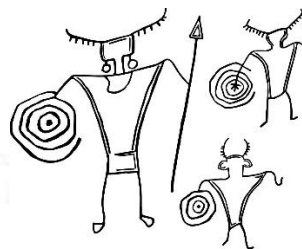


VESTIGES



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

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From the Prez

Rick Mathews

Greetings URARA Members!

I’m excited to talk to you all about our recent Board Retreat in Moab. I’m sure you’ll all be excited to hear about upcoming symposiums:

- 2026 - Bluff, UT
- 2027 - Delta, UT
- 2028 - Escalante, UT

Speaking of Symposiums, I would encourage you to start making your lodging plans now. See Carol Patterson on page 4 below.

The great thing about our Board Retreat is working with my fellow members as we plan URARA’s future and administration. The EXPLORE Act has changed fieldtrip permitting on public land. I am grateful to our land manager partners who recognize URARA’s past contributions to documenting, preserving and conserving Rock Imagery on public land. Working with our land managers, we can do great things.

Another fun thing we’ve been working on is URARA’s on-going partnership with the Colorado Rock Art Chapter of the Colorado Archaeological Society. The Old Ones didn’t see a border between the states, and I think it’s great when we can collaborate and share knowledge about the cultures who lived on the land before us. We have some great webinars coming up this spring. Check them out in the Calendar, p. 8

Prez (continued)

And check out the Member's Forum; there have been some interesting discussions. And don't forget the Facebook Page. We have over 4.3K followers. Posts are reviewed and can be pulled if not appropriate. There are some great posts.

When the weather is good, go out and enjoy. We were able to take small field trip close to Moab. We saw some great images and had fun hiking around.

Enjoy your February!



URARA Board 2026

Photo by Steve Acerson

Back Row: Tina Tan, John McHugh, Carol Duecker, Rein van West, Rick Mathews

Front Row: Margo Mahoney, Nancy Lombardo, Darlene Koerner, Carol Patterson, Diana Acerson

Kanab Symposium Presentations On Line

Dennis Devore

As promised Tom Getts has uploaded the final group of symposium presentations. Included are those by Phil Geib, Carol Patterson and Jim Farmer. In addition, I compiled a tribute to Dell Crandall using slides that were shown at symposium. Dell was well-known in the Moab area. For many years Dell conducted the symposium auction at the evening banquet.

<https://urara.wildapricot.org/Symposium-Presentations>

Let's Get Going with Field Trips

Tina Tan

It's been a mild winter so far - are you already starting to think of rock art trips? If you are, I hope you consider leading a trip for URARA!

It's really not too early to start thinking about this as we need to check in with the land managers to see what is involved in getting a field trip going. Some field trips being planned include trips to the following: Vernal area, Bluff area, Smith Preserve, Fremont State Parks (dates TBD).

You can see there's room for more! No volunteer field trip leaders = no field trips. I sure would hate to see that happen, and I know you all feel the same (right?)

So why not be one this year? Let's add to the calendar, shall we?

Here's how it works:

- Pick a site you know, choose a date, and send me your proposal.
- Make sure you are familiar with road and trail conditions, & watch the weather.
- Be prepared to handle unexpected situations. Having basic first aid knowledge is helpful (just in case)

(I'll check in with the relevant land managers)

- We'll handle the trip sign-ups and support you with participant lists etc.
- As the trip leader, we'll ask that you communicate with participants on trip logistics (meet up time and location place, etc.)
- Trips are generally limited to 12 participants, depending on the limits set by land managers
- If it helps, you can also get reimbursed up to \$200 for your trip expenses.

If you're interested in leading a field trip, please email me with your trip proposal, or we can also bat around some ideas if you're not sure where to go. Please email me at: tinatan07@gmail.com

Let's work together to make this a good field trip year! - Tina

Call for Symposium Volunteers

Rein van West

Volunteers are needed for a successful Bluff Symposium, October 8-12, 2026. Tasks would be small, easy to manage, and would not require anyone to miss either field trips or speaker presentations.

Please email your willingness to volunteer to:

Carol Patterson, urraca2fly@gmail.com, or

Rein van West, arcticwild@gmail.com

Thank you!

Symposium Lodging in Bluff

Carol Patterson

The URARA Board reminds you that Bluff is a very small town, and that our Symposium, October 8-12, Thursday thru Monday, coincides with the peak of the shoulder season and a 3-day weekend, Columbus Day (Indigenous Peoples Day). Accommodation availability will be limited. Symposium dates had already been set by the board in 2025. Therefore, those considering attending the symposium are urged to make reservations as soon as possible.

Online reservations through a third party can, at times, be a hassle to modify, if needed. Making a call directly to the accommodation venue, whether it be a motel, an RV park, or an Air B&B, can be often more efficient and less frustrating.

A list of accommodations is available from the Bluff Chamber of Commerce:

<https://bluffutah.org/>

Rock Imagery in the News

Cinco Milenios de Arte Rupestre en Los Andes Atacamenos: Images para lo Humano, Imagenes para lo Divino Boletín del Museo Chileno de Arte Precolombino, No. 9, 2004, pp 75-108

"A Mark by Any Other Name . . .": Reconciling Historical and Descendant Terms and Concepts for Indigenous Petroglyphs and Pictographs American Antiquity 2025.2

This 67,800-year-old hand stencil is the world's oldest human-made art Ars Technica, 23 Jan 2026

<https://arstechnica.com/science/2026/01/this-67800-year-old-hand-stencil-is-the-worlds-oldest-human-made-art/>

Digital scans uncover writing on Pompeii wall St George Spectrum (reuters) 24 Jan 2026

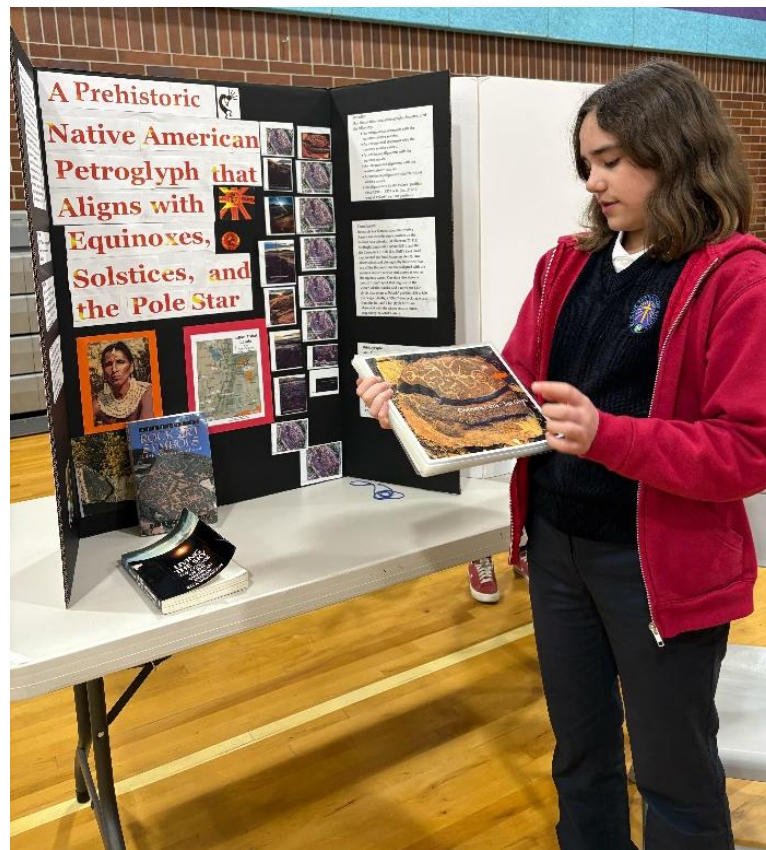
Digital scans unveil new love notes and sketches on ancient Pompeii wall Reuters 19 Jan 2026

Table Rock Petroglyph Panel at Science Fair

John McHugh

The “Table Rock” petroglyph panel (42UT1454, Panel 1) will take center stage at the Salt Lake Science and Engineering Fair held at Juan Diego High School (Draper, UT) on February 7th. The Blessed Sacrament School “Shovel Bums” archaeology club has been stewarding this site since 2019. Recent photography taken during the past year has reconfirmed what URARA’s Nina Bowen first discovered in 2006: the Table Rock petroglyph marks the sunrise and sunset at the summer solstice. Additional research demonstrated that Table Rock also makes alignments with the equinox and winter solstice sunrise and sunset. And a line at the norther tip of the panel appears to point to the Pole Star’s position circa 1400 – 1575 AD; the latter date possibly serving as the panel’s “time stamp.”

6th grader Emma Ashby, a Shovel Bum who has been stewarding Table Rock for the past two years, will be representing all of her fellow Shovel Bums when she presents the most recent findings at the upcoming Science and Engineering Fair. Emma, who is part Ute, has been out to Table Rock at least twenty times as a Shovel Bum, usually accompanied by her Ute grandmother, Lisa Magaro or mother, Danielle Gallegos. Table Rock comes alive when seen through the eyes of the direct descendants of the people who made it.



6th grader, Emma Ashby, preparing to present at the Blessed Sacrament Science Fair on Jan. 22nd.

Emma placed 2nd at the Blessed Sacrament School's Science Fair, and she hopes to have similar success when discussing the vast array of astronomical wisdom encoded in this panel at the state Science and Engineering Fair.

Similarly, 11th grader Connor Hoisington (Juan Diego High School) will also be describing the solar-astronomical alignments of Table Rock in the "Senior Division" of the Science and Engineering Fair, emphasizing the mathematical basis for the alignments. Connor was a Shovel Bum during his middle school (6th - 8th grade) years at Blessed Sacrament where he twice went out to Vernal to record and document Native American rock imagery with BLM archaeologist David Christensen and eat Darlene Koerner and Tim Sweeney's wonderful Dutch Oven chili. Because he has a driver's license, Connor currently does field research with the Utah Cultural Astronomy Project founded by URARA's John K. Lundwall. A brilliant student and amateur astronomer, Connor took many of the photographs that were used to validate the solar and astronomical alignments at Table Rock, and will be contributing to a scholarly peer-reviewed article about this panel. Like Emma, we hope he too has great success at the Feb. 7th Science and Engineering Fair!



11th grader Connor Hoisington awaits the winter solstice sunrise at Table Rock.

Clouds in Rock Images

Carol Patterson

The Anthropology of Clouds in Petroglyphs and Pictographs of the Southwest

Presentation by Carol Patterson, CAS Grand Junction: **February 25, 2026**, 6:30 PM

<https://www.casgjchapter.org/public-meetings>

Abstract: Rain is of dire importance for survival in the southwest USA. Prehistoric people pray to cloud-spirits through ritual ceremonies and rain dances. They viewed their world as animate, and they engraved or painted imitative rain making ceremonies to motivate cloud behavior. An examination of proposed cloud images found in context with lightning, thunder, hail and rainbow symbols, are discussed in context with extensive ethnographic documentation. There are many varieties of cloud-beings that take on different body shapes and sizes. They all share a common theme as being Rain Bringers. What are called 'clouds' in English, are called by proper names because they are sentient beings. The cultural association with the rock imagery is based on diagnostic elements in the panels that are named in the emergence stories of the Keres, Zuni and Western Apache. Their foundation myths of creation that names their gods and culture heroes are what define each culture. Cloud Beings have personal relationships with members of the Pueblo and Apachean groups and are impersonated in masked dances. But not so with the nomadic Numic groups including the Ute and Paiute.

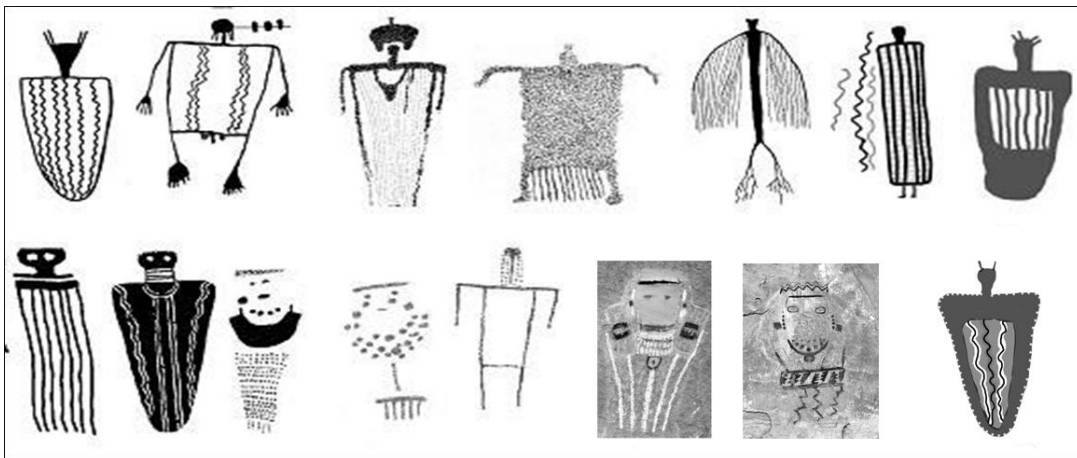


Figure 1. Variations on 'Cloud Beings' in the southwest region.

Calendar, URARA Events and Trips

February 19	URARA Webinar John McHugh on the Table Mtn. Solar alignment
February 25	CAS GJ Section Lecture: The Anthropology of Clouds in Rock Images of the Southwest (in person only)
March 3	Archaeology Southwest webinar: Road Signs and Walking Shoes https://www.archaeologysouthwest.org/event/road-signs-and-walking-shoes/
March 6-8	Celebrate Bears Ears 2026 Bears Ears Partnership - Celebrate Bears Ears 2026-Public Events
April 16	URARA Webinar Jerod Roberts on Red Linear paintings of the Upper Pecos River.
June 25-29	ARARA Symposium Great Falls https://arara.wildapricot.org/Conference-General-Info-2026
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>

Crow Canyon webinars resume in March

The Utah State Historic Preservation Office has occasional events and tours.
See <https://ushpo.utah.gov/the-events/>

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

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