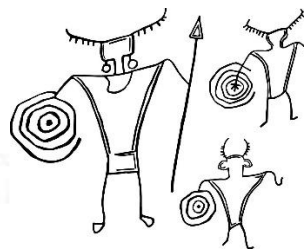


VESTIGES



October 2026
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Monthly Newsletter of URARA, the Utah Rock Art Research Association

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From the Prez

Rick Mathews

How did it get to be Symposium Time already??? It will be great to gather together in an area with so much imagery close by! We are going to have some great speakers. It will be awesome to hear what they have to teach us. One of the great things I have always enjoyed about the symposiums is the exchange of ideas and knowledge. I have left each one even more excited explore more Rock Imagery and learn more about Utah's past. Thank you Bob for coordinating the speakers.

One of best things about Symposium is getting out and seeing imagery with fellow URARA members. URARA has worked closely with the BLM and other Land Management Partners to navigate the administrative changes in progress. Tina has worked closely with the various agencies to coordinate the field trips. Thank you Tina and everyone who signed up to be a fieldtrip leader! And to the fieldtrip participants, please be courteous to the fieldtrip leaders and work with them. If you need to leave early, please let them know so we don't have to worry about you being lost in the wilderness.

The Symposium is URARA's biggest event each year. The coordinators and other volunteers work hard to make this a great event for all attendees. Thank you Carol and Rein for your time and efforts checking off the lists and making sure the tickly, little items are checked off.

Thank you to the town of Bluff for helping URARA with the symposium. It's not easy to suddenly drop approximately 200 people into a town with a population of around 250.

Again, it will be great to gather with you in just a couple of weeks. See you in Bluff!

October 2026

Symposium Updates and Notes

Carol Patterson and Rein van West

We're looking forward to another exciting symposium with a full house of old and new friends! Here are some old reminders, new additions, and corrections.

- There is still space for Dave Manley's, and Robert Mark's workshops. You would be welcome to show up but please email Robert Mark first (in the text below).
- **WE NEED AUCTION ITEMS, LIVE OR DEAD!** The money raised goes to support URARA's conservation and education projects - a key part of URARA's mission platform. Take a moment to scrounge items from around the house/attic/garage you would be willing to part with to support partner collaborations for the benefit of rock art protection. Please bring them Thursday or Friday to the Bluff Community Center. We thank you!
- While the Jonathan Till backroom tours are filled (one at 1:00pm and another at 2:00pm), all are invited to attend his orientation of the Bluff Great House on Cemetery Hill up above Bluff at 4:00pm.
- CORRECTION 1: The Thursday FT orientation from 7-8pm will meet in the BCC.
- CORRECTION 2: The Thursday star-gazing event will take place at the Bluff Community Center baseball field.
- Saturday morning a prayer will be offered by a Ute elder to honor the lives lived and the ancestral lands of the Indigenous People during thousands of years of occupation.
- CORRECTION 3: Saturday and Sunday lunches will be catered by Twin Rocks Restaurant to all attending the symposium. (yes, it's back in business!)
- Prepaid sack lunches on Friday and Monday field trip days need to be picked up by 7:45am and filled with cookie/fruit/chips - please plan on bringing your own drink.
- Reminder: Please wear name-tags for the banquet letting the caterer know what meal was ordered.
- Reminder : There will not be plastic bottles of water available to do our bit for the environment - please bring your own water bottles to fill.
- Poncho House field trip has been cancelled and replaced by a trip to Mossback (details below on page 8).
- We bow to our faithful volunteers as this symposium would not take place without them.

Symposium Agenda



Utah Rock Art Research Association 44th Annual Symposium Bluff, Utah– Oct 8 – October 12, 2026 Agenda

Thursday Morning Workshops – October 8, 2026, Bluff Community Center

9:00 am – 11:00 am. Workshop 1. Connie Massingale will hold a workshop titled **Hematite and its use in Pictographs**. This hands-on workshop explores the use of hematite in pictographs and focuses on Barrier Canyon Style images. Discussions will cover procurement of ochre in the landscape, processing of it in preparation to be mixed with binders and other materials to create a liquid pigment, creating yucca brushes for application, and finally an opportunity to re-create components of a Barrier Canyon Style panel of your choice on sandstone slabs.

There is a \$5.00 fee for the workshop to pay for supplies. Payment is to be made directly to Connie during the class. **Location: Design Build Bluff Classroom 239 N 7th E** (across the street from La Posada Inn)

Thursday Afternoon Workshops – October 8, 2026

1:00 pm Workshop 2. Dave Manley will hold a half-day basic rock art photography workshop to help capture rock art in its setting. His aim is to guide people to find their own way of seeing through the lens. This workshop will be held in the Bluff Community Center.

1:00 pm Workshop 3. Robert Mark will hold a half-day +/- workshop on Photogrammetry in general and Photogrammetric drone mapping. If you are interested in taking this class, it would help him if you would let him know about your interests and experiences with drones, photogrammetry, and GIS. He can then send out some software and other links in advance. This workshop will be held in the Bluff Community Center.

Contact him if you will be taking his class. His e-mail is rkmark@mac.com

2:00-3:00pm Special Event - Jonathan Till, curator of collections, will lead two backroom tours of the Edge of the Cedars Museum in Blanding. Limit 12 people - sign up.

Thursday Evening – October 8, 2026

4:00-5:00 PM **Bluff Great House Tour with Jonathan Till, archaeologist and director of Edge of the Cedars Museum**

Meet at the Bluff Great House (Cemetery Hill).

Jonathan Till will give an orientation to the landscape with connecting ritual running roads (Chaco roads) that intersect this site and run up and over the Comb, across to San Juan Hill past *huraduras*, and northeast into Montezuma Creek. This area was the center of a huge population that lived here for thousands of years.

7:00-8:00 pm **Field Trip Leader Meet and Greet** at the BCC Outdoor Pavilion located next to the Bluff Community Center.

8:00 pm The **Bears Ears Education Center** will host a night of telescope stargazing to which URARA members are invited. Location: Bears Ears Education Center.



Utah Rock Art Research Association 44th Annual Symposium Bluff, Utah– Oct 8 – October 12, 2026 Agenda

Friday – October 9, 2026, Bluff Community Center

8:00 AM **FIELD TRIPS ALL DAY** – Field Trips leave from Bluff Community Center; See your individual trip description for specific details and meeting times.

6:00 PM **Watermelon Social** at the Bluff Community Center



Utah Rock Art Research Association 44th Annual Symposium Bluff, Utah– Oct 8 – October 12, 2026 Speaker Agenda

Bluff Community Center

Saturday Morning – October 10, 2026

7:00 am **Doors Open**

Saturday Morning Speaker Agenda (continued)

- 7:30 Drinks and Refreshments
- 8:00 Announcements – Rick Mathews URARA President
- 8:10 Keynote Speaker: Sally Cole: Greater San Juan Culture Styles, Traditions, and Boundaries, Archaic to Historic
- 9:00 Dennis Devore: The Unresolved Case of the Bluff Mammoth: A Look Back and a Look Forward
- 9:40 Dr. Radosław Palonka (presenter), Polly Schaafsma, Vince MacMillan: Documentation and analysis of Ancestral Pueblo and historic Ute petroglyphs, and Euro-American inscriptions in the Canyons of the Ancients National Monument, southwestern Colorado
- 10:30 Morning Break
- 10:40 Vaughn Hadenfeld: Book Reading
- 11:10 Dr. David T. Yoder, Dept. of Sociology and Anthropology, Weber State University. Fremont Figurines and Rock Art: Complimentary Paths of Interpretation.
- 12:00 Lunch (BCC – Fire Mesa Kitchen – catered by Twin Rocks Restaurant)

Saturday Afternoon – October 10, 2026

- 1:10 pm Richard Jenkinson: Faces in New Mexico Rock Art
- 1:45 Roger Cook: Rock Art Eccentrics Part V, Incorporation of Natural Rock Elements in Rock Art Images
- 2:20 John Lundwall: Cave, Kiva, and Canyon: The Ritual Cosmography of Clear Creek Canyon
- 2:55 David Sucec BCS Project: What's In A Name
- 3:30 Afternoon Break
- 3:45 Panel Discussion: Sacred Landscapes of Bears Ears
 Regina Lopez Whiteskunk and Rebecca (Becky) Hammond (Ute Mountain Ute Tribe); Marilyn Fredricks (Hopi); Aldean Ketchum (White Mountain Ute). Robert Crifasi, Moderator
- 4:35 End of Saturday Presentations
- 6:00 Evening Banquet – Bluff Community Center
- 7:00 Awards and Live Auction – Bluff Community Center

Speaker Agenda (Continued)



Bluff Community Center

Sunday Morning – October 11, 2026

- 7:00 am Doors Open
- 7:30 Drinks & Refreshments
- 8:00 Rick Mathews – URARA President
- 8:10 Keynote Speaker: Melanie McKay-Cody, PhD: From Rock Panel stories to Tribal Sign Language—How are they related?
- 9:00 John Kincheloe: Black Mesa Flute Player Petroglyphs: Iconography and Beyond
- 9:40 Morning Break
- 10:00 Francois Gohier: Ascending Sheep, Linked Sheep and Deer Charmers
- 10:30 Tina Tan – Field Trip Insights
- 10:50 Conservation - Kent Williams
- 11:30 Lunch (BCC – Fire Mesa Kitchen)
- URARA Working Board Meeting

Sunday Afternoon – October 11, 2026

- 1:00 pm Membership Meeting
- 1:30 Carol Patterson, PhD: Pueblo Myths Correlate to Climate Shifts Represented in Basketmaker II-Pueblo III Petroglyphs of the Four Corners Region
- 2:15 Robert Crifasi – Using Drones to Photograph Rock Imagery
- 2:45 Steven J. Waller, Ph.D.: 40 Years of Listening at Rock Art Sites
- 3:15 Afternoon Break
- 3:30 Lynda McNeil: San Juan Anthropomorphic Style Headdress Designs:
- 4:10 The 260-day calendar representing the maize life cycle
- End of Sunday Presentations



Symposium Field Trips

Tina Tan

We've already had to cancel one FT for the symposium - Poncho House - as our permit request was denied. All participants have been notified. We were able to get a FT out to Mossback in place of Poncho House. Registrants for Poncho House were given priority to get on the Mossback trip instead. Please let the FTL for Mossback know if you are not interested in Mossback.

For those of you registered for Symposium Field Trips, a couple of things to note:

- If you have changed your mind about participating in a Field Trip you've already signed up for, please be sure to let the FT Leader know, so they are not waiting for you at the point of departure.
- A reminder that the land managing agencies typically ask that we do not share field trip site locations or post photos of sites we visit on social media platforms.
- Please remember that your phone camera may automatically have location tagging turned on. If you share photos with friends or family, that photo may have the GPS location embedded in that photo. Please ensure this is turned off - if you need instructions for how to do this, you can google it — for example - iPhones, see <https://mashable.com/article/how-to-turn-off-location-on-iphone> and for Android phones - see <https://support.google.com/accounts/answer/3467281?hl=en> You can also find YouTube videos that will walk you through this.
- Similarly, if you are using a GPS app, like GAIA, check and make sure the points/photos you take are not set to be shared to the public. (This is true for GAIA - ask me how I know...)
- Some of the FTs will require carpooling due to the need for high clearance 4WD to access the Trailhead. A few of the sites have restricted the number of vehicles that can be at the TH so please, everyone, try and car pool as much as possible.
- If we have weather, like we did in Kanab last year, please be prepared if we have to cancel the FT due to road conditions. (And we appreciate your understanding if that is the case).

Green River Service Project

Troy Scotter

When: 13 Oct 2026 11:00 AM, MDT

Where: North of the town of Green River

This event is to assist the BLM in protecting a rock art site near Green River. We have scheduled it the day after the symposium so that participants can participate on their way home. We need 8-12 volunteers. We will be helping the BLM install a buck and rail fence to protect a rock art site. We will be moving log segments to build the fence. Bring heavy clothing, gloves, eye protection/sunglasses, a sun hat, sunscreen, lunch, and drinks.

We will be meeting at Swasey's Beach at 11:00 a.m. Tuesday Oct 13. Swasey's Beach is about 20 minutes north of the town of Green River on the east side of the River.

<https://maps.app.goo.gl/kJMihZYUHbUKMs6XA> It is roughly three hours from Bluff if you are starting from there.

Swasey's Beach is a popular camp site/rafting put-in and take-out. To get there use the I-70 business route through Green River turn north on Hastings Road which is close to the Comfort Inn just east of the bridge over the Green River. Stay on that road heading north until you get to the Swasey's Beach campground meeting point.

This is a good quality road unless rains have created some wash outs. Most vehicles shouldn't have a problem getting to Swasey's Beach. From there we may consolidate for the last part of the route.

SFAP Field Trip Report

Rick Mathews

We were few in numbers but strong in spirit! URARA members and SFAP tour guides, Gayle Rudolph and Rick Mathews led a small group around the SFAP (Smith Family Archeological Preserve) on 25 Sep. The weather was great and attendees got to see many examples of Fremont imagery. The SFAP offers tours in the Spring and Fall. You can watch their Facebook page for tour announcement (Adelbert Doyle Smith Family Archaeological Preserve).



Acerson's Flood Follow-up

Steve and Diana Acerson

As we tried to salvage items in the mud we slowly realized that some of our memorable possessions were missing. The flood and debris that washed through our house carried items out of the house and yard downstream to become an archaeologist's dream find sometime in the future.

We have survived each other's company in our 24 foot camp trailer, and cleaned and put our salvage items in bins. Sometime in the future these bins will be like Christmas presents, with unknown items surprising us.

We have been blessed by so many helping hands and donations that have brought tears and emotions to our hearts. THANK YOU!! We will move into a small rental (The Baby Blue House) after the Symposium for the winter. The burn scar will not stabilize for a few years, and with El Nino forecast this winter, there is a probable flood scenario.

In the aftermath of the devastating flooding I realized my own personal disaster. Photos of my years of visiting, leading field trips, and documenting images and cultural site had been saved on external drives. The BAD news is that these drives have been lost. I did have some folders on my laptop, but had just moved everything to the storage drive to make room for the coming adventures. So here comes my request. If we've shared the trail or adventures over the years. If you're comfortable helping me recover location data, pictures, etc., please use thumb drives, or some kind of sharable electronic data to help me rebuild my information. Mail, email, by mail, or bring it to the Symposium. All help will be rewarded with a hug and blessing.

Thank you again for your time helping us, your blessings, and prayers as we start a new chapter in our life book.

Rock Art in the News

[Rock Art Suggests the Tasmanian Tiger May Have Survived on Mainland Australia Longer Than Previously Thought](#) Smithsonian Magazine 03 April 2026

Trump's border wall expansion bulldozes an ancient tribal ... The Washington Post
<https://www.washingtonpost.com> › 2026/04/30 › borde...

Las Playas Intaglio Destroyed During Border Wall Expansion Archaeology Southwest 7 May 2026
<https://www.archaeologysouthwest.org/2026/05/07/las-playas-intaglio-destroyed-during-border-wall-expansion/>

[This Rock Art in China Has Remained Bright Red for Nearly 2,000 Years. How? The Secret Ingredient Might Be Blood](#) Smithsonian Magazine 25 August 2026

News (continued)

Historical Pollution, Not Current Industrial Emissions, Damaged the World's Largest and Oldest Collection of Ancient Rock Art Smithsonian Magazine 28 August 2026

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/prehistoric-paintings-walls-caves-have-always-been-moving-with-right-light-some-seem-move-180989276/?utm> Smithsonian Magazine Sep 2026

Lands that Trump cut from Bears Ears were opened to mining claims last week. Prospectors filed 16 that same day. Salt Lake Tribune 17 September 2026

In Less Than a Month, Mining Claims Filed in Bears Ears Already Triple the Total Number Filed During Previous Trump Reduction Natl Parks Conservation Association 28 Sep 2026

Calendar; Trips and Events

October 01-02, 8:15	URARA Field Trip SE Colorado Area Bob Crifasi and Tina Tan DATE CHANGE!
Oct 8-12	URARA Symposium, Bluff, Utah
Oct 13, 11:00	Green River Service Project

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>

Grand Junction Chapter, Colorado Archaeological Society (CAS) meets regularly on the fourth Wednesday of each month <https://www.casgchapter.org/public-meetings>

URARA Board and Officers

Utah Rock Art Research Association: Box 511324, Salt Lake City, UT 84151-1324.

www.utahrockart.org . Contact information - utahrockartresearchassoc@gmail.com

2026 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	Carol Patterson
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