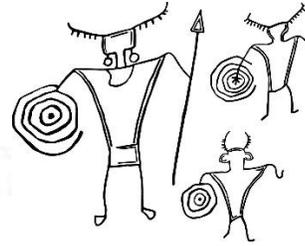


# VESTIGES



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Monthly Newsletter of URARA, the Utah Rock Art Research Association

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## From the Prez

Rick Mathews

It's March! I remember the Elementary School learning how March either came in like Lion and out like a Lamb or the other way around. I grew up in Roosevelt so it was almost always in like a Lion, stayed like a Lion and left like a Lion. One thing about the Uintah Basin is the wind is almost always present.

As I prepared to draft my message I had an urge to go visit a familiar site, the BYU Botany Pond. This site is close and there is a decorated boulder from somewhere in Salt Lake County. Rock Imagery doesn't get much more domesticated than that. Even with that, I love that it is just a few blocks away. I am grateful for the reminder that this busy, urban area where I live was once inhabited by others. The imagery on this boulder spans several generations. I notice something new nearly each time I visit it.

I'd like to take a little space and give a shout out and fond farewell to two of my Utah SHPO friends, Ian Wright and Lexi Little. I have enjoyed working, exploring and playing alongside them in the Utah Cultural Site Stewardship program. SHPO is a great URARA partner. I've been lucky to have helped document and protect imagery locations in Utah. Thank you Ian and Lexi!



I encourage you to get out and explore. Enjoy the good days and make the most of them!

March 2026

## Symposium Announcements

### Rein van West

#### **2026 Bluff Symposium Accommodations**

The plans for the Bluff Symposium are moving along nicely! As with the previous Bluff Symposium the venue is the Senior Center which is the largest in the area with a capacity of 250. Therefore it is recommended to book early for this busy time, October 8-12. <https://bluffutah.org/> click on 'Stay'

#### **2026 Bluff Symposium Call For Volunteers**

Volunteers are a hugely appreciated and essential item for the success of any URARA Symposium. : passing the microphone, assisting the auctioneer, taking photos, helping with reception, T-shirt distribution, trash removal, running errands, chair & table set-up and take down, and more. Please volunteer your availability to either:

Carol Patterson, [urraca2fly@gmail.com](mailto:urraca2fly@gmail.com)

Rein van West, [arcticwild@gmail.com](mailto:arcticwild@gmail.com)

## Preliminary Field Trip List

### Tina Tan

We have a few field trips lined up for the year, and this is what we have planned for now:

March: Cottonwood Canyon (Carol Patterson)  
 April 13-15: Perfect Panel (Rein and Jan van West)  
 May: Vernal area (Darlene Koerner)  
 May16: Nine Mile canyon (Layne Miller)  
 June: Vernal area summer solstice (John McHugh)  
 August 22: Head of Sinbad area (Layne Miller, side by side trip)  
 September: Fremont Indian State Park (John McHugh)  
 September: Smith Preserve (Rick Mathews)

We also hope to run additional field trips to the Moab area, San Rafael Swell, Bluff area, Hanksville, Beaver, and St George. I need to get more information from the relevant BLM field offices regarding what would be involved in setting this up, so stay tuned. And fingers crossed.

Some of these may need a volunteer trip leader. So if you are up for it, please get in touch!

Also, it would be great to have a one-day commercial float trip on the San Juan included in the symposium field trips. Can I have a show of hands? If you are interested send me a note at: [tinatan07@gmail.com](mailto:tinatan07@gmail.com)

## **August Picnic at Fremont Indian State Park**

**Margo Mahoney**

Greetings fellow rock art enthusiasts!

The Summer Picnic will be held the weekend of August 14-16, 2026 at Fremont Indian State Park. We will have a few campsites in the Castle Rock campground reserved on a first come, first served basis. If you'd like to reserve your own spot, plan on making reservations 4 months previous to the dates on Recreation.gov. The campsites we have blocked are 20, 21, 22 and 23. Choose if you want to be close to the action, or further away from the activities!

We will have a potluck dinner on Saturday night with people assigned to appetizers, sides or desserts based on their last name. More details will be forthcoming as we approach the date.

We will likely explore Fremont Indian State Park on Friday on an individual basis, and will make plans Friday evening for field trips on Saturday and Sunday.

The museum might have a special tour for URARA members to see items from the vault that are not on public display!

Mystic Hot Springs in a short drive away if anyone wants to soak their bones!

Hope to see you there! Margo

## **ARARA Symposium Update**

**Troy Scotter ARARA**

While we aren't ready for registration yet, we want to share field trip information for the upcoming ARARA conference in Great Falls, Montana (June 25 -29).

Mavis Greer and Jim Keyser have been working hard on the field trips. We are even going international this year! We are also adding some field trip options that you can do on your own.

- To view the field trips click [here](#)
- To get general information about the conference click [here](#)
- To look at the Call for Papers click [here](#)

## **Is Rock Art Visual art?**

**ed. note**

For those interested in language etiquette, there is an ongoing and instructive discussion in the MEMBER'S FORUM about the proper terminology to use when discussing anthropogenic iconographic marks pecked, painted or scratched on rock by aboriginal ancestors.

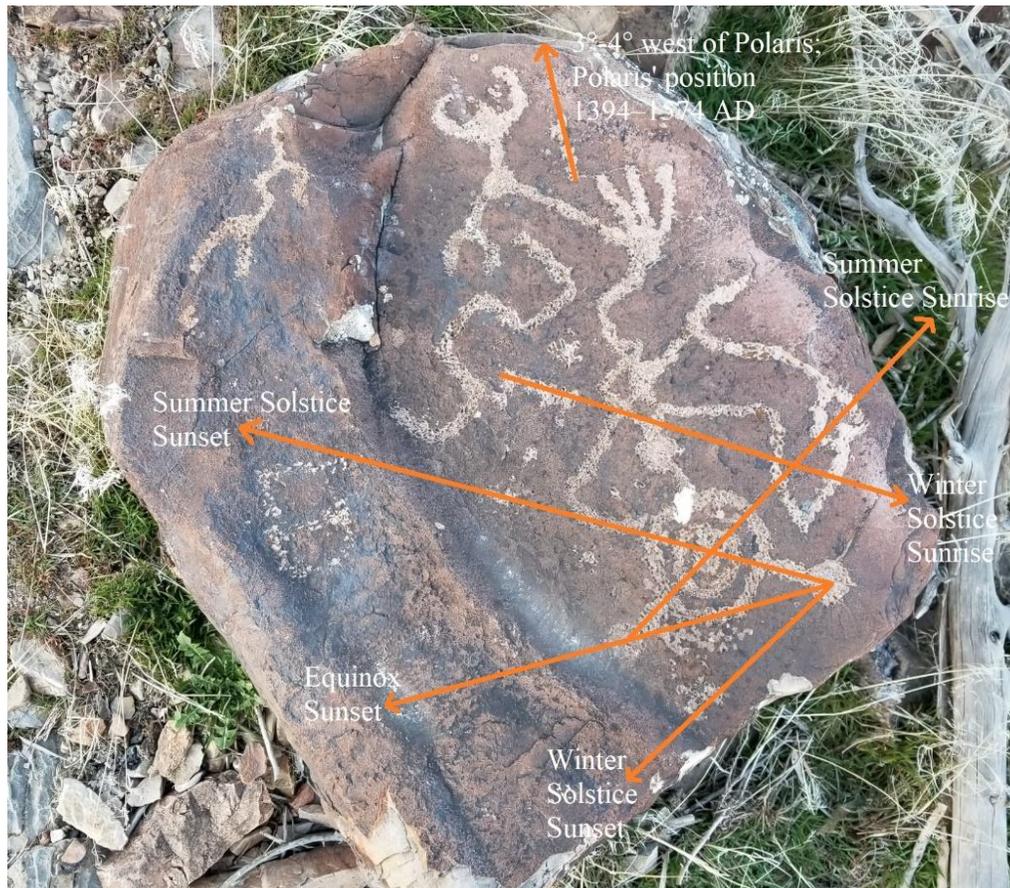
<https://urara.wildapricot.org/Members-Forum/13484528>

Or check the URARA facebook page.

## Shovel Bum Emma Ashby Wins Young Scientist Award at Science Fair

John McHugh

Sixth grader Emma Ashby knows the petroglyph panels of the Lake Mountains area near Utah Lake like the back of her hand. During her two years in Blessed Sacrament School's "Shovel Bum" archaeology club she has stewarded, documented, and protected the fragile, prehistoric Native American rock images that adorn the boulders and outcroppings of that region. One of these, Table Rock (42UT1454, Panel 1), appears to be encoded with an astonishing amount of astronomical data.



### **The solar and astronomical alignments at Table Rock.**

With the impending Salt Lake City Diocesan Science Fair coming in February 2026, Emma, who is part Ute, wanted to do a science fair project connected to her heritage – and Table Rock and its ancient wisdom fit the bill. Using an assortment of photographs taken by the Shovel Bums, their supervisor John McHugh, and URARA member and field researcher Franz Villate, Emma painstakingly explained how the various geographical motifs etched into Table Rock align definitively with the solstices, equinoxes, and Polaris. Emma did such a good job that she won: 1<sup>st</sup> place in the Physics, Astronomy, and Mathematics Division, was the 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Overall Science Fair Winner, and she also won the Young Scientist Award.

**Emma Ashby (continued) -**

**Shovel Bum 6<sup>th</sup> grader, Emma Ashby, receiving the Young Scientist Award at the Salt Lake City Diocesan Science Fair.**

The day and its awards were a tribute to Emma and her hard work, but mostly they felt like a celebration of the ancient wisdom of the Indigenous Peoples themselves. For it was the prehistoric Native Americans who comprehended how to track the sun's cyclical motion through the seasons and elegantly encode it onto a boulder in the form of pictures.

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## **Video Channel Roundup**

**Carol Patterson**

NEW! "Tracking the First Americans" with Vance T. Holliday, hosted by Archaeology Southwest as part of our Archaeology Café series. [Watch now »](#)

NEW! "Our Elder Brother Dwells There: How I'toi Ki Moved from Mountain Peak to Basket Design," with David Martinez, hosted by the Amerind Foundation. [Watch now »](#)

Catch up on some presentations not highlighted above that we might've missed, too! A simple click on any of the links to the YouTube channels of our Partners and Friends should catch you up. (And please do let us know if your channel isn't in this list but should be.)

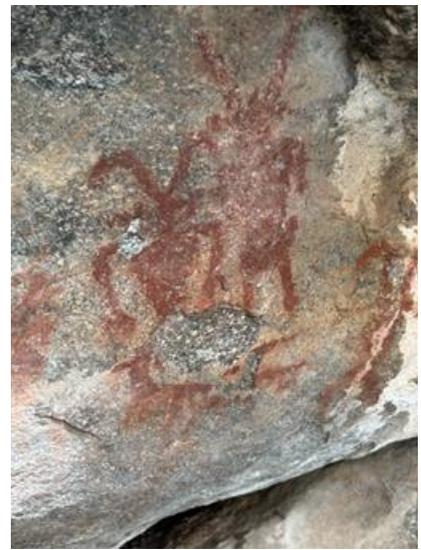
## From Rock Art to Relics

Diana Acerson

February 11<sup>th</sup>, the Utah Cultural Site Steward (UCSS) Site Stewardship Program Engagement Specialist Rachel Blumhardt hosted an evening backstage tour of the Frontier Heritage Museum in Cedar City, Utah. UCSS hosts many events throughout the year to thank stewards for the time they dedicate to stewarding cultural sites. URARA has many members who are stewards for rock art sites around the state.

Have you ever wondered what goes on in the back of house in a museum? How much is stored? What it takes to keep track of it all? What to do with unwanted donations? I'm sure it varies with each museum but there was a lot to think about as Steve and I toured with the group. Everything you can imagine used by humanity from generations past, including life-sized imitation horses used for events. The museum folks explained how hard it is to place everything that gets donated and a lot gets turned away due to lack of space.

Earlier in the day Rachel joined Steve and myself in Beaver to view and talk about our rock art sites that we steward on Beaver Bench. We were also able to take her to a few other sites in the area during the day.



## Calendar, Trips and Other Events

March 3	Archaeology Southwest webinar: Road Signs and Walking Shoes <a href="https://www.archaeologysouthwest.org/event/road-signs-and-walking-shoes/">https://www.archaeologysouthwest.org/event/road-signs-and-walking-shoes/</a>
March 6-8	Celebrate Bears Ears 2026 <a href="#">Bears Ears Partnership - Celebrate Bears Ears 2026-Public Events</a>
March	URARA Field Trip Cottonwood Canyon, Carol Patterson
April 13-15	URARA Field Trip Perfect Panel, Rein and Jan van West
April 16	URARA Webinar Jerod Roberts on Red Linear paintings of the Upper Pecos River.
May 16	URARA Field Trip Nine Mile Canyon, Layne Miller
May	URARA Field Trip Vernal area, Darlene Koerner
June	URARA Field Trip Vernal area summer solstice, John McHugh
June 25-29	ARARA Symposium Great Falls, Montana <a href="https://arara.wildapricot.org/Conference-General-Info-2026">https://arara.wildapricot.org/Conference-General-Info-2026</a>
Aug 14-16	URARA Summer Picnic, Fremont Indian State Park.
August 22	URARA Field Trip Head of Sinbad, Layne Miller
September	URARA Field Trip Fremont Indian State Park, John McHugh
September	URARA Field Trip Smith Reserve, Rick Mathews
Oct 8-12	URARA Symposium, Bluff, Utah

URARA symposia and field trips (FT) are available to members only. Members will be notified by email when a field trip opens for registration, usually about 3-4 weeks before a trip. If a trip is full when you try to register, your name is added to a wait list. You will get another notification if and when someone drops out and you can be added to the trip. <https://urara.wildapricot.org/>

CRAA and URARA are currently doing monthly ZOOM presentations on alternate months. CRAA will have January, March, and May (Summer months off), and October (December off). URARA will have February, April, Sept, and November. <https://coloradorockart.org/>

American Rock Art Research Association (ARARA) is hosting on-line events. Free access is granted to URARA members. Registration at: <https://arara.wildapricot.org/Lectures>

Desert Archaeological Society (DAS), St George, meets on the second Wednesday of the month. Saturday field trips once a month. Accessible on-line via Utah Tech University ICL . <https://reg125.imperisoft.com/ICL/ProgramDetail/3837333038/Registration.aspx>

San Diego Rock Art Association (SDRAA) meets on line until further notice. <https://sandiegorockart.org/meetings>

Grand Junction Chapter CAS meets regularly on the fourth Wednesday of each month  
<https://www.casgjchapter.org/public-meetings>

## URARA Board and Officers

Utah Rock Art Research Association: Box 511324, Salt Lake City, UT 84151-1324.  
[www.utahrockart.org](http://www.utahrockart.org) . Contact information - [utahrockartresearchassoc@gmail.com](mailto:utahrockartresearchassoc@gmail.com)

### 2025 URARA Board and Officers

President	Rick Mathews
Vice President	Carol Patterson
Secretary	Nancy Lombardo
Treasurer	Carol Duecker
	John McHugh
	Darlene Koerner
	Tina Tan
	Margo Mahoney
	Rein van West

### Committee Chairs and Appointees

Tribal Liaison	Carol Patterson
Historian/Archives	Keith Fessenden
Website/Board Advisor	Troy Scotter
Membership Coordinator	Deb Mitchell
Funds Manager	Pat Sullivan
Conservation/Preservation	Kent Williams
Education	John McHugh
Field Trip Coordinator	Tina Tan
Symposium Chair	Pat Sullivan
Publications Editor	Dennis DeVore
Vestiges Editor	Ben Everitt
Nominations/Governance	Diana Acerson

### URARA Conservation Coordinators

<u>BLM District</u>	<u>Field Office</u>	<u>Coordinator</u>
Coordinator Lead		
Canyon Country	Moab	Pam & Quent Baker
Canyon Country	Monticello	Werner Duecker, Carol Duecker
Paria River	Kanab	Jeff Frey
Color Country	Cedar City	Diana Acerson
Color Country	St. George	Nina Bowen
Color Country	Richfield	Steve Acerson
Green River	Vernal	Tim Sweeney, Darlene Koerner
Green River	Price	Layne Miller
West Desert	Fillmore	Jeff Roberts
West Desert	Salt Lake	Bill Hirt