



FROM THE DIRECTOR

As the CBBS team closes out a productive 2024, we're excited about the coming year. Our success in pursuing this groundbreaking work depends on our partners, old and new. We hope you'll consider supporting our efforts to find out more about the earliest people in this region.

- In November, we gathered at our annual conference for two days of presentations and discussions, plus a reception at the Museum of the Big Bend and a banquet featuring Dr. Severin Fowles' keynote address.
- We'll can concentrate on our work with the big lift from the PPHOA grant, stabilizing our funding for the next five years.
- An eventful summer of field work concluded with a final effort that beautifully sets us up for 2025.

Dr. Bryon Schroeder
CBBS Director



Many Facets of Big Bend Research Featured at 30th Annual CBBS Conference



Conference banquet speaker Dr. Severin Fowles, Professor of Anthropology at Barnard College

The 30th annual Center for Big Bend Studies Conference (November 8-9) featured dozens of presenters—historians, archaeologists, students, folklorists and other researchers—who are studying the past and present of the Big Bend region and northern Mexico in a variety of ways. Friday's sessions were capped off by an evening reception at the Emmett and Miriam McCoy Cultural Events Center at the Museum of the Big Bend. Another full day of presentations filled the Saturday schedule, followed by a closing banquet featuring Dr. Severin Fowles' keynote address.

A leading voice in archaeology, Dr. Fowles (Barnard College) provided a thought-provoking exploration of ancient Southwestern cultures. He uses an interdisciplinary approach to bridge archaeology, anthropology, and history and reconstruct the lived experiences of Indigenous peoples in New Mexico through the analysis of rock art. Fowles' numerous publications have significantly advanced our understanding of the Southwest's cultural heritage.

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Look for full papers from the conference in the next Journal of Big Bend Studies. Here's a sampling of the many insightful presentations at this year's conference:



The Southwest Collection Oral Histories in Fort Stockton: The Barrio Fest Legacy

West Texas Historical Association Executive Director and Texas Tech archivist Tail Kreidler presented highlights from a decade of oral history interviews from the diverse Hispanic, Anglo-Texan and Native American population of Fort Stockton. For the past three years, Barrio Fest, an annual community celebration, seeks to revitalize and sustain historical awareness of this important trans-borderland zone.

Using Archival and Archaeological Information in Support of Bat Conservation

The Trans-Pecos is archaeologically rich, yet it's the least-studied region of Texas. Texas Master Naturalist and bat volunteer Lindsey Bredemeyer says this also holds true for biology as species not considered economically significant have little research, regardless of their natural significance. Reviews of archives and archaeological findings assist in determining pre-development conditions to better understand destroyed habitat and at-risk species.

Indigenous Fort Leaton

Under the direction of Kendra DeHart, Sul Ross history students' poster presentation explored the region's early inhabitants and interactions with the Spanish, Mexican, and U.S. citizens in this contested border country, prior to the establishment of Fort Leaton.

How Consistency can Unlock a Portal to the Past

Ohio surveyor/mapper Dave Bodo brought a passion

for surveying and technology to work with CBBS Director Schroeder to better understand the complexity of the CBBS archaeological sites. Fusing traditional mapping techniques with state-of-the-art technology, the two have attempted to peel back layers of time to a people's unknown past in the Big Bend desert.

Blessing or Curse?

In 1867, Fort Concho replaced Fort Chadbourne to provide a more accessible water supply, the Concho River, with a poor water quality that brought sanitation and health problems. Librarian/archivist Eunice Tibay reinterpreted the post surgeon's notes to analyze the impact of the surrounding physical environment and natural resources on the health of the soldiers in the fort's early years, 1868 - 1872.

A Preliminary Assessment of Diet, Taphonomy, and Spatial Patterning Using Faunal Remains Recovered from Surprise Rockshelter in West Texas

Sul Ross student Bailey Larremore (a McNair Scholar) is conducting one of the first Big Bend zooarchaeological analyses to provide essential data on how Indigenous people interacted with animal populations from roughly AD 1000 -1800. Analyzing animal bones recovered from archaeological sites offers insight into diets, seasonal land usage, and adaptation to changing environments. 🦕



Morgan Robledo, holding a stadia rod at the Genevieve Lykes Duncan (GLD) site.

Grant Enriches Sul Ross Science Programs

The U.S. Department of Education has awarded Sul Ross State University nearly \$7.5 million to help develop new degree programs, including a new Ph.D. in Natural Sciences.

This will allow for multiple faculty members to teach and research at the Center for Big Bend Studies and provides stability for the program's funding for half a decade.

The Promoting Postbaccalaureate Opportunities for Hispanic Americans (PPOHA) grant program will provide approximately \$1.5 million annually for the next five years to increase the attainment of Hispanic students, improve academic offerings and enhance program quality to help Hispanic and low-income students complete post-secondary degrees.

The grant will help develop graduate degrees/certificates in Water Science, Dual Credit Teaching and Professional Spanish, while providing support for existing graduate programs such as the new Master of Arts in Anthropology. The funds will also cover the cost of 11 new faculty positions, a project director and support staff.

"The security this funding provides allows us to focus on our important fieldwork," says CBBS Director Dr. Bryon Schroeder. "The work ahead requires many hands, so we are grateful for the increased opportunities."

This grant implements a partnership with Texas Tech University and Texas A&M University-Kingsville to help create market-driven graduate programs and improve the student experience through better facilities, equipment, technology and hands-on learning. 📍



Pettrigrew Provides Atlatl Leadership

Dr. Devin Pettigrew recently traveled to Missouri for the annual World Atlatl Association (WAA) meeting, where he met with colleagues, collected data, and conducted experiments for forthcoming papers. Devin will serve as the new WAA president. More details here about everything atlatl. worldatlatl.org 📍

New WAA President Devin Pettigrew scored 76 in the International Standard Accuracy Contest for the atlatl September in Missouri.



UNEARTHING OUR SHARED PAST

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Summer Field Work Offers Dramatic Discoveries of Clovis Occupation

CBBS sites saw impactful progress this summer. The most dramatic work took place at the Rockshelter, where wonderfully preserved finds show the promise of more treasures to come, and at GLD, where we found a 12,800-year-old camp. The age of the oldest site in the Big Bend region has now been pushed back by almost 2,000 years, placing it right at the end of the Clovis period.

The next step is to determine if this is a camp or a kill site. The answers will remain buried for now, but they are too important to be ignored.

"It literally proves that the earliest populations of North America were in West Texas, and that's never been done," CBBS Director Bryon Schroeder says.

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