeVore



Check One: **Annual Dues*** (includes state CAS dues): Check one
 New Family (2 or more members same household)\$40
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 Secondary (Circle one) Individual (\$10) or Family... (\$15)
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**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.



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:
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CHIPETA CHAPTER WEBSITE

- <https://www.chipetachaptercas.org>
- **Webmaster:** Jay Johnson

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>

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Our May Speaker

Greg Munson on Paleoastronomy

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 Bill Harris. All other unattributed photos are by the editor.