



THE MOKI MESSENGER

December 2024

San Juan Basin Archaeological Society

sjbas.org

SJBAS Monthly Meeting Is our Annual Meeting: December 7

Our monthly speaker meetings resume on January 8.

President's Message – State of the Society -- 2024

Greetings fellow members:

Our membership is up 26% at 186, and finances reflect that increase. Janice once again assembled an outstanding series of monthly programs on topics of current interest which introduced many people to SJBAS. This included presentations about the famous “Lucy” found in Africa, various aspects of the Chaco phenomenon, rock art, and the 23,000-year-old foot prints found at White Sands. Tish followed up with membership invitations distributed to visitors, and many did so.



Field Trips: Most of our trips were successful despite weather and other issues beyond our control that caused some cancellations. People went to Chaco, Bears Ears, Keet Seel and other premier sites in our region. We have established some credibility with the BLM concerning permits for access to Bears Ears/Cedar Mesa and received “Letter of Agreement” permits again for this year. Hopefully this will continue.

Promotion: This year we have made a considerable effort to expand our public presence. In addition to the usual announcements in local media, we placed archaeology exhibits promoting

the society in two local libraries for a month. At the Durango Visitors Center, site etiquette materials were added to the brochures promoting area archaeological attractions.

In an effort to inspire the next generation of professional and avocational archaeologist, members conducted an experimental archaeology class for 6 area schools and two civic groups.

Participants learned about, and tried their hand at, fire bow drills, making yucca twine, pine pitch glue, flint knapping, and use of the atlatl. In total, over 700 students experienced a day with the Neolithic technology used by ancient indigenous people. Proper site etiquette and the difference between scientific archaeology and curio collecting were also discussed.

The society also hosted the world premiere of "Written on the Landscape," a film produced by the Solstice Project which documents Chaco outlier sites. Over 450 people attended the event. We had informational materials displayed in the lobby and several membership forms were handed out.

We continue to promote Indigenous Involvement and perspectives in our programs. This year we had an excellent presentation by Venancio Aragon, a Diné textile artist, on "The Survival of Diné textile traditions". We also have a service work day planned for next year on the Ute Mountain Ute Reservation.

Advocacy: Times have changed and our access to many of the unique regional archaeological sites has come under regulatory scrutiny by land management agencies. Educational organizations such as ours are often categorized as similar to commercial guide services and competitive events, and the associated fees and permit requirements are beyond our capability. Therefore, it has become imperative that SJBAS become recognized as a responsible regional educational organization. Establishing and maintaining that credibility is critical to our continued access.

There are additional potential challenges facing us. These include review and possible reduction of park and monument boundaries, expanded oil and gas development and some discussions of turning management of national parks and monuments over to tribal governments. Repeal of the Antiquities Act is a real possibility.

We have attempted to gain recognition by providing input to land management agency master plans and contributed financially to conservation organizations such as the Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition and Bears Ears Partnership.

In addition, we joined the Council of Allied Societies which is an avocational subsection of the Society for American Archaeology. It includes 29 members from across the country and requires site etiquette and membership criteria that matches those of SJBAS. In addition, the group provides access to educational resources, archaeology related news, and government/regulatory issues affecting archaeology groups such as ours.

I look forward to continued achievements in the coming year and hope to see you are the at the Holiday Brunch and Annual Meeting on December 7th.

Paul Landrum, President

Upcoming SJBAS Events for 2024

[Contact trip organizers for details.
See sjbas.org for the latest version of the full-year calendar.]

December 7	SJBAS annual meeting and holiday brunch
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Upcoming SJBAS Events for 2025

January 8	SJBAS Meeting – “War Paint: Biographic Art Painted on Plains War Horses” by James Keyser (Oregon Archaeological Society).
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Additional SJBAS Volunteer Opportunities

Program Co-Chair: We are looking for a volunteer to work with our Program Chair, Janice Sheftel. The Program Chair secures speakers for regular membership meetings and works with other SJBAS members to organize other lectures, such as the John W. Sanders Lecture. This is a Board position. Please contact Janice at janicesheftel@gmail.com for more information.

Membership Co-Chair: The co-chair will work with Tish Varney and, eventually, move into the chair position. The Membership Chair is responsible for organizing recruitment of new SJBAS members and supporting Board members in encouraging active participation by members. This is a Board position. Please contact Tish Varney (tishvarney@att.net) for more information.

Webmaster Assistant: If you know your way around a computer, please consider volunteering to assist our Webmaster, Lyle Hancock, when he is unable to access a computer. The Webmaster is responsible for maintaining and updating the SJBAS website- www.sjbas.org. Please contact Lyle for more information, lylehancock54@gmail.com. Training and support will be provided for all positions.

We look forward to working with you! We need you!!

SJBAS Elected Officers and Board Members

President	Paul Landrum
Vice President	Thomas Polich
Secretary	Susan Hicks

Treasurer	Mary Moorehead
Communications chair	Byron Kellogg
Membership chair	Tish Varney
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	Michelle and Mark McKibben
Webmaster	Lyle Hancock

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