

The Uncompahgre Journal

May 2025

CHIPETA CHAPTER OF THE COLORADO ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Volume 42 Issue 5

Mark Your Calendar

May 7: [Montrose County Historical Society](#) monthly meeting with Dennis DeVore on historic inscriptions and rock art. Montrose County Event Center, 7:00 pm.

May 14: [San Juan Basin Archaeological Society](#) monthly meeting with Sharon Hull on the turquoise trade in the Chaco world. At the lyceum, Center of Southwest Studies, Fort Lewis College, 7:00 pm.

May 21: [Chipeta Chapter](#) monthly meeting with Greg Munson on envisioning a cultural landscape (*right*). United Methodist Church 19 S. Park Avenue, Montrose, 7:00 pm.

May 28: [CAS-GJ](#) monthly meeting with John Seebach on what's new in Ice Age archaeology in the Americas. Redlands United Methodist Church, 527 Village Way, GJ, 6:30 pm.

Our May Presentation

Envisioning a Cultural Landscape

by Greg Munson

Greg Munson (Society for Cultural Astronomy in the American Southwest) will discuss new ways to record, document and visualize the cultural landscape of the Greater American Southwest. The program emphasizes the SCAAS Cultural Landscapes Survey Program which has tribal consultation as a key component. At the center of the program is expanding the concept of the archaeological site boundary to include resources from the local environment, relationships to nearby villages, how the architecture relates to the more distant landscape and a building's alignment to horizon features such as mountain peaks. Our survey methods study the connection of a site to astronomical cycles and features in the day and night sky. We will explore new technologies for the visualization of buildings and the landscape like the use of dynamic panoramas, 3D modeling and infographics. We seek to establish a common method of documenting and visualizing this link between ancestral peoples and the land and sky that surrounded them so that we can better understand that we live in a unified cultural landscape, inseparable from its parts.



Our May Speaker

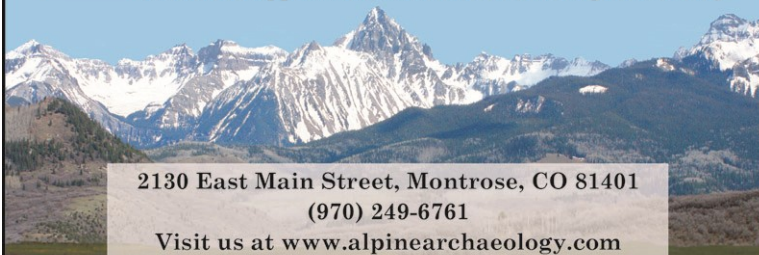


Greg is the founder of the Society for Cultural Astronomy in the American Southwest and is currently directing its Cultural Landscapes Survey Program. Greg came to the Southwest in 1991 as a Ranger at Mesa Verde National Park where he cultivated his interest in cultural astronomy while giving tours to thousands of visitors each year. He studied the documentation of Ancestral Puebloan architecture and worked with the park's Archaeological Site Conservation Program documenting Cliff Palace, Spruce Tree House and other backcountry sites. Greg now works as a consultant with a focus on continuing his interests in architecture and astronomy. He brought the skills learned at Mesa Verde when he established the Society and is working to bring standardized documentation and visualization practices to cultural astronomy research and landscape archaeology.



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Attention Field Trip Participants!

Do you take pictures of Chipeta Field Trips? The Uncompahgre Journal would love to receive images and/or stories about our field trips each month. Over the summer, you can send them to me, and I'll print some or all of them starting in the fall. Send them to editor@chipetachaptercas.org. Thanks!

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Dave Batten, editor@chipetachaptercas.org



If April showers bring May flowers, what does the Mayflower bring? Pilgrims, of course!

Yes, it is an old third-grade joke, and I could not resist.

This is the time of year when we want to be outside. We welcome the sun with gratitude for a new spring and new beginnings for us all. Flowers begin to appear, baby birds chirp with the coming sun, and Colorado CAS wants the chapters to review their goals.

The Chipeta Board will be reviewing the goals listed below. These goals were set in January 2024.

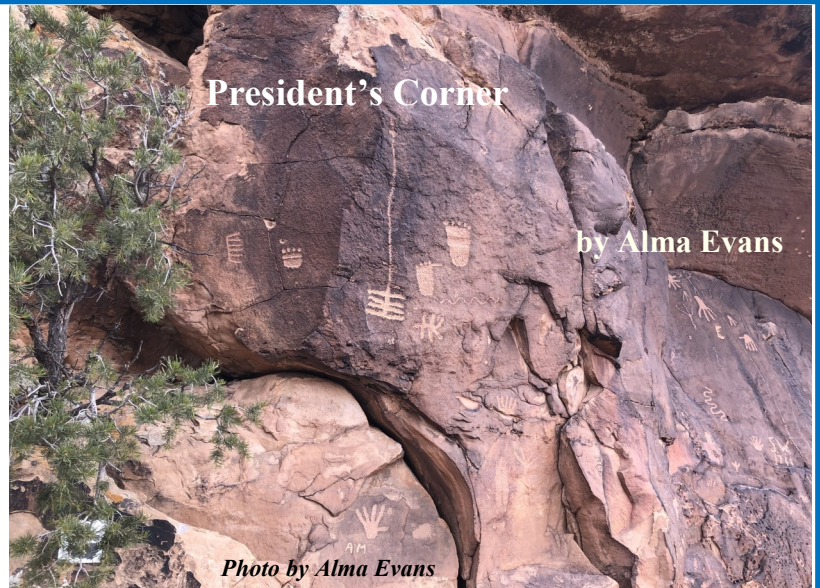
Obtain Liability insurance for trip leaders.
– Completed

Coordinating site stewards and training with Grand Junction CAS, Colorado Canyons Association. - In progress

Encourage interest and recruit younger members to our organization.

I would be interested to know what goals the membership would like us to pursue. The CAS Board meets next on May 21, 2025, @ 3:00 in the BLM Office. Should you have any suggestions, you are welcome to email them to me at: dinotrackerale@gmail.com before May 20, 2025, or come to the Board meeting with your ideas.

Also, we are interested in ideas how to implement the # 3 Goal. How can we encourage interest and recruit younger and seasoned members to our organization?



From the Editor

Did you ever think about being a gladiator? I wonder what college classes you'd have to take to get a job like that. I wonder what the job description would be: "Must be fit." You certainly wouldn't have to worry about how long it would be until you reach retirement age. You'd be lucky to last into your thirties. Chances are it wouldn't be something you chose to do. I suppose there were some who were just so good at fighting that they got into the business for the glory of it, but I imagine most gladiators were conscripted: they were prisoners of war or criminals, and I suspect that the average gladiator only had to fight once.

There are relatively few positive identifications of the gladiatorial profession in the archaeological record. There's a graveyard of gladiators near a Roman arena somewhere in Germany along the Danube. The pastime tended to leave marks on the participants: lots of healed or partially healed breaks and dents in the cranium. Lots of unhealed breaks and dents on other individuals. Many of them also had their heads forcibly separated from their necks (often between the second and third vertebrae).

I guess it's no surprise that as the Roman Empire expanded, the gladiatorial games came with it. Archaeologists and historians have debated for some time, I gather, as to what degree the sport (?) was practiced in England. Graves have recently been discovered and studied near the town of York (Roman *Eboracum*), and the condition of the bones has led some archaeologists to suggest that many of the remains were those of gladiators. One of the individuals has been labeled 6DT19, and he is notable for having bite marks on his pelvis, right on the top of the ilium, the part that you can feel around your belt line.

Besides the bite marks, this skeleton's body had been forcefully separated from his head as described above. Apparently, there were no other injuries. The guy was somewhere between 26 and 35 years old, and he was about 5' 8" tall. Isotope values suggested that he may have been from more southerly climes than England.

So back to the bite marks. I won't bore you with the details, but there are pictures and detailed descriptions in the open-access article. Comparisons suggest that they were made by a feline—and not a house cat. The authors suggest that it could have been any large cat, but most likely a lion. If you're like me, you probably are wondering how ordinary it would be for a lion to be biting people in gladiatorial games in England of all places. What kind of monumental effort would have been required to get a lion from Africa all the way to York?

The authors seem to be just as surprised, but they are pretty confident of the identity of the biter. Apparently, throughout Europe, including Rome itself, bones from gladiatorial animals are extremely rare in archaeological collections. They aren't surprised that a large carnivore was responsible for the damage, but are surprised that it was a big cat rather than a bear or a boar, for example. They speculate that a local magistrate or governor, or perhaps even the Emperor (on a rare visit), might have been responsible for the big cat's importation. And they stress the importance of this find in putting to rest the debate over whether gladiatorial forms of entertainment played a role in the Roman Empire's northern extremes.

References

Thompson, TJU, D Errickson, C McDonnell, M Holst, A Caffell, J Pearce, et al. 2025 Unique osteological evidence for human-animal gladiatorial combat in Roman Britain. [PLoS ONE 20\(4\): e0319847](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0319847).



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

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- **Secretary:** Elizabeth Binder, secretary@chipetachaptercas.org
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- **CAS Rep:** Nick Ard, casrep@chipetachaptercas.org

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- **Library:** Linda Manske, 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

sarah.allaun@state.co.us

303-866-5746

Leigh Ann Hunt

Chipeta Chapter PAAC Coordinator

vp@chipetachaptercas.org

The next issue will be in September. Have a great summer!

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.