



Old Pueblo Archaeology Center Presents:

“Spring Equinox Tour of Los Morteros and Picture Rocks Petroglyphs Archaeological Sites”

with archaeologist Allen Dart, RPA

Saturday March 20, 2010

8 a.m. to noon

The tour is free but
reservations are required

In celebration of the annual Arizona Archaeology and Heritage Awareness Month, Old Pueblo Archaeology Center’s executive director, archaeologist Allen Dart, leads this tour to two of the Tucson area’s premier archaeological sites.

Los Morteros, an ancient village site of the Hohokam Indians from about A.D. 850 to 1300, has been studied by archaeologists and historians for more than a century. During its heyday it was the center of an extended community of related Hohokam sites along the Santa Cruz River. The core of Los Morteros, which is now preserved in a Pima County natural and cultural resources park, encompasses a large public architectural feature interpreted as a ballcourt used for ritual and other purposes, plus many refuse mounds, room blocks, hundreds of pithouses, and thousands of artifacts. Bedrock mortars that inspired the site’s name (“Los Morteros” is Spanish for “the mortars”) and petroglyphs also are present.



Bedrock mortars for which “Los Morteros” is named
(Pima County Cultural Resources & Historic Preservation Office photo)



One of these petroglyphs at the Picture Rocks site shows an interesting sunlight interaction on equinox days

The Picture Rocks site, located in the Tucson Mountains foothills, contains hundreds of ancient rock symbols created mostly by the Hohokam, although some of the rock designs may date prior to A.D. 500. The symbols at Picture Rocks include dancing human-like figures and whimsical animals as well as abstract depictions. At least some of these petroglyphs evidently were ritually important, as evidenced by the observation that at least one of them is a marker for both the equinoxes and the summer solstice. March 20, 2010, is the day of the Spring Equinox, so if the day is sunny we will be able to witness the equinox sunlight phenomenon on the marker petroglyph.

The tour is limited to 32 people because the Picture Rocks site is on a religious retreat property where silence and meditation are important.

REGISTRANTS PROVIDE THEIR OWN TRANSPORTATION – CARPOOLS ARE ENCOURAGED

The tour will meet at Los Morteros and caravan from there to Picture Rocks

Bring a lunch and water

Contact Old Pueblo Archaeology Center
at 520-798-1201 or info@oldpueblo.org to register and obtain meeting place directions

Please visit Old Pueblo Archaeology Center’s web site at www.oldpueblo.org