When the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) made the decision to start building a fence across the U.S.-Mexico border, environmental and archaeological work began as part of the federal compliance process to mitigate the fence project’s adverse effects on natural and cultural resources. Now, after years of conducting archaeological survey, testing, and data recovery in the Arizona borderlands, we have a refined perspective on the cultural resources in this region, in addition to the complexity involved with working along the international border.

Recent archaeological work at Upper San Pedro Village, a prehistoric site in southeast Arizona, provides insight into this process. The site spans the border between the U.S. and Mexico and is of particular interest because the newly constructed border fence cuts through the middle of it. Northland Research, Inc. (Northland) conducted the archaeological compliance work prior to the construction of the fence. Some of the challenges and adventures associated with working on the international border are described below.

Upper San Pedro Village, archaeological site AZ EE:12:60(ASM), was a prehistoric Native American settlement located on the east bank of the San Pedro River on the U.S.-Mexico border. On the U.S. side the site falls within the San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area (SPRCA), managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). On the Mexican side, the site is buried beneath a cilantro farm and cattle ranch.

The Roosevelt Reservation passes through the site along the north side of the border. The Roosevelt Reservation is a 60-foot wide corridor adjacent to the U.S.-Mexico border that was set aside for law enforcement and border protection or public highway by Presidential Proclamation in 1907 by Theodore Roosevelt. When archaeological work began at the site at the request of the DHS and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (the Corps), activities were confined to this 60-
foot wide Roosevelt easement. Although ranchers, farmers, residents and migrants have known about the site for years, Upper San Pedro Village was not assigned a site number until 2002 when Aztlan Archaeology conducted a pedestrian survey along the border. They recorded the site as a surface artifact scatter concentrated in a field north of the Roosevelt Reservation.

In June of 2007, under the request of the DHS and the Corps, Northland initiated Phase I testing at the site. At the time of the original recording, it was unclear if the site even extended as far south as the border. The idea for Phase I testing was first to see if buried features extended into the Roosevelt Reservation, and then to make a determination on the National Register eligibility of the site and develop a data recovery plan if necessary.

Even though the border fence project was technically a Corps and DHS undertaking, the BLM was still considered the lead agency during the mitigation process of the project. The BLM was therefore responsible for granting the necessary federal permits, reviewing the archaeological treatment plan, and acting as a middleman between the Corps, DHS, State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), consulting tribes, and Northland.

Under the advisement of the BLM, Northland’s Phase I testing consisted of the mechanical excavation of a single 280-meter (980-ft) long, five-foot deep trench that paralleled the international border. The intention was to excavate as closely as possible to the area of potential effect (APE) of the proposed pedestrian fence within the site boundary. In most cases, the fence construction would only affect a maximum of five feet deep by about three feet wide.

During this first phase of testing, Northland identified approximately 30 archaeological features at varying depths. The fill between features also contained cultural material. Based on the results of Phase I, a data recovery plan was drafted. Phase II data recovery not only had to take into account the APE of the pedestrian border fence, but also the entire 60-foot width where the site would be impacted by construction activities and staging.

In October of 2007, when Phase II data recovery was
nearly underway, the border fence project within the SPRNCA had become the focal point of several environmental groups and the media. The Sierra Club and the Defenders of Wildlife had a court injunction placed on the project, arguing that the federal government skipped steps in the review process that should have allowed the public and interested parties to read and comment on the environmental assessment prior to the start of construction. The SPRNCA was of particular interest because of its pristine riparian environment along the San Pedro River, the last undammed, unchannelized, unaltered river in the Southwest.

A judge reviewed the case and approximately two weeks later, the injunction was lifted. Because the DHS had been granted the power to waive certain environmental laws for the sake of national security, it was ruled that no policies had been bypassed. Following the court injunction, the border fence project in this area gained even more publicity.

Construction activities resumed immediately, and Northland archaeologists headed back into the field along with construction workers, Border Patrol agents, BLM officials, members of the media, and local residents.

The large number of people involved with the project, many of whom had differing agendas, resulted in an exciting and challenging atmosphere along the international border. As archaeologists, we were just beginning Phase II excavations. The data recovery plan consisted of the mechanical excavation of additional trenches along the northern edge of the project corridor, followed by mechanical stripping across the entire 60-foot right-of-way. The idea was to clear the entire 60-foot APE up to five feet deep, with the priority being the footprint of the pedestrian fence.

Over just a couple of months, we watched the international boundary go from an intermittent barbed-wire fence to a 15-foot steel wall. Granite Construction moved westward with their construction as we moved eastward with our excavation. Granite built the fence right up to the eastern boundary of Upper San Pedro Village, where they halted construction until all archaeological work was completed.

Safety inspectors from the Corps, Border Patrol agents and BLM rangers were a common sight in the project area. They would stop by to check on our security and watch the archaeology unfold. The BLM archaeologist would make weekly visits to the site to check on the progress of compliance. Members of the archaeological community, including archaeologists from the Mexican Institute for Anthropology and History (INAH) and Southwest archaeologists from the U.S., made regular visits to the site to gain insight and share their knowledge about the archaeology of the region.

"The metate above, the ground stone tool above, and the projectile points on pages 2 and 3 were found on pithouse floors at the Upper San Pedro Village. Photo courtesy Northland Research, Inc., and Maren P. Hopkins."
The Upper San Pedro Village is located on the periphery of several prehistoric cultural traditions. It is at the southeastern edge of the Tucson Basin Hohokam tradition, west of Mimbres, north and east of Trincheras, at the southwestern edge of San Simon, and within Dragoon, Babocomari and other known southeastern Arizona traditions. The artifacts, architecture and burials somewhat reflect this overlap, with styles from all of the surrounding cultural traditions. Temporally, based (so far) only on ceramic and projectile point data, the site was occupied between A.D. 750 and 1100, with potential for an Archaic component as well. The Upper San Pedro Village was a borderlands village 1,000 years ago, just as it is today.

Northland recorded 260 archaeological features in at least three distinct alluvial strata at Upper San Pedro Village. There were obvious challenges accompanying the archaeology, such as identifying and excavating features at a relatively complex site, keeping a large amount of backdirt within the narrow right-of-way, and making the right compromises during excavation. The real challenges, however, were in achieving a balance between the border politics, the publicity and the archaeology.

One day a Blackhawk helicopter landed near the site and minutes later about 20 people entered our project area. Among these were agents from DHS, the Border Patrol and planners from the Secure Border Initiative project (SBInet). The number-three man below DHS Secretary Michael Chertoff was there, as well as the number-one man in charge of SBInet, the head of the Tucson Sector Border Patrol office, and the head of the Naco Border Patrol station. They were accompanied by a media representative from DHS. We showed them around the site, discussed the archaeology, and explained to them the importance of the area, not just to us as archaeologists, but to locals as well.

As we were all standing there talking a Mexican rancher from Rancho de la Bandera, just south of the border, came up to the fence with a plate of burritos. Almost every day we chatted with the ranchers, made jokes, and traded snacks. One of the Northland field technicians accepted the burritos and talked for a while before returning to work. The men from the Blackhawk watched this interaction with a slight look of astonishment, and finally said that if we ever had any problems to please call the Naco Border Patrol station. I laughed and politely thanked him. Unbeknownst to the DHS officials, the Mexican ranchers always looked after our site while we were away, and fortunately nothing was ever stolen or vandalized. We were very grateful for their friendship.

A few days later, the supervisor of the Naco station came back to the site and thanked us on behalf of the entire DHS crowd for the tour. They were all excited and very pleased to have seen the project.

Not all visitors to the site were warmly received. One such visitor was a resident who lived on the west side of the river and happened to be the leader of the American Patrol, a militant border vigilante group. He would regularly wander over to the site, take photos, ask questions, and then post updates on his website about the status of the border wall. As the archaeology progressed and findings became more sensitive, we told him that he could not enter our job site. He became furious and threatened to fly over in his airplane and take photos. We dismissed the threat and continued working. An hour later, a small private plane was circling the site. Later that night aerial photos of our project area were posted on his website.

Throughout the excavation there was a steady stream of visitors to the site.
government officials, concerned citizens, and other interested parties coming at us from both sides of the border. Everyone was very interested in the project, in part because of its relationship to the construction of the border fence, but also because many people have never seen or experienced an archaeological excavation before. Mexican politicians from Naco and Agua Prieta visited one day from the south side of the fence. An article was written in a Sonoran newspaper about the site shortly thereafter, and I received emails from local Mexicans who were eager to know more about the archaeology in their area. The Mexican military wandered over during their patrols and talked to us. Immigrants from Guerrero, Hidalgo, Oaxaca, and elsewhere stopped by and chatted as they trekked back to Naco, where they would later initiate another trip northward. Hunters and local residents on the U.S. side often came by and talked. Everyone was extremely interested in the people that once lived on their landscape.

The things we experienced at Upper San Pedro Village are not unlike activities that occur all across the Arizona-Sonora border. Archaeological sites are present throughout the borderlands. Ranchers, law enforcement agents, members of the military, activists, and just regular people are all part of the border demography. Land ownership varies, and perhaps people’s perspectives differ, but the borderlands maintain a character all their own. Excavations at Upper San Pedro Village not only allowed us to make an important contribution archaeologically, but also to experience the unique atmosphere of the border.

Amidst all the chaos and controversy associated with border politics, as archaeologists we found ourselves in a neutral position. Our job was to excavate an archaeological site so that construction of the border fence could continue. Within that process, however, we were recording, preserving, and sharing a part of history that is important to everyone – Mexican ranchers, construction workers, local residents, media personnel, DHS and Border Patrol agents, environmentalists, and archaeologists alike. The prehistoric village we unearthed was part of the land long before politics defined Mexico, the U.S. and the border wall.

About the Author: Maren Hopkins is a project director for Northland Research, Inc. She has worked as an archaeologist mainly in Southern Arizona, Southwestern New Mexico, and Northern Mexico. During the past three years, Maren has conducted projects along the U.S.-Mexico border in Arizona. The borderlands are a special cultural environment both modernly and archaeologically. Her primary interests are in cultural landscapes and ethnography.
An Accidental Archaeologist  
by Allen Dart

I consider myself an accidental archaeologist, owing to a fortunate setback that happened to me when I was in college. When I was a kid growing up in New Mexico, I occasionally got to visit national monuments and state parks that focused on archaeology, and found them and their subject interesting. However, I got into archaeology as a profession because I failed in my originally chosen career field. You see, when I enrolled at the University of New Mexico I was going to major in biology so I could become a physician, but in my first semester I was required to take an introductory calculus course that was required for biology majors, and I failed it miserably. So much for the medical career. But during that same first semester I also took an Introduction to Prehistory course and found it fascinating. In the next few years I continued taking anthropology courses, and eventually majored in anthropology with a focus on archaeology.

In 1975, I was hired for my first paying archaeology job: “Utility Worker” on a four-month excavation project just east of Albuquerque for the Museum of New Mexico. The following year I was rehired by the Museum as an archaeology crew chief. From then through late 1978, I continued working with the Museum of New Mexico and gained invaluable experience on the ancient and historical cultures of the region. Particularly memorable projects with the Museum were my first excavations at prehistoric Puebloan, and historical Spanish and Mexican sites east of Albuquerque; my first excavation of a human burial and the realization that archaeology deals with real people who lived, breathed, loved, and passed on; supervision of excavations at several ancient pueblo and pit-house sites on the Navajo Indian Reservation and other sites in western New Mexico; serving as archaeologist/photographer for the 1978 stabilization project at the Spanish Colonial mission church and Indian pueblo ruins now preserved at Jemez State Monument; and expanding the Museum’s comparative collection of animal skeletons that archaeologists use for identifying animal bones discovered in excavations. After leaving the Museum of New Mexico in 1978, I worked for a couple more years in New Mexico with the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, then in 1980 I moved to Tucson to attend graduate school at the University of Arizona.

After I relocated to Tucson I completed my Master’s degree in anthropology at the U of A, and from 1980 through 1994 I was employed as an archaeologist, first for the Arizona State Museum (ASM), and then for the Institute for American Research, a Tucson not-for-profit organization that later was reorganized into two separate corporations: the not-for-profit Center for Desert Archaeology and the privately owned archaeological consulting business Desert Archaeology, Inc. While working with the Institute and Desert Archaeology’s nonprofit arm I found out how much I enjoy working with the public and volunteers, so to pursue that interest I decided in 1993 to create a new organization to help make archaeology more accessible to the public. This new organization, which my friends Carolyn O’Bagy Davis and Marc Severson helped me establish, became the not-for-profit Old Pueblo Archaeology Center. Incorporated in 1994, Old Pueblo’s mission is to educate children and adults to understand and appreciate archaeology and other cultures, to foster the preservation of archaeological and historical sites, and to develop a lifelong concern for the importance of nonrenewable resources and traditional cultures.

I became a fulltime employee of Old Pueblo on March 9, 1994, just a few days before it was officially incorporated in the State of Arizona on March 18. Since then my duties have included development and direction of archaeological education programs including five publication series, a children’s simulated archaeological dig education program, archaeological field schools for the public at real archaeological sites, an archaeological research participation program for volunteers, an archaeology internship program, archaeology workshops for teachers, programs done in cooperation with other archaeological and historical organizations, and a small smattering of fieldwork. My Old Pueblo work also has included “cultural resource management” (also known as “CRM”), which I define as caring for and finding ways to manage places of archaeological, architectural, and historical interest, often in accordance with environmental and historic preservation laws.

In my opinion, Old Pueblo Archaeology Center has done very well in performing its mission of educating people about archaeology and cultures, preserving heritage sites, and instilling public concern for our resources and traditional cultures. However, most of my work for the past 14-plus years has been from behind a desk, with my intimate

Volunteer Jim Trimbell working on Old Pueblo’s first public excavation project.
Duane is another valuable member of the team of assistant program instructors at Old Pueblo Archaeology Center and a field technician for the public archaeological field schools and projects. He has participated in surveys and excavations in Arizona and Israel. Duane was born and raised in northeastern New Mexico. He holds a B.S. degree in Agricultural Economics from Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas. He continued his education in economics at the University of Arizona in Tucson. After a 30 year career in Agricultural Finance he retired in Tucson. He and his wife Kathie make their home in Oro Valley, Arizona.

Duane’s interest in archaeology began in 1998, when he and his wife Kathie took a trip to Greece, Turkey, and Israel. Since that trip he has attended Pima Community College in Tucson and earned archaeology certificates in Field Methods and in Artifact Fundamentals. Duane has excavated for three seasons with Bethsaida Excavation in Bethsaida, Israel and plans to return there in 2009. The Bethsaida site is in its 20th year of excavation and is under the directorship of Dr. Rami Arav, University of Nebraska at Omaha, and Dr. Richard Freund, University of Hartford, Hartford, CT. In addition, this very busy retiree is currently pursuing his master’s degree in Biblical Archaeology and History from Trinity Southwest University, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Duane’s interest in archaeology began in 1998, when he and his wife Kathie took a trip to Greece, Turkey, and Israel. Since that trip he has attended Pima Community College in Tucson and earned archaeology certificates in Field Methods and in Artifact Fundamentals. Duane has excavated for three seasons with Bethsaida Excavation in Bethsaida, Israel and plans to return there in 2009. The Bethsaida site is in its 20th year of excavation and is under the directorship of Dr. Rami Arav, University of Nebraska at Omaha, and Dr. Richard Freund, University of Hartford, Hartford, CT. In addition, this very busy retiree is currently pursuing his master’s degree in Biblical Archaeology and History from Trinity Southwest University, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Old Pueblo Archaeology Center is very lucky indeed to have such a talented and hard working individual as a member of our team of instructors. The children’s programs have greatly benefited from Duane’s ability to relate to the children. His patience, kindly manner and inexhaustible energy make him very popular with both children and teachers. Thank you Duane for your hard work. Old Pueblo’s staff and supporters are glad that you decided to pursue your interest in archaeology!
THIRD THURSDAY PRESENTATIONS

September 18, 2008 “New Light on the San Pedro Phase: Debunking the Early Agricultural Period” with archaeologist Stephanie Whittlesey, Ph.D.


November 20, 2008 To be announced

All Third Thursday talks are held at Old Pueblo Archaeology Center, 7:30-9:00 pm, 5100 W. Ina Road Bldg. 8 (northwestern Tucson metro area). Free. No reservations needed.

ANCIENT CRAFTS

Arrowhead-Making and Flintknapping Workshop with Sam Greenleaf at Old Pueblo Archaeology Center, 5100 W. Ina Road Bldg. 8 (northwestern Tucson metro area). Noon to 3 p.m. $35; $28 for Old Pueblo Archaeology Center and Pueblo Grande Museum Auxiliary members. Flintknapper Sam Greenleaf teaches hands-on workshop on making arrowheads and spearpoints out of stone to better understand how ancient people made and used stone artifacts. Class limited to 8 registrants age 16 and older. Advance reservations required: 520-798-1201 or info@oldpueblo.org. Workshops this fall will be held September 21, October 19, November 16 and December 14.

Traditional Pottery Making Level 1 Workshop with John Guerin at Old Pueblo Archaeology Center, 5100 W. Ina Road Bldg. 8. (northwestern Tucson metro area. 2 to 5 p.m. each Sunday) Fee $79; $63.20 for Old Pueblo Archaeology Center and Pueblo Grande Museum Auxiliary members; includes all materials except clay, which participants will collect during class field trip. A series of 7 pottery-making class sessions will be offered by artist John Guerin each Sunday afternoon beginning October 5 and ending November 16, 2008, including a clay-gathering field trip on October 12. The class is designed to help modern people understand how prehistoric Native Americans made and used pottery, and is not intended to train students how to make artwork for sale. The Level 1 class demonstrates pottery making techniques the instructor has learned from modern Native American potters, using gourd scrapers, mineral paints, and yucca brushes instead of modern potters’ wheels and paint. Advance reservations required: 520-798-1201 or info@oldpueblo.org.

OLD PUEBLO TOURS!!

“White Tank Mountains Petroglyphs of Waterfall Canyon and Mesquite Canyon” guided fund raising “flex-tour,” featuring choice of van transport departing from Old Pueblo Archaeology Center, 5100 W. Ina Road Bldg. 7 (northwestern Tucson metro area), OR provide your own transportation and meet van tour group at White Tank Mountain Regional Park Visitor Center, 13025 N. White Tank Mountain Road in Waddell. 7 a.m. departure from Tucson or 9 a.m. departure from Regional Park Visitor Center, van transport group returns to Tucson 6:30 p.m. Fee including van transport $89 ($71.20 for Old Pueblo Archaeology Center and Pueblo Grande Museum Auxiliary members); fee without van transport $25 ($20 for Old Pueblo Archaeology Center and Pueblo Grande Museum Auxiliary members). Archaeologist Allen Dart and Maricopa County Parks Interpretive Ranger Shelly Rasmussen guide this “flex-tour” to see hundreds of ancient petroglyphs in the 30,000-acre White Tank Mountain Regional Park west of Phoenix. Tour includes a 3-hour walk along the 2.5-mile-roundtrip, fairly flat Black Rock Loop Trail to see and photograph dozens of Archaic and Hohokam petroglyphs; lunch at ramadas with picnic facilities; then afternoon visits to three petroglyph sites with Archaic and Hohokam rock art in a 3-hour, 2.5-mile-roundtrip hike along the Mesquite Canyon trail. Bring your own picnic lunch and water, wear comfortable hiking shoes. Advance reservations required: 520-798-1201 or info@oldpueblo.org.

December 6, 2008 “Deer Valley and Spur Cross Ranch Petroglyphs” guided fund raising “flex-tour,” featuring choice of van transport departing from Old Pueblo Archaeology Center, 5100 W. Ina Road Bldg. 7 (northwestern Tucson metro area), OR provide your own transportation and meet van tour group at Deer Valley Rock Art Center, 3711 W. Deer Valley Road, Phoenix. 8 a.m. departure from Tucson or 10 a.m. departure from Deer Valley Rock Art Center, van transport group returns to Tucson 5:30 p.m. Fee including van transport $89 ($71.20 for Old Pueblo Archaeology Center and Pueblo Grande Museum Auxiliary members); fee without van transport $25 ($20 for Old Pueblo Archaeology Center and Pueblo Grande Museum Auxiliary members) plus $6.50 per person Deer Valley Rock Art Center entrance fee payable in advance to Old Pueblo and $6 per vehicle Spur Cross Ranch Regional Park entrance fee payable separately at park. Archaeologist Allen Dart and Maricopa County Parks Interpretive Ranger Shelly Rasmussen guide this tour to see hundreds of ancient petroglyphs and the rock art museum at Deer Valley Rock Art Center north of Phoenix. Bring your own picnic lunch and water, wear comfortable hiking shoes. Advance reservations required: 520-798-1201 or info@oldpueblo.org.
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September 2008

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The San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area.
Photo courtesy Northland Research, Inc., and Maren P. Hopkins.

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Upcoming Activities of Old Pueblo Archaeology Center & Some Other Organizations*

ONGOING:
Children’s OPEN2 simulated archaeological dig and OPENOUT in-classroom education programs for children
Contact us for details!

OTHER ACTIVITIES MAY HAVE BEEN ADDED!
For updates and details please contact Old Pueblo:
Telephone 520-798-1201 Email info@oldpueblo.org
Web site www.oldpueblo.org

* Asterisks indicate programs sponsored by organizations other than Old Pueblo Archaeology Center.

September 18, 2008 “Third Thursdays” free presentation at Old Pueblo: "New Light on the San Pedro Phase: Debunking the Early Agricultural period" with archaeologist Stephanie Whittlesey, Ph.D.

September 20, 2008 “Set in Stone but Not in Meaning: Southwestern Indian Rock Art” free presentation at Deer Valley Rock Art Center, Phoenix*

September 21, 2008 Arrowhead-Making and Flintknapping Workshop at Old Pueblo with Sam Greenleaf

October 5 through November 16, 2008 (Sundays) Traditional Pottery Making Level 1 Workshop with John Guerin at Old Pueblo


October 19, 2008 Arrowhead-Making and Flintknapping Workshop at Old Pueblo with Sam Greenleaf

October 28, 2008 “Tucson-Marana Rock Art and Archaeology” (ST149) Pima Community College study tour with archaeologist Allen Dart*

November 11, 2008 “Set in Stone but Not in Meaning: Southwestern Indian Rock Art” free presentation at Sonoita Creek Natural Area, Patagonia, Arizona*


November 15, 2008 “White Tank Mountains: Waterfall Canyon & Mesquite Canyon Petroglyphs” guided fundraising tour starting at Old Pueblo

November 16, 2008 Arrowhead-Making and Flintknapping Workshop at Old Pueblo with Sam Greenleaf

November 18, 2008 “Ventana Cave and Tohono O’odham Nation Archaeology and Culture” (ST146) Pima Community College study tour with archaeologist Allen Dart*

November 20, 2008 “Third Thursdays” free presentation at Old Pueblo: Topic and speaker to be announced

December 2, 2008 “Casa Grande Ruins and Middle Gila Valley: Archaeology and History” (ST147) Pima Community College study tour with archaeologist Allen Dart*

December 6, 2008 “Deer Valley & Spur Cross Ranch Petroglyphs” guided fundraising tour starting at Old Pueblo

December 9, 2008 “Ancient Native American Pottery of Southern Arizona” free presentation at Sonoita Creek Natural Area, Patagonia, Arizona*

December 11, 2008 “Set in Stone but Not in Meaning: Southwestern Indian Rock Art” free presentation at Pima County Public Library, 101 N. Stone Ave., Tucson*

December 14, 2008 Arrowhead-Making and Flintknapping Workshop at Old Pueblo with Sam Greenleaf

December 16, 2008 “Ventana Cave and Tohono O’odham Nation Archaeology and Culture” (ST146) Pima Community College study tour with archaeologist Allen Dart*

December 18, 2008 “Third Thursdays” free presentation at Old Pueblo: Topic and speaker to be announced

January 6, 2009 “Casa Grande Ruins and Middle Gila Valley: Archaeology and History” (ST147) Pima Community College study tour with archaeologist Allen Dart*

January 15, 2009 “Third Thursdays” free presentation at Old Pueblo: Topic and speaker to be announced

January 20, 2009 “Ventana Cave and Tohono O’odham Nation Archaeology and Culture” (ST146) Pima Community College study tour with archaeologist Allen Dart*

February 10, 2009 “Ventana Cave and Tohono O’odham Nation Archaeology and Culture” (ST146) Pima Community College study tour with archaeologist Allen Dart*