



ANCIENT ECHOES ANCIENT ECHOES ANCIENT ECHOES

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April, May, June 2011

MEMBERSHIP MEETING

**Thursday, May 5, 7 PM In The Theater
Of The Arizona Museum Of Natural History
35 N. Macdonald Street (Enter from First Street)**

Jen Conway will discuss her field experiences at ASU's summer field school in Hadar Ethiopia. Jen's first archaeology experience was in Dr. Jerry Howard's Maricopa Community College field methods class where she developed her love in paleoanthropology. She also worked on the Waveyard Project with Dr. Howard, and helped excavate a burial there. She's now enrolled at Arizona State University and due to graduate next semester with her degree in Paleo-anthropology (i.e. hominids.) Jen is very passionate about her field and always interested in attending conferences and seminars related to her field of work. Her knowledge has increased this last winter as she pursued her second field school year in Hadar, Ethiopia. She has plenty of interesting stories about the locals of the area.

The Institute of Human Origins in the School of Human Evolution and Social Change, in conjunction with the Center for Global Education Services at Arizona State University, offers a field school in paleoanthropology at Hadar, Ethiopia. This region of the Afar Triangle is one of the richest in the world for middle Pliocene hominin fossils.

The Hadar site contains approximately a million years of human evolution within its deposits. Australopithecus afarensis material has been recovered from more than 3.4 to 3.0 million years ago. The Australopithecus afarensis sites include the Lucy Locality, the First Family Locality and the two adult skull localities. In addition, stone tools have been recovered from sediments older than 2.33 million years. While at Hadar site the students received instruction in early hominin evolution, paleoecology, faunal analysis, geology, archaeology, site mapping, fossil survey and various types of excavation.

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Chair Chatter

Donna Bengé
Chairperson



Thanks to the many SWAT members and MCC students who helped at the Mesa Grande Open House on March 19, we had another very successful year both on the trail and at the various activities. We were also grateful to have the Mesa Grande Neighborhood Alliance helping us by providing breakfast for everyone who came to visit. And it was a perfect weather day!

The next weekend on March 26 and 27, a number of you helped at the SWAT booth and activity area at the Arizona Archaeology Expo at the Deer Valley Rock Art Center. Thank you. A special thanks to the Mesa Community College members of the Archaeology Club who helped with the pump drill activity. Except for some gusts of wind late in the afternoon on Saturday, the weather was also perfect for that event so we had more than a thousand visitors during the weekend.

In February, a number of SWAT members were honored at a brunch by the museum for the many volunteer hours they contributed during the past year. SWAT members, Donna Bengé, Ed Mack, and Jim Britton, had the most volunteer hours.

Besides participating in the Archaeology Month activities, we also worked at the Toltec Schoolhouse and Pueblo Grande besides having lab each Wednesday evening. Three SWAT members were honored on April 5th at a Mesa City Council meeting for their years of volunteer service with the Arizona Museum of Natural History. The awards were made to city volunteers who had at least 20 years of service. They included Donna Bengé and Jim and Marie Britton.

If you have forgotten to renew your membership, be sure to do so right away so you can keep up with the SWAT activities and meetings. The meeting we have planned for May should be a fascinating one, and in October Jim Britton will be telling us about work he is doing at Homolovi State Park.



Children enjoyed the partially collapsed lava tube during the Pinacate Exhibit opening.

Exhibits Team Assists With Pinacate And Sea Of Cortez Openings

Along with constant maintenance work, we have participated in the opening of two new exhibitions: Pinacate and Sea of Cortez. The Pinacate exhibit features wall sized photographs of the desert area in Mexico just south of the Arizona boarder. As you enter the exhibit, you can hear birds singing and see a display of the beetles that inhabit the site. You can see how the sand dunes build up around the mountains and how the land uplifts to form ridges. A volcanic tube for children to crawl in demonstrates how the area has many volcanic features.

The Sea of Cortez exhibit upstairs shows how a group followed the same route as the writer Ernest Hemingway did in the 1940's. They looked at the same areas evaluating the conditions to compare it to the earlier observations. Photographs and displays help to tell the story. As a part of that show, a tide pool puzzle was constructed. It's a very large piece with cutouts that contain three dimensional objects such a starfish, crabs, turtles, jellyfish, anemones, and other animals found in the Cortez tide pools. The puzzle masters have to find where the many pieces fit into the tide pool rocks. There is also a guessing game of concentration with cards of the tide pool creatures that can be played.

During this coming year, Arizona will be celebrating our 100 year centennial and Mesa's theme for the year is "Mesa Takes Flight" with many activities, museum displays, and shows at the Mesa Arts Center. We will be working on an exhibit for the museum entitled "First Flight" which will include the flights of the first birds.



SWAT members are busy installing new exterior siding around the new front door of the Toltec Schoolhouse

Toltec Schoolhouse

Much progress has been made at the Toltec Schoolhouse. Dick Myer's son has been working on rewiring the building for electricity and Dick has had new windows placed on the west side. The double door opening on the north side was reframed and a new single door was installed. Dick also had a new door made for the south side. New windows are being custom made for areas on the north, south, and east sides of the school. SWAT members have now installed exterior siding on the east and west sides and up to the roof gable on the north side. Several layers of insulation were put into the walls before the siding was nailed on. Two layers have also been put in above the rafters.

On future workdays dry wall will need to be put on the north interior wall and the wainscoting will need to be extended on both sides of the new door. The siding on the north and south sides will be completed on the May workday, and then the finish work on that will need to be done. Ceiling tiles also need to be installed, and the

interior and exterior will need to be painted.

Dick Myers has spent many hours as leader of this project and other SWAT members have contributed lots of help since last fall so the project is moving right along to completion.

Milk Barn Work Report

The Milk Barn is located in the Park of the Canals, a city park, on Horne Road in Mesa. We have had one workday to begin partial roof replacement. Four pieces of the corrugated metal roofing had blown off. The purlins in the area of the missing roof were rotted and termite damaged. These purlins were replaced with new lumber. On this upcoming workday we'll need to attach the new metal roofing. The next scheduled work day is May 14, 2011. If you are interested in helping contact, Jerry Howard at (480)644-3428 or jerry.howard@mesaaz.gov

Mesa Grande Open House

Before coming into the mound area, over 300 people enjoyed a breakfast of eggs, sausage, pancakes, and orange juice. They then walked along the trail where signs were in place as well as SWAT members who could elaborate on the sign messages and answer questions.

Jerry Howard's field school class demonstrated excavation techniques on the north side of the mound. Along with the trail walk there were activities for the visitors including spear throwing using an atlatl, rabbit stick throwing, using a pump drill to



Families from all over enjoyed activities at Mesa Grande open house.

drill holes in pieces of wood to make a bracelet, bola throw by Mike and JJ Gollio, pottery making by Glen Dotson, and demonstrations on the use of various Hohokam artifacts by Cano Ramirez, who is a docent at the Arizona Museum of Natural History.

SWAT members were on hand to introduce visitors to our group.



Pueblo Grande Stabilization

The Enemy Attacks!

By Jim Britton

On February 19th the PGM Mudslingers were scheduled to take up positions around the Pueblo Grande platform mound and repair damage inflicted previously by the "Enemy" (rain). However, the bad news was that the "Enemy" had another plan. The good news was that the leader of the Mudslingers had been tipped off by an informant (the weatherman) that the "Enemy" planned to hit the mound defenders on that morning so that the repairs could not be made as planned. So to protect the "mound defenders" the leader gave them advanced notice that the work schedule had changed.

Sure enough, in the middle of the night February 18th, under the cover of darkness, the "Enemy"

moved in. It pounded Pueblo Grande platform mound and adjacent rooms with mighty blasts of wind and rain. Some damage was done but the "mound defenders" were safe in their home shelters and prepared for their opportunity to counter attack.

That opportunity occurred on March 12. And what a huge counter attack it was. Many first time "defenders" joined our usual well trained force of 8 to 12. This resulted in a huge force of 23 "defenders." The damage inflicted by the "Enemy" attack was quickly repaired. The "defenders" all returned home safe and with feelings of a job well done.

If you would like to join the Mudslingers, contact Jim Britton at (480)827-8070. The next work day is scheduled for May 21, 2011.

Archaeology Expo

SWAT Members Learn “Location Is Everything!”

The many visitors at the Expo at the Deer Valley Rock Art Center on March 26 and 27 learned about archaeology plus Hohokam, rock art, crafts, and lifestyles. They were able to visit booths sponsored by various archaeology groups such as SWAT, Arizona Archaeology Society, Arizona Archaeological and Historic Society (Tucson), plus archaeologists from Arizona universities, museums, national and state parks, Native American communities, and private companies.

There were many activities in which to participate including using pump drills at the SWAT area, a mock archaeology dig, jewelry making, using an atlatl to throw a spear, etc. Also included were tours of the rock art site. The various displays were in the parking lot, and along the trail to the petroglyph sites. The museum was also open to visitors. Food, including fry bread, was also available.

This year there were no funds available from the Heritage Fund but there were some private donations. The participants had to furnish their own tents for shade but the center had tables and chairs in the spaces.

On Saturday SWAT was assigned an area that was away from other participants and not on the pathway that the visitors used so we did not have too many people come to our booth to find out about SWAT or learn how to use the pump drills. The next day we set up on the other side of the parking lot and had hundreds of visitors.



Above and below, SWAT members assist youngsters with the “pump drill” as they make their own jewelry at the Archaeology Expo.



Lab Team Faces Challenges

The lab team has been working on several projects including sherd analysis of Mesa Grande, lithic and sherd analysis of the Mesa Cemetery project, and the continuing rebagging of artifacts into archival plastic bags. We often have a full house of volunteers so we are making good progress.

As a matter of fact, we now need to be able to get artifacts from a storage area above the museum jail in a

hard to reach place to continue. To get to this storage area, we have to crawl up a high ladder, and walk along a pipe to a platform. Then after entering a low door, we have to walk in to screw in a lightbulb to see what we are doing in the dusty small space.

We hope to very soon invent a method for getting the heavy boxes down from this second story platform without harming ourselves or the artifacts.

Join Or Renew Today!

If you have not renewed your membership in Southwest Archaeology Team yet, we invite you to do so. 2011 memberships being accepted now.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Date Sent: _____

This is a: New Membership Renewal Membership

- \$20 - Family Membership
- \$15 - Single or Individual Membership
- \$10 - Student Membership

Return to: Southwest Archaeology Team
P.O. Box 5368, Mesa, AZ 85211-5368

Southwest Archaeology Team

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Ancient Echoes is the
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