



# ANCIENT ECHOES ANCIENT ECHOES ANCIENT ECHOES

Volume No. 21 Issue No. 4

October, November, December, 2011

## HOLIDAY DINNER AND MEETING

Thursday, December 1, 6:00 PM

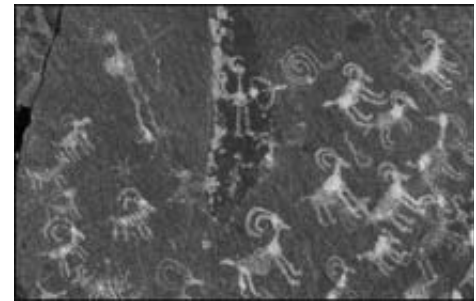
Speaker: Chris Loendorf, Ph.D.

### THE HOHOKAM AND AKIMEL O'ODHAM

Prehistory and History along the Middle Gila River in Southern Arizona

AzMNH Theatre, 53 N. Macdonald (Enter from First Street)

By the 18th century, the Middle Gila River was one of the few portions of southern Arizona where sedentary farming communities (the Akimel O'odham or Pima) still remained. Agricultural societies were much more widely distributed during late prehistory, and reasons for the collapse of these populations have been debated since Spaniards first visited Casa Grande Ruins. Recent analyses of the Hohokam collapse have focused on studying the roles of migration, trade, conflict, and changes in subsistence practices. Projectile point data can be used to study each of these issues; however, this evidence has previously received little attention. Akimel O'odham stories say they are the direct descendants of the Hohokam, and projectile point data as well as extensive additional archaeological evidence support this association. While many differences occur between the prehistoric and historic periods in the Hohokam region, these changes are part of a much longer cycle of episodic variation in material culture. Akimel O'odham traditions describe this cycle, and the many close parallels between their stories and the archaeological record indicate they have lived in the area for a considerable time



Chris Loendorf is a Project Manager for the Gila River Indian Community Cultural Resource Management Program. He earned his Ph.D. and M.A. at Arizona State University, and B.A. at the University of Montana. Chris began his career in 1981 doing fieldwork in the Northern Plains but has studied Hohokam archaeology since coming to Arizona in 1989. His research expertise includes projectile point analysis, rock art studies, mortuary documentation, and x-ray fluorescence analysis of archaeological remains

Please bring a side dish to share. A HoneyBaked Ham as well as drinks and utensils will be furnished by SWAT. The Southwest Archaeology Team Volunteer of the Year award will also be presented. It should be a fun time! Mark your calendars for the start of this year's holiday season.

## Renew Your SWAT Membership Now!

Please renew your membership now for 2012. Our membership fees are at bargain rates since they have not changed since our inception. Please see back page for renewal form. New interested persons please go to website shown below for a complete form.

Editor, Marie Britton (480) 827-8070, email: mbrit@cox.net

[www.southwestarchaeologyteam.org](http://www.southwestarchaeologyteam.org)

# Chair Chatter

Donna Bengé  
Chairperson



Arizona's Centennial year is almost here, and there will be two big events involving members of the Southwest Archaeology Team. First, the Visitors' Center will be opening at Mesa Grande. Permanent metal revolving signs will be at the various stations where the guides have often been stationed to describe the areas to visitors. The second important event is that the schoolhouse that we have been working on in Eloy will be completed and open to the public as a museum showing what it was like as the Toltec School for Colored Students. The one-room school will be furnished as it was when students were attending. A number of the original artifacts will be used.

Some SWAT members are involved in saving the Mesa Diving Lady neon sign to again be located on Main Street near Lindsey. Featured in the November "Arizona Highways," she will be back in place before the end of the year. You are invited to come to the grand opening when the lady dives again. She was an important part of the era when there were many motels in Mesa beckoning tourists to come stay at their places. From the 1920's to the early 1970's, three coast to coast highways, 60, 70 and 80, merged on Main Street. Border to border Highway 89 went through Mesa on Country Club which it still does today.

We are planning a gala potluck again with a Honey-Baked Ham and your potluck contributions at our December meeting so plan to come enjoy the feast and chat with your SWAT friends. Fifty attended last year, and we hope even more of you will be able to come this December. The speaker's presentation will be a very interesting subject.



AZMNH has been  
named the  
**Best Place to  
Dig Dinosaurs**  
by Phoenix New  
Times



# Mesa Grande Interpretive Signage

Dr. Jerry Howard

Tim Walters and his crew in the museum workshop have been busy as usual. They have been making the hardware for the new interpretive signs at Mesa Grande. The design of the signs is Tim's take on interpretive signs that Tom Wilson and Jerry Howard studied when they attended a workshop with the Exploratorium, an innovative and world renowned science museum in San Francisco, California. Designed to contain information in a small and unobtrusive style for historic sites, the sign contains four panels that rotate around a center bar. Tim created a unique colored concrete base to hold the signs that contains a red on buff design. All went well in pouring the base using a mold – until they had to get the concrete to separate from the mold. Several shop members with flailing hammers did not seem to do the trick – but we understand that Tim jumping up and down on it finally made the mold release the base.

The four panels on the sign posts will contain the four "voices" used in the interpretive material. They include the "old explorer" voice relating the story of the early visitors to Mesa Grande and efforts to preserve the mound, the archaeologists voice explaining what science has learned about the mound and the Hohokam people, the Native American voice relating the knowledge of the O'odham descendants and the "close looking" voice pointing out natural processes of erosion and the plants and animals at the site.

The interpretive material being created at the museum is in its final editing stage and will be done as this goes to press. This material will be displayed at the museum in December as a "test" to see the reaction of the public and to make any necessary changes before the signs are brought out to the site.

These are certainly exciting times as the construction plans for the "welcoming center" building go out for bid.

## Milk Barn Project

This fix-up project on a building at The Park Of The Canals has been in a holding pattern for quite awhile due to our work on many other projects. However, we are now scheduled to work Saturday December 10 and January 14 at 9:00 A.M. at this rock house structure in the park. If you have some carpentry skills, please lend us a hand. Contact Donna Bengé, 480-969-0578 or [dbenge1@cox.net](mailto:dbenge1@cox.net).

# Pueblo Grande Mudslingers

## Jim Britton

Mud was flying on October 22 at Pueblo Grande! As mentioned in the last "Ancient Echoes" newsletter this workday was going to be special since it was National Archaeology Day. Throughout October and on October 22 in particular, the Archaeological Institute of America (AIA) and its 108 local societies throughout the United States were presenting and participating in archaeological programs.

The AIA is a North America non-profit organization devoted to the promotion of public interest in archaeology and the preservation of archaeology sites. It was founded in 1879. It has over 200,000 members. On their website under National Archaeology Day it stated; "Saturday, October 22 is National Archaeology Day! From mudslinging in Phoenix to the archaeology fair in Toronto, there are events all over North America." The PGM Mudslingers and the stabilization project at Pueblo Grande became exposed to people all over North America.

On October 22, there were 29 mudslingers who contributed 126 hours to repair the eroded mortar joints in the west wall of the platform mound, cleaning out drop-boxes, and recapping several damaged wall caps. A total of 165 gallons of mud were used in this stabilization effort.

In addition to doing mudslinging the AIA participants were given a tour of the museum, the platform mound, the trail to the pit house and compound villages, and the ball court by Bob (Roberto), one of the PGM docents.



**Mudslingers in action at Pueblo Grande.**

Photo by Kathy Neenan Photography.

Everyone said they enjoyed their day at Pueblo Grande, even though some of them got very dirty from the splatter of mud.

If you would like to help the PGM Mudslingers, call Jim Britton (480)827-8070 for the work schedule and starting times.

## Toltec School Renovation



**SWAT members staining beadboard siding.**

Amazing strides have been made on the schoolhouse project this fall. All the windows were installed and the frames have been painted on the outside. A coat of shellac has been put on the interior window frames by SWAT members, and now they will be stained to match the wainscoting. The walls are ready to be painted by a painter and the ceiling will soon be to that point also. Calking has been done around the exterior windows and gaps in the siding. Light fixtures purchased by SWAT will be added as soon as the painting is finished and the electrical wires are in place. Then it will be clean-up time so the artifacts can be put in place.

The Open House is scheduled for February 14, 2012 at 10:00 A.M. Be sure to mark the date on your calendar. Lots of festivities will be included at this event. To get to the schoolhouse follow these directions: coming eastbound from Phoenix/Mesa towards Tucson on Interstate 10 take Exit 203, at the stop sign turn left and proceed 7/10's of a mile north to Coolidge or Marsh St. and turn right (east) one block to Sunland Visitor Center and the Schoolhouse Site.



# SWAT Exhibit Crew



Ed Mack with his life-size Pterosaur.

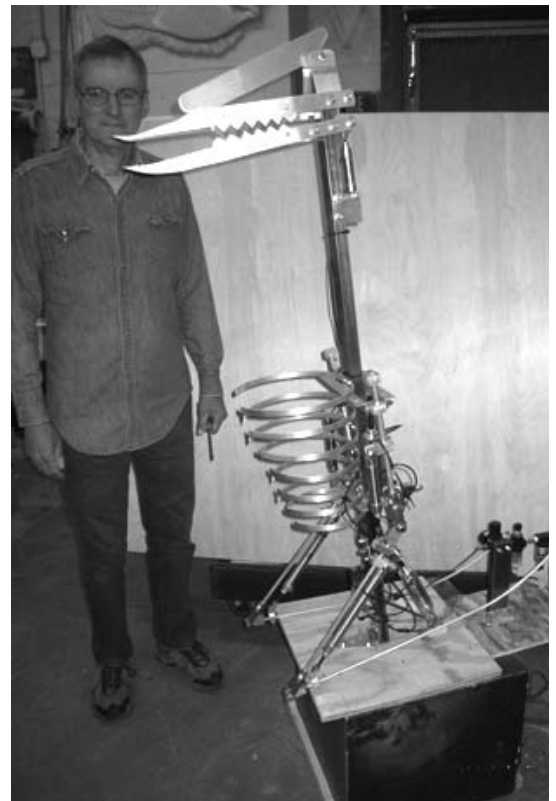
Jim Britton Photos

Some of our SWAT members are working hard on Mondays to get exhibits ready for the Mesa Takes Flight celebration slated for February 2012. Prehistoric birds are being sculpted, rocks of Styrofoam coated with cement are being made to use as barriers for the huge low flying birds, a robot spreads its wings, and large pieces of Baltic birch plywood are being painted and cut into puzzles. Be sure to ask Ed Mack about the "Big Bird" (Pterosaur) with a 23 foot wing span that he is sculpting. It will be included in the exhibition entitled "Rulers of the Prehistoric Skies", opening January 28, 2012.



Left, Ron & Ruth working on wood puzzle.

Right, Dan with his robotic "Big Bird"



## Lab Volunteer Team Is Growing

### Donna Bengé

We've welcomed some new members to lab recently, and all of us volunteers are honing our manuscript printing skills each week while labeling archival plastic bags.

The storage area at the Federal Building will soon be renovated so that we can store artifacts on new shelves we recently obtained from the Mesa Courts building. Doing away with paper records, they no longer needed the shelves that they purchased just months ago when

the new building was dedicated. They advertised in a City of Mesa communication that the shelves were available to anyone who would come and take them apart and haul them away. After determining that they were just what we needed, a crew of Monday exhibit workers quickly took them apart, loaded them in the museum truck, and moved them to the future artifact storage room where they slid them down the stairs in a wagon especially made for the slide that is placed there. A crew in the basement stacked them neatly on the floor. Eventually they will be put together again for our use.

# Riverview Archaeological Project Update

## Dr. Jerry Howard

The Riverview Archaeological Project is, as always, moving forward slowly on two different fronts. The first is the final fieldwork in the south end of Riverview Park and in the Riverview Golf Course. Both of these parcels are being explored in preparation for the construction of the new Cubs baseball stadium. The parcel at the south end of Riverview Park will be explored to “track” the route of canals found in the original project area to the northeast. Canals found in the Riverview Development (the retail area) may continue to the south down Dobson Road. Alternatively, some may turn to the west into the south end of Riverview Park.

The Riverview Golf Course area will be explored to see if any canals, not found in previous project areas, are located here. Previous work showed that north boundary of the golf course is the edge of the Salt River Channel. This raises an exciting prospect. If canals come off the river at this point (a big IF) then we will be able to locate the actual head of a canal in this area. No previous archaeological projects have ever located a canal head. So, this would be an exciting “first” that could provide important new information.

The second “front” of the Riverview work involves the analysis of the data collected in the Riverview Development area. A very important aspect of this work is to determine when the canals were in use. Dave Abbott, a professor at ASU and longtime SWAT member and myself have joined forces to obtain a National Science Foundation grant to fund the use of a new dating tech-

nique, “optically stimulated luminescence dating” or OSL, on the material collected at the site. They also joined forces with Dr. Glen Berger of the Desert Research Institute (DRI, the research arm of the University of Nevada), one of the pioneers of this new dating technique. As we prepared to resubmit the grant to the NSF, we received the sad news that Glen had passed away. While we were devastated by the loss of our friend and colleague, we felt that the best tribute we could accord to Glen was to carry on the work. We believe we have now found a new researcher in OSL dating, a previous student, close colleague and friend of Glen’s who will collaborate with us. The grant will soon be submitted and we will keep everyone apprised of our progress.

## Verdugo Stage Stop and Schoolhouse

On the way home from a work day at Toltec School, three SWAT members visited the site recently to see if the buildings survived the summer dust and rain storms. We were pleasantly surprised to find that there had been little storm damage. The most serious damage was caused by vandals shooting holes in the Heritage Fund sign and damaging two window screens. It won’t take too long to repair the adobe wall erosion and replace the screens. We will soon schedule a work day there. If you are interested in working contact Donna Bengel 480-969-0578 or [dbengel1@cox.net](mailto:dbengel1@cox.net).

## Holiday Gift Giving Made Easy!

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Our membership fees are at bargain rates since they have not changed since our inception!

Please renew my SWAT membership for 2012.

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- \$20 - Family Membership  
 \$15 - Single or Individual Membership  
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Return to: Southwest Archaeology Team  
P.O. Box 5368, Mesa, AZ 85211-5368

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Ancient Echoes is the  
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