

The Uncompahgre Journal

October 2026

CHIPETA CHAPTER OF THE COLORADO ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Volume 43 Issue 7

Our October Presentation

Mark Your Calendar

Oct 7: [Montrose Historical Society](#) monthly meeting with Steve Kries on shepherds and sheep ranching in the Uncompahgre Valley. Friendship Hall, Montrose Fairgrounds, 7:00 pm.

Oct 14: [San Juan Basin Archaeological Society](#) monthly meeting with Joseph Birkmann on late archaic and early farming periods in a southern Arizona Cave site. Lyceum, Center of SW Studies, Fort Lewis College, Durango, 7:00 pm.

Oct 21: [Chipeta Chapter](#) monthly meeting with Jon Horn on the old Spanish Trail (right). United Methodist Church, 19 S. Park Ave, Montrose, 7:00 pm.

Oct 28: [CAS-GJ](#) monthly meeting with Susan Fisher on Chimney Rock National Monument. Redlands United Methodist Church, 527 Village Way, GJ, 7:00 pm.

Recent Old Spanish Trail Research

by Jon Horn

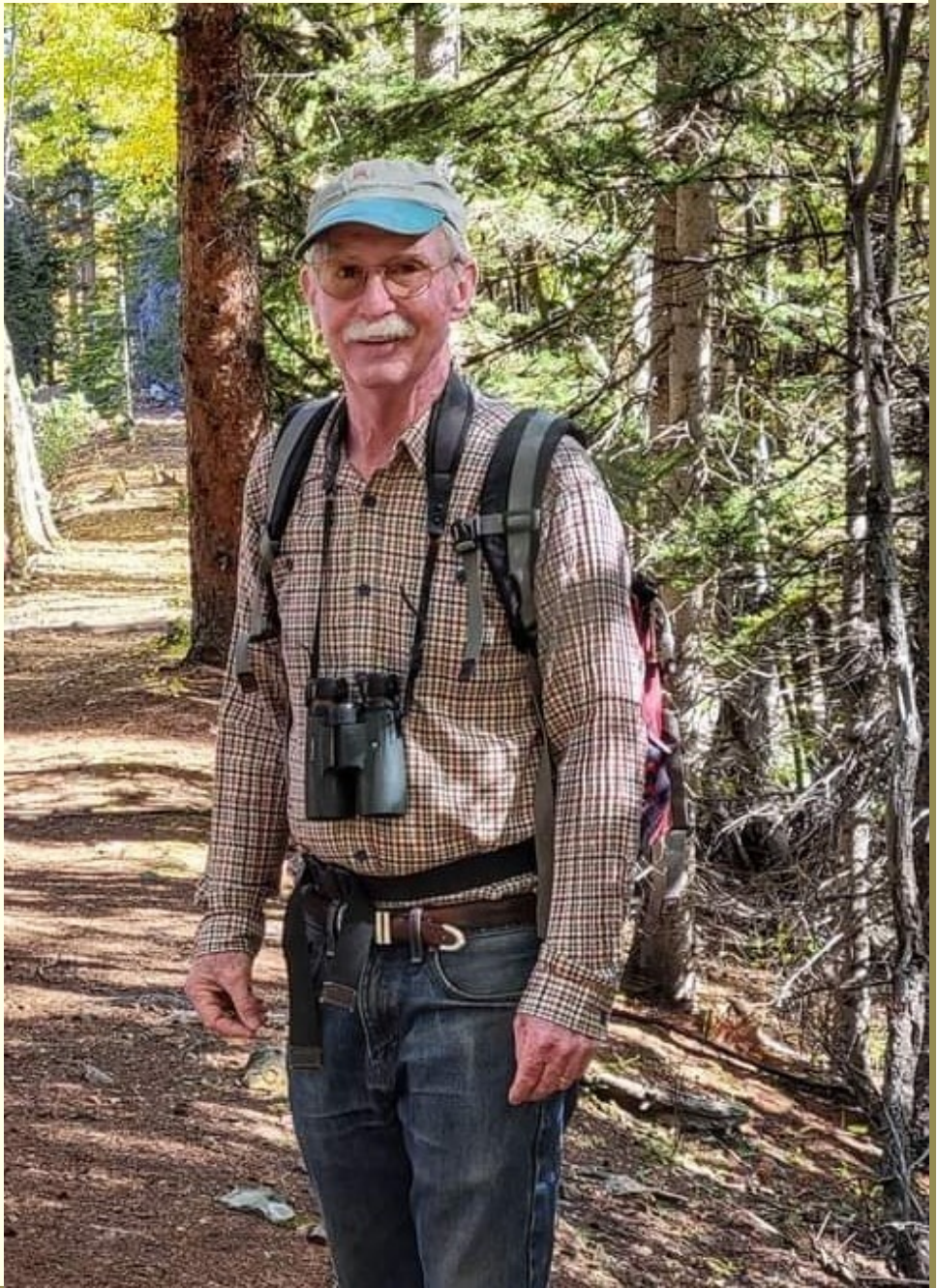
The Old Spanish Trail provided an important commercial linkage between New Mexico and California between 1829 and 1848 that has been recognized as the Old Spanish National Historic Trail. Recent research puts the trail into a larger context that encompasses a history of the entire southwest to provide a new period of significance for the trail of 1821-1881. This draws from American Indian use into prehistory (particularly that of the Ute), Spanish settlement of New Mexico, exploration and trade northward during the Spanish period, Mexican Independence in 1821 and the opening of the Santa Fe Trail, U.S. government exploration and military use, and regional settlement by Mormons and gold seekers. The expansion of the historic context for the trail is a result of preparation of a National Register nomination of the Fools Hill section of the trail northwest of Delta. Also to be discussed will be the difficulties in managing the historic landscape of the trail.



Our October Speaker

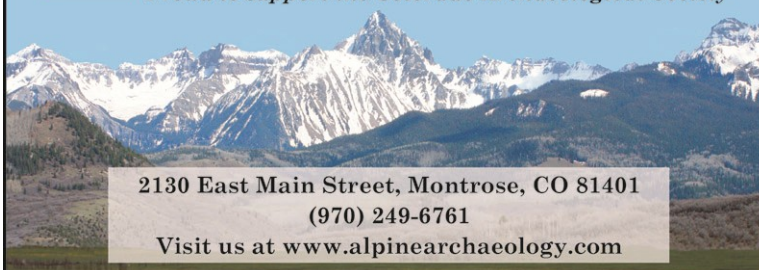
Jon Horn arrived in Montrose in 1984 to work for the cultural resource management firm of Nickens & Associates. He joined the Chipeta Chapter in 1985. In 1987, he was a founder of Alpine Archaeological Consultants and has worked in all of the western states except Nevada. Jon has a Bachelors degree in History from Lewis & Clark College in Portland, Oregon, and a Masters in Anthropology, focusing on historical archaeology, from the University of Idaho. He has written over 350 cultural resource management reports, 33 National Register of Historic Places nominations, including Multnomah Falls in Oregon and the Shavano Valley Rock Art Site, and 6 Historic American Engineering Record documents. He served on the Colorado Historic Preservation Review Board from 2015-2020, was named a Fellow of the Colorado Council of Professional Archaeologists in 2017, and has been the chair of the City of Montrose Historic Preservation Commission since 2018.

Jon's work on the Old Spanish Trail began on the BLM's National Historic Trails Project in Utah and Colorado in 2010. Since then, he has been involved in documenting additional sections of the trail and sites along the trail through Alpine and as a volunteer with other organizations. He is mostly retired now, but works on a few small projects for Alpine and continues his research on the Old Spanish Trail. When not doing those things, he enjoys time in the outdoors hiking and birdwatching, gardening, doing family genealogy, and traveling.



ALPINE ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTANTS, INC.

Proud to support the Colorado Archaeological Society



2130 East Main Street, Montrose, CO 81401
(970) 249-6761

Visit us at www.alpinearchaeology.com

I often wish I had a rather important message to relay to you. Business items, agendas, etc. This month I have none of those to offer; however I do have a favorite October poem by Florence Jacobs to share.

Suppertime now, but who can shut the door on a single precious moment? Not many more such evenings! The apple-green sunset may mean frost...

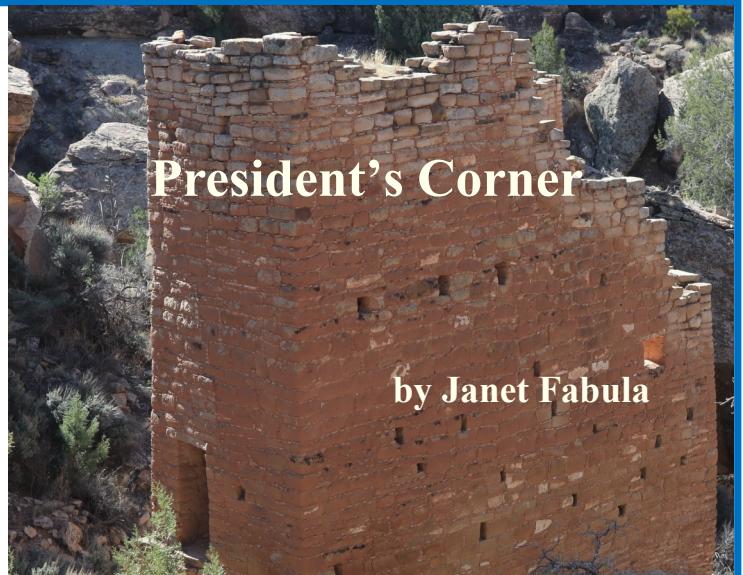
...its faint lilac tinge certainly means October.

We had a good Lands End Field trip recently. Parts of the drive we took down Lands End Road on the Grand Mesa, reminded me of Mr Toad's Wild Ride. The weather was mild right up till the very end, when a western slope storm blew in (we saw it coming from afar). At which point our leader said those memorable words "...and that concludes our trip"! As we all hustled to our cars. It was a day well spent. I hope to see you at our next field trip.

As always, let our field trip leaders know of any sites you would like to put down for this upcoming season. New and old ideas are welcomed.

During one of our last board meetings the idea of some more time to visit with one another was discussed. We all agreed a little extra social time before our regular 7:00 pm meeting would be nice. So come early if you would like. Potluck cookies/refreshments will await you.

See you at our October 21, 2026 meeting.



More from the Lands End field trip



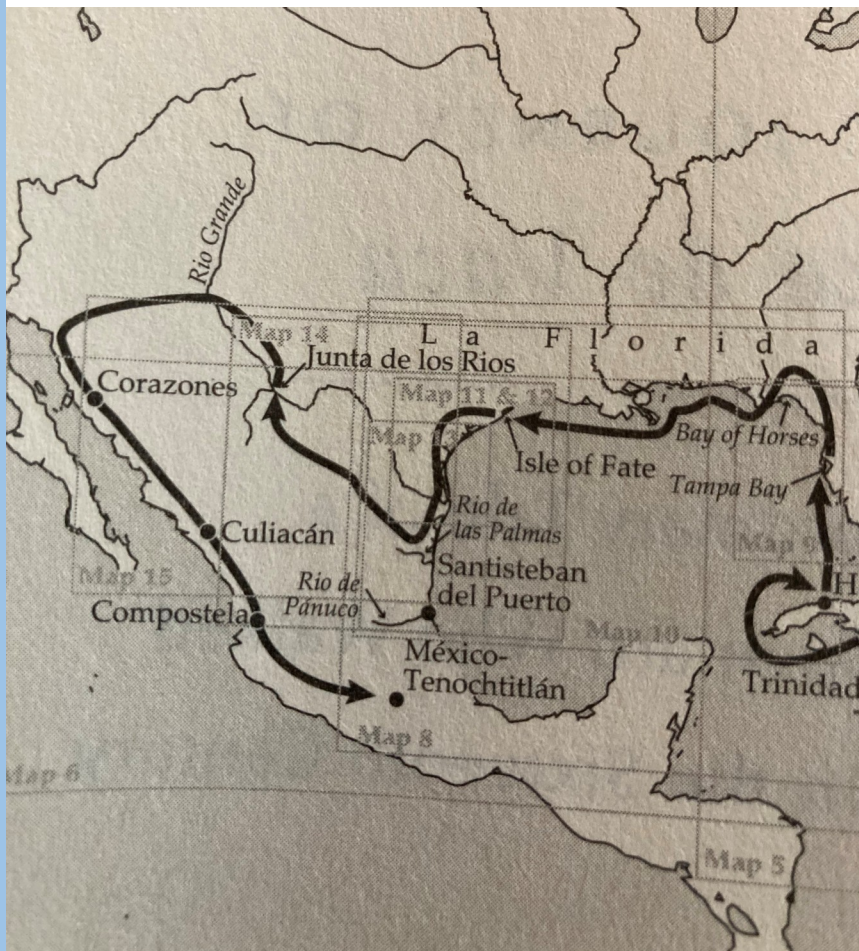
January Presentations: a Potpourri

The January presentation will be a potpourri: that is, **You**, the members of the Chipeta Chapter, will present 20-minute talks about your own archaeologically-related experiences.

If you have an experience you would like to talk about, contact Dan Elsner at speaker@chipetachaptercas.org.

The Epic Journey of Cabeza de Vaca A Review of *A Land So Strange*, by Andres Resendez

In 1527 three hundred men left Seville, Spain, on a mission to colonize Florida. With the conquest of Mexico by Hernan Cortez and Francisco Pizarro in recent memory, the quest began. The goal was to explore the coast from Florida to Rio de las Palmas in current coastal Mexico [see map].



Let's pick up the story in Florida after the expedition survived a hurricane. The group split into a land party of able bodied men to explore parallel to the coast, and the remaining ships to sail directly to Rio de las Palmas. The expeditions deteriorated very quickly. In the end Vaca and 3 other survivors escaped and began their inland quest to reach the land of the Christians.

The "children of the sun" lived by their wits, mastery of languages and ability to make sense of the social world. Their journey became as much spiritual as physical. Reinventing themselves as medicine men allowed them to move freely amongst the Indian groups as they journeyed west.

After 8 years they reached the west coast and were reunified with Spaniards. Unfortunately the method of peaceful cohabitation was not the way of the Spaniards.

I highly recommend this book about their exciting adventures.

— Dan Elsner

The Uncompahgre Journal
Published 9 times annually
by the
Chipeta Chapter
of the
Colorado Archaeological Society.
P.O. Box 593
Montrose, CO 81402
Submissions for publication
may be emailed to:
Dave Batten, david.batten@enmu.edu

From the Editor

I wonder how many of you remember the discovery in Indonesia of the human-like fossil remains dubbed the Hobbit. She was an adult female about 3½ feet tall that would have weighed around 60 lbs. She was given the scientific name *Homo floresiensis* after the island of Flores, where she was found, and her specimen designation is LB 1, because she was the first fossil assemblage discovered in the Liang Bua cave. She lived between 100,000 and 60,000 years ago. Not everybody agrees on the *H. floresiensis* designation. In the last 20 years, there has been quite a bit of back-and-forth discussion between different scholars with totally different interpretations of her. Some have declared her to be a modern human who suffered from dwarfism, while others consider her to be a close relative of our early African ancestors (*Ardipithecus* and *Australopithecus*), or descendants of early offshoots of *Homo erectus*.

She's in the news again, because a team of physical anthropologists have published a detailed study of her pelvis. They favor the *Homo erectus* connection, but do not really dwell on the evolutionary arguments. Their goal is more descriptive, as they attempt to provide a "detailed comparative analysis" in order to securely situate the creature—or at least the creature's pelvis—in the context of other humans and human ancestors dating back to about 4 million years ago.

The authors provide a detailed metric analysis of a right ilium fragment and a more complete left ilium and ischium. The ilium is the top bone of your hip, that you can feel on your sides just below your waist. The ischium is the bone you sit on when you're at your desk writing on your computer. Included is the acetabulum, the socket that the ball of your thigh bone articulates with. The configuration of these bones can tell you a lot about the way a creature moves around the landscape. For example, a vertical ilium is suited to a creature that climbs around in trees, and also uses its front limbs for locomotion on the ground. A "flared" ilium such as ours (one that turns out near the top), allows us to walk upright with an efficient gliding stride—and without the aid of our arms.

This was a truly wonky article. It consists mostly of a description of nine measurements of the *H. floresiensis* pelvis. Each measurement was carefully described and compared to the values of that measure among 30+ other ancient and modern pelvises from apes and humans, after being scaled (adjusted) to eliminate the problem of body size differences. They addressed where each LB 1 measure would fit in the continuum of variation between apes, ancestral humans, and modern humans. That was followed by an exhaustive discussion of what significance these measures might have and what they imply about the walking ability of LB 1.

Their results were sort of ambiguous. Some characteristics of the LB 1 pelvis resembled those of our early australopithecine ancestors, while others were more like us. Nevertheless, all but one of the measures were within the range of variation of modern humans (the exception was the LB 1 ischium, which was surprisingly long), and the authors concluded that *H. floresiensis* would have walked pretty much like a human (though not necessarily like an Egyptian).



References

- Lewton, Kristi L., Ashley S. Hammond, Nico Alamsyah, Sofwan Noerwidi, Thomas Sutikna, Matthew M. Skinner, Matthew W. Tocheri
2026 Comparative Morphometric Analysis of the Pelvis of LB 1 (*Homo floresiensis*). *American Journal of Biological Anthropology* 190:e70339. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ajpa.70339>

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)\$50

_____ Individual\$40

_____ 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

- **President:** Janet Fabula, president@chipetachaptercas.org
- **Vice Pres:** Leigh Ann Hunt, vp@chipetachaptercas.org
- **Secretary:** Elizabeth Binder, secretary@chipetachaptercas.org
- **Treasurer:** Jim Douras, treasurer@chipetachaptercas.org
- **CAS Rep:** Nick Ard, casrep@chipetachaptercas.org

STANDING COMMITTEES

- **Speaker:** Dan Elsner, speaker@chipetachaptercas.org
- **Newsletter:** Dave Batten, editor@chipetachaptercas.org
- **Membership:** Sally Johnson, membership@chipetachaptercas.org
- **Site Steward Coordinator:** Leigh Ann Hunt, sitestewards@chipetachaptercas.org
- **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

Upcoming Speakers

November: Carol Patterson on Pueblo Myths and Climate Shifts

January: Membership Potpourri—volunteers needed!

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.