



# STUDY of ANCIENT LIFEWAYS and TECHNOLOGIES

## S.A.L.T. MISSION STATEMENT

S.A.L.T.'s primary goal is to understand, practice and share all life skills and arts of the ancient world. This is accomplished by regular Skills Meetings and informing the public through various Events.

[www.saltskills.com](http://www.saltskills.com)

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Volume 12, Issue 4

S.A.L.T. e-NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2021

## S. A. L. T. CALENDAR

NEXT S.A.L.T. SKILLS MEETING...

**ALL MEETINGS AND EVENTS ARE STILL CANCELLED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE**

at PUEBLO GRANDE MUSEUM

4619 E. Washington St., Phoenix, AZ 85034 602-495-0901



## PGM Virtual Ancient Technology Day 3/13/21



I wanted to let you know that Pueblo Grande Museum has opened its outdoor interpretive trails to the public! Guests can visit the interpretive trails free of charge Monday – Saturday from 9 am – 4:45 pm.

We have two trails - the portal loop trail near the grand canal and our main interpretive trail that includes the platform mound, Hohokam House replicas, and ballcourt. All indoor facilities including restrooms remain closed to the public at this time. Just wanted to share the good news!

Check our website and follow us on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/PuebloGrandeMuseum>) and YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/c/PuebloGrandeMuseumArchaeologicalPark/videos>).

Please let us know if you have any questions.

**Laura Andrew**, Visitor Services Supervisor  
City of Phoenix Parks and Recreation  
Pueblo Grande Museum and Archaeological Park  
Office: 602-495-0901

Pueblo Grande's Virtual Ancient Technology Day celebrated Archaeology month as an on-line event featuring short talks and demonstrations by guest speakers on topics such as projectile point production, stone jewelry manufacturing, friction fire starting, the importance of parrots to the ancestors, adobe brick construction, and agave roasting.

Here is the link - <https://youtu.be/fUbdU-JU3u0>

Thank you to S.A.L.T. Members Charlie Tadano and Tom Wax and all the other presenters for all your hard work to make this virtual event happen! We couldn't have done it without your support and efforts. I understand how difficult and challenging it can be to record a presentation. You all did a wonderful job!

Laura Andrew  
Pueblo Grande Museum

# S.A.L.T. MEMBERS PROJECT GALLERY

## LET'S MAKE AN AXEHEAD! Part III by Charlie Tadano

Well...let me start by apologizing for what I wasn't able to accomplish this past month! I was planning on completing the axe head (pecking, final shaping, grinding and polishing) and wasn't able to find the time or energy to get it completed! Maybe it's due to turning 70 recently or due to the COVID-19 both Tamara and I had. Seems I don't have as much energy as I did before COVID-19 so I am claiming that. Hopefully, in the next month, my energy levels get back to where they used to be.....but here is what I was able to get done....



**S.A.L.T. LOOKS FORWARD TO  
GETTING BACK TO PGM  
WITH SKILLS MEETINGS  
ONE DAY IN THE FUTURE...  
WATCH FOR E-MAIL UPDATES.**

**MEANWHILE, STAY SAFE!**



## HOMework

**For all S.A.L.T. Members  
and Associates!**

While you are looking for something to do at home... please go to our S.A.L.T. Website, [www.saltskills.com](http://www.saltskills.com) and scroll way down to the bottom beyond CONTACT US and open the S.A.L.T. SKILLS pdf under S.A.L.T. INFO. Look through all the skills and please e-mail us the ones you are interested in learning to

[saltskills@gmail.com](mailto:saltskills@gmail.com)

We can include "How To" information in our newsletters and on the website.

**THANK YOU!!!**



This picture shows the poll area and what needs to be pecked off.

I pecked all of the cortex from the stone, started to work on a raised groove, and made the groove deeper.



This first photo shows the cortex on the poll end that I need to peck off....and you can see how shallow the existing groove is. I peck in a circular pattern around the poll until all of the cortex is removed. Same principal of pecking into the depression made by my earlier pecking....don't forget...that makes working the axe blank much easier!



When I started working on the raised groove, I also used the circular pecking pattern, except for the bottom of the axe blank, which needs to be flat due to the hafting process that 3/4" grooved axes use.



If needed, draw another guide line to help you keep the raised area straight. I usually don't do this anymore since I have trained my eye and hands to keep a straight line when

I am pecking. That will come in time as you produce more axes, but for this first time, use a guide line to help you. It will save you a lot of time and effort.



I haven't decided if this is going to be a "fighting" axe head or a "chopping" axe head. I have noticed "thinner" bits on some axes and the normal thicker bit areas on others. The majority of the found axe heads seem to fall into the "chopping" style, which makes sense since this style can cover both usages if needed. In inspecting the "thinner" bitted axe heads, I don't see where the lighter weight would help in chopping, but it sure makes moving the axe faster a lot easier, and in my thinking, the faster you can "defend/attack" the more valuable the tool becomes if that is the purpose of that tool. Where it is easier to understand is when you see a recovered "double bitted" axe head. This style has no real chopping ability, but offers two "cutting edges" that seem to have only one purpose. Maybe the next axe head I make will be a double bitted style.

Next let's work on making the inside groove area deeper. The deeper it is, the more secure your axe head will be held when hafted. There are shallow grooves on some axe heads, but many of the shallow grooves seem to be on larger, heavier axe heads. I am not sure why this was done, but maybe when I decide to make a large axe head and haft it, I will come up with a theory, or at least a good story! LOL!

Let's hope by next month, I will have completed this axe!

**RECREATING A COA DE JIMA\***  
*(Tabular Agave Harvesting Knife)*  
 by Ron Moses March 2021



Coa de Jima

Tabular agave knives are a common artifact in ancient Hohokam sites in Arizona. They are thought to be associated with the harvesting and preparation of the agave plant for both food and raw materials like fiber. The tabular name is taken from the layered or tabular characteristic of the stone used to make the blade. Locally gathered metaphoric schist stone was often used but there are also examples made from the close geologic relative, shale. The blade shape appears to be defined by the particular function for which it is intended. This example is replica [Coa de Jima](#) used to remove the sharply edged and pointed leaves from the still living agave plant. The blade is hafted to a dried agave flower stalk handle to be able to avoid the sharp leaves when removing them from the central plant core. A modern version of this tool is used today in the commercial agave fields in Mexico but is fitted with a semi circular steel blade rather than stone. Other tabular agave knives appear to have been hand held and were used cutting the core for food preparation and for processing the detached leaves for fiber.

A good rock candidate is selected and the process of rough shaping using a hammer stone to percussion flake. Some pecking may be needed to removed hanging edges. The artifact blades tend to be of rectangular shape with the cutting edge across the narrow dimension. The cutting edge might be centered, concave, or even convex depending on the intended use. The blade in this project has a centered cutting edge.



Shaping the Blade with a Hammer Stone



Roughed-Out Blade is Smoothed and Beveled Edge Formed on Wet Sandstone Slab



Collected Schist Rocks of Approximate Size and Shape



Sandstone Used to Hone a Sharp Cutting Edge

The handle was made from a dried agave flower stalk. These stalks form when the agave plant flowers the one and only time, after 14 to 20 years. Stalks often reach 10 to 20 feet in height. The plant then dies after flowering but is replaced by offspring plants called pups. I selected a handle length of about 4 feet which is long enough to avoid the sharp edges on the leaves. The blade end was notched to create a socket for blade which is held in place with a shrunken leather lace and some pine pitch. This allows for later blade replacement when needed.



Blade Inserted Into Hot Pine Pitch and the Stalk Wrapped with Wet Lacing

Once a notch has been formed in the stalk, the blade butt end is coated with pine pitch that has been heated on a hot stone. The stone blade is quickly inserted into the notch while the pitch is still soft. A wet leather lace is then wrapped around the stalk end and allowed to dry and shrink tight. This attachment method allows for damaged blade replacement when needed. The Coa de Jima is now ready for use. The Coa de Jima is thrust down along the leaf base to shear it away from the central core. Once all the sharp leaves have been removed, they can be processed to make fiber for cordage. The remaining core or "cabeza" can then be removed from the roots and be harvested as a food product such as roasted agave heart.



Notch in Handle is Started with Obsidian Cutting Blade



Coa de Jima Ready to be Used to Remove Agave Leaves from Core



Notch is Widened by Driving a Pointed Rock Point Into Stalk End

# S.A.L.T. MEMBERS OUT ON THE TRAIL

## SANTA CRUZ ISLAND in the CHANNEL ISLANDS NATIONAL PARK March 2021 Day One by Tom Wax

Day 1 of my 3 day backpacking trip on Santa Cruz Island in Channel Islands N.P.:

After getting my gear unloaded from the boat, I cashed an extra two gallons of water near the pier. That was just in case if the boat could not pick me back up due to bad weather. There is no water where I was headed on this part of the island. My pack weighed 63 pounds with 3 gallons of water for three days. I am used to having a heavy pack with water because I grew up on a desert with a dry canteen. 🌵



Photo #1: I started up the Del Norte Road/Trail to Del Norte Backcountry Camp that was 3.5 miles away with a 700 plus elevation gain.



Photo #2: As I hiked higher up the trail I looked back at Prisoners Harbor. it was a beautiful sunny cool day.



Photo #3: The trail is rated as strenuous and it is steep with a 63 pound pack. In the photo it shows the steepness of the trail.



Photo #4: Looking back down at the trail from the trail. 😊



Photo #5: The trail guide said it was 700+ elevation gain, But it did not say that you had to go back down and up again through deep ravines.



Photo #6: I was the only one on the trail that day, this is a self-photo that I took of myself on the Del Norte Trail.



Photo #7: Views from the Del Norte Trail were awesome. You can see the mainland about 25 miles away on a clear day.



Photo #8: This view is at the trail jct. for Del Norte Camp that is about 100 yards away. I will show some great photos from Del Norte Backcountry Camp on my next post of my 3 day Backpacking trip.

Part of my 3 day backpacking trip in Channel Islands N.P. was my camp at Del Norte Backcountry Camp:



Photo1: My campsite underneath an oak tree with its tree limbs twisted and going in different Directions. This is a Panoramic photo of two photos merged into one.



Photo 2: My tent set up under the Oak Tree. The Oak tree protected me from the wind and why I choose campsite #4. There are only 4 campsites at Del Norte Backcountry Camp.



Photo 3: A room with a view, better than any hotel room.



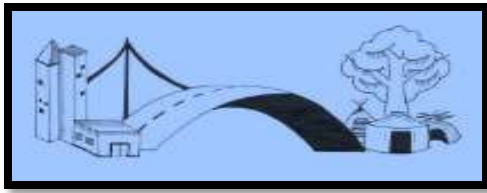
Photo 4: The Oak Tree had twisted tree limbs going into each other. Take a close look at this photo, one limb grows out from a limb and then grows back into and around each other.



Photos 5 & 6: This is the Island Scrub Jay, a subspecies that is found on Santa Cruz Island in Channel Islands N.P. and nowhere else in the world. They like hanging out at my camp in the Oak Tree above me.



Photo 7: First night's Sunset at Del Norte Backcountry Camp. More photos and stories to tell of my 2nd. day backpacking Channel Islands N.P. to come.



## Between the Rivers Gathering

May 31st- June 5th, 2021

Ancestral Skills for Self-Sufficiency

Sponsored by Bridges to the Past 501(c)(3)

### Northeastern Washington State Ancestral Skills & Self-Sufficiency Gathering

**Between the Rivers Gathering** is a week-long workshop for learning skills that originate in the stone-age all the way up to modern homesteading. We are an annual event located in Washington State about an hour north of Spokane. We will have a multitude of instructors offering a broad-range of classes all week long. Included will be wilderness survival skills of all kind, basic and homespun living, preparedness and skills of a practical and archeological nature.

We offer **hands-on classes in ancestral living and survival**, and we also focus on the skills of *self-sufficiency* and *sustainable living* to minimize our impact on this planet we all share. Come join our community and experience for yourself what an ancestral skills gathering is all about!

**Warning:** *Attending Between the Rivers Gathering may change your life!*

Sometimes the old legends say it best:

*"We do not go to the green woods and crystal waters to rough it, we go to smooth it. We get it rough enough at home; in towns and cities; in shops, offices, stores, banks—anywhere that we may be placed—with the necessity always present of being on time and up to our work; of providing for the dependent ones; of keeping up, catching up, or getting left. "Alas for the life-long battle, whose bravest slogan is bread." I am talking ... to those of the world's workers who go, or would like to go, every summer to the woods. And to these I would say, don't rough it; make it as smooth, as restful and pleasurable as you can." - Nessmuk*

**That is our hope and dream that we can help all who attend to be able to make meaningful life changes that increase their skills, intensify their connection with the Earth, and improve their relationships with others. It is all about deeper connections!**

"Primitive skills are our shared inheritance. It is the shared thread which links us to our prehistory and binds us together as human beings." -Steve Watts

### Skills Classes Offered May Include:

- **Atlatl and Dart**
- **Archery & Bow making**
- **Basketry**
- **Blacksmithing**
- **Buckskin Tanning**
- **Campcraft**
- **Clothing & Decoration**
- **Fibers, Cordage & Weaving**
- **Friction Fire**
- **Flintknapping**
- **Footwear**
- **Fur Brain Tanning**
- **Hunting, Tracking & Trapping**
- **Kids Program!**
- **Lithic (Stone) Tools**
- **Navigation**
- **Pottery**
- **Shelters**
- **Survival Skills**
- **Tin Smithing**
- **Tracking**
- **Water Craft**
- **Weapons**
- **Wild Edibles & Medicinals**
- **Woodworking**
- **And Much More!**

[Link to Classes](#)

Come and experience the entire week with us!

To register click [here](#).

Other [Skills Gatherings](#)

[BtR T-Shirt](#)

Burning questions that can't wait? Contact us: [patrickf@bridgestothepast.org](mailto:patrickf@bridgestothepast.org)

[betweentheriversgathering.com](http://betweentheriversgathering.com)



### BTR LOGO HATS ARE AVAILABLE!



Kandis Larson is making Between the Rivers Gathering Logo Hats and making them available to you! Each hat has a leather patch branded with our BTR logo that we have all grown to love, no two are alike, and have a primitive touch to them.

[kandiscreated@gmail.com](mailto:kandiscreated@gmail.com)

509-994-0585 cell . @kandis created (Instagram)



**PRESCOTT PRIMITIVE LIVING SKILLS**  
**Prescott, Arizona**

Check out Kiowa Sage on Facebook!



Hello friends! It's Kiowa Sage! I started a local meetup group to teach courses on primitive living skills, nature awareness and outdoor survival skills - all of which I've been training in for many years. All classes ranging from two hour workshops, day long classes and multiple day immersion courses. Skills and knowledge bases such as making fire with sticks, edible and medicinal plants, animal trapping and tracking, fiber arts and weaving, basic outdoor survival skills and how to do more with less in the outdoors. Right now I only have a couple classes listed until I acquire more traffic. Check out some of the listings that are available! [www.meetup.com](http://www.meetup.com)

Watch for new listings of classes that are offered, and there will be more to come!

-Kiowa Sage



Dear RMS family & friends,  
 ~ Live What You Love ~



All classes held at Reevis Mountain School include hearty meals fresh from the homestead, class supplies, hot showers, and campsite. Camping is free, or stay in a yurpee (\$10 per night per person), single cabin (\$25 per night, sleeps 1), or double cabin (\$50 per night, sleeps 1-2+), availability permitting. We provide complimentary shuttle service from Roosevelt, AZ, or caravan in your own 4X4. Shuttle pickup is at 4 p.m., first day of class. Please see our [website](http://www.reevismountain.org) to enroll and to get more information

Sign up online!

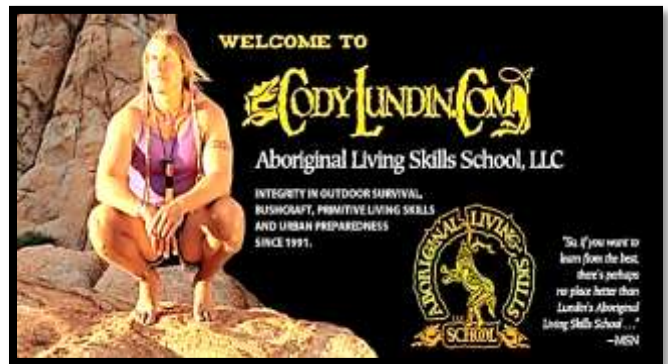
[www.reevismountain.org/classes](http://www.reevismountain.org/classes)

Order all your favorite Reevis Mountain Remedies online!

[www.reevismountain.org/country-store](http://www.reevismountain.org/country-store)



Blessings, Peter Bigfoot & the RMS Interns



**“Primitive (first) skills are our shared inheritance. It is the shared thread which links us to our prehistory and binds us together as human beings.” Steve Watts**



# 33RD RABBITSTICK

in Rexburg, Idaho

**SEPTEMBER 12 - 18, 2021**

**"Rabbitstick is the Mother Church  
of Primitive Technology"**

*-Steve Watts, Past President of the Society of Primitive Technology*

Rabbitstick Primitive Skills Gathering, held the 3rd week of September in ID, is the premier Backtracks event. Rabbitstick is the oldest of all of the modern primitive skills events and has been the model for most of the events currently running worldwide. Each year we host nearly 150 instructional and support staff who provide a camp with hands-on classes that run 9am-5pm for 5 days for about 400 registered participants. This is an unparalleled opportunity to learn skills and get to know teachers that you can trust. Visit our new website - [rabbitstick.com](http://rabbitstick.com) - for complete event and registration details. Backtracks has assembled one of the largest and most complete rosters of primitive skills teachers and practitioners available anywhere. Backtracks is your source for the best instructional staff you'll find at any event. Join Us!

[www.rabbitstick.com](http://www.rabbitstick.com)

[Register On-Line Today](#)  
[Share a Ride Bulletin Board](#)  
[Meet Our Staff](#)

Rabbitstick | (208) 359-2400 | [backtracks905@gmail.com](mailto:backtracks905@gmail.com) | [societyofprimitivetech@gmail.com](mailto:societyofprimitivetech@gmail.com)



Bulletin of Primitive Technology website at [primitive.org](http://primitive.org). Order back issues, download a complete index of topics and titles, or view the entire first issue and newsletters for free. Don't miss out on this amazing collection of information. It's up and running and ready to take your orders now.

<https://www.facebook.com/Backtracks-Keeping-Traditions-Alive-213565755397099/?fref=nf>



# WINTER COUNT

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR  
FEB. 13-19, 2022!**

Winter Count  
2119 Calle Tecolote  
Santa Fe, NM 87505

Winter Count 505-570-9484 | [WinterCountCamp@gmail.com](mailto:WinterCountCamp@gmail.com)  
[www.WinterCountCamp.com](http://www.WinterCountCamp.com)

## ATTENTION

**S.A.L.T. Members and Associates!**

Please send in pictures and articles for this newsletter! Send in information on projects you are working on, information you have found on primitive skills, pictures from trips to archaeological sites, etc.

Send it to [saltskills@gmail.com](mailto:saltskills@gmail.com)



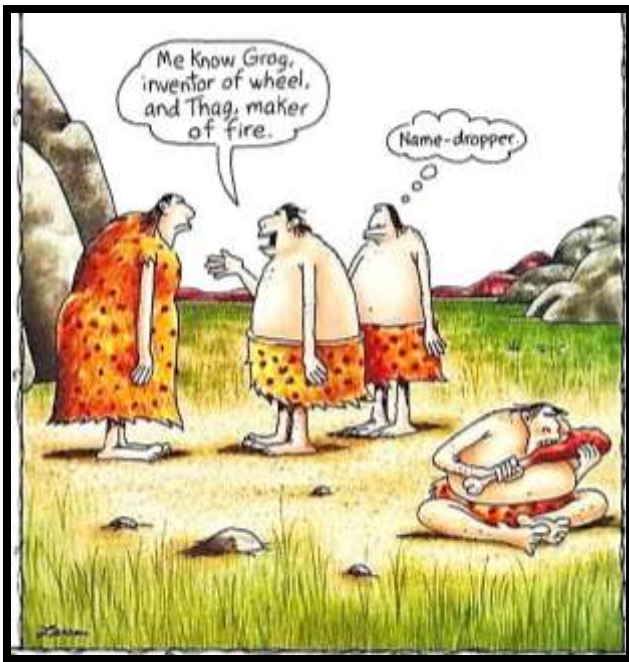
STONE AGE TECHNOLOGY FROM PRIMITIVE WAYS



**ALSO, THINK ABOUT TEACHING ONE OF OUR SKILLS  
CLASSES WHEN WE GET BACK TO PGM!**

Contact Charlie Tadano at 602-524-6910

**"Knowledge is not complete  
until it is passed on."  
Steve Watts**



## 2021 MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE DUE !

**SINGLE \$12.00 & FAMILY \$24.00**  
(New memberships are  
pro-rated throughout the year)

Please mail them to S.A.L.T. Treasurer,

**TAMARA TADANO**  
12840 N. 45<sup>th</sup> Drive  
Glendale, AZ 85304

Please make the check out to  
**Tamara Tadano**

## S.A.L.T. STORE

T-SHIRTS & PATCHES will be available at all S.A.L.T.  
Skill Meetings



S.A.L.T. T-SHIRTS are available in all sizes at \$20.00 each  
(Special pricing for Members)



S.A.L.T. PATCHES \$5.00 each  
(Memberships receive one free)



Have a place to store and carry all of your S.A.L.T. Projects  
and Tools! \$15.00 each  
(Special price for members)  
Call Charlie for availability on Totes  
602-524-6910

## S.A.L.T. MEMBERSHIP ITEMS

The Tan "Fishing Shirt" Style S.A.L.T. Membership Shirts  
are available by pre-order. Please contact Charlie Tadano  
to order your Shirt at 602-524-6910

**S.A.L.T. T-SHIRTS  
and S.A.L.T. PATCHES  
are still available!**

**There may be some Tote Bags, too.**

The S.A.L.T. "Sonoran Desert, Sorting out the Weak" T-SHIRT is available to  
anyone interested for \$15.00 each. They will be available at most S.A.L.T. Monthly  
Skill Meetings and Events until they are gone. (Only a few left!)

## S.A.L.T. CONTACT INFORMATION:

Website: [www.saltskills.com](http://www.saltskills.com)

e-mail address: [saltskills@gmail.com](mailto:saltskills@gmail.com)

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602-524-6910 or Bob Sizemore at 520-705-9780 or e-mail  
[saltskills@gmail.com](mailto:saltskills@gmail.com)

For EVENTS and BEAD information contact Donna  
Moses at 602-384-1359 or [saltdonna1@gmail.com](mailto:saltdonna1@gmail.com)

For S.A.L.T. e-Newsletter or Website info contact  
Laura Robins, Editor at 623-533-0847 or e-mail  
[saltskills@gmail.com](mailto:saltskills@gmail.com)