

Utah canyon holds secrets of ancient civilization

RANGE CREEK CANYON, Utah (AP) - The newly discovered ruins of an ancient civilization in this remote eastern Utah canyon could reveal secrets about the descendants of the continent's original Paleo-Indians who showed up before the time of Christ to settle much of present-day Utah.

Archaeologists estimate as many as 250 households occupied this canyon over a span of centuries ending about 750 years ago. They left half-buried stone-and-mortar houses and granary caches, and painted colorful trapezoidal figures on canyon walls.

"It's like finding a van Gogh in your grandmother's attic," Utah state archaeologist Kevin Jones said.

The so-called Fremont people, named after a Spanish explorer who never met them, remain a poorly understood collection of widely scattered archaic groups. Yet they represent a tenuous link to the earliest inhabitants of North America, who are believed to have arrived by way of the Bering Strait more than 10,000 years ago. As a culture, the Fremont were distinguished by their style of basket weaving, animal-claw moccasins and farming and hunting skills.

Their everyday tools and pottery were different from the

farming-dependent Anasazi south of the Colorado River - even as they shared a similar fate. Both cultures packed up and left about the same time for reasons not fully explained. What became of the Fremont and Anasazi also is a mystery.

Earliest traces of Fremont life show up three centuries before the birth of Christ, but they disappeared around A.D. 1250. This unlooted canyon - turned over by a rancher who kept it secret for more than half a century - could have been one of their final strongholds.

It also could reveal why the Fremont were driven out of Utah and possibly left in isolated pockets to die off. More recently, makeshift sites found in north-west Colorado suggest they were forced into exile by the Numic-speaking Ute, Paiute and Shoshone tribes.

Utah's Indian leaders, however, take exception to that, believing the Fremont are their ancestors. "The sacred belief is that we are all related," said Mel Brewster, an archaeologist and historic preservation officer for Utah's Goshute tribe.

Range Creek differs from other, better-known ancient sites in Utah, Arizona or Colorado because it has been left virtually untouched by looters, with the ground still littered in places with

Among recent finds: a paddle-like wood shovel; a rare bundle of arrow shafts, found wedged in a canyon wall; a perfectly preserved beehive-shaped granary with a cap stone, still a third full with piles of parched wild grass seed and corn; and a pair of human remains from surrounding federal land.

arrowheads, beads and pottery shards.

"You could stand right on it and not know it," said Corinne Springer, an archaeologist and Range Creek's new caretaker.

Until recently, Range Creek was all but unknown. An expedition from Harvard's Peabody Museum made a stop in 1929, but visited only a few sites. In recent summers, archaeologists and graduate students have quietly conducted a labor-intensive survey - keeping the area's full significance under wraps until news reports surfaced about the land transfer in June.

Archaeologists have documented about 300 sites - pit houses, granaries and petroglyphs - but they've surveyed only about 5 percent of the canyon drainage.

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To safeguard the canyon, the Utah Natural Resources Department is rushing to adopt a management plan that will restrict hunting, prohibit camping and require visitors to get permits and guides. The state Legislature also appropriated \$152,000 for ground patrols and aircraft surveillance.

So far, the canyon's subtle charms tell two tales: traces of larger villages just off the canyon bottom and defensive retreats as high as 900 feet atop pinnacle and mesa tops, Jones said.

Archaeologists believe more carbon-dating will show the Fremont retreated to the higher positions toward the end of their tenure here, suggesting they were feeling pressure from other tribes moving through their territory. The Fremont would have used ladders, ropes or cords to reach some of their granaries, set at impossible heights "where you risk life and limb getting to them," Utah journalist and archaeologist Jerry Spangler said.

Rare buffalo considered sacred by many Native Americans

JANESVILLE, Wis. (AP) - A buffalo considered sacred by some American Indians because it was born white has died of natural causes at the age of 10, its owner said.

The animal, named Miracle, drew as many as 2,000 visitors a day in the year after its birth in 1994. Miracle died Sunday, its owner, Dave Heider, said Friday.

Although its hide became darker as it aged, some associated Miracle with the white buffalo of American Indian prophecies. According to lore, such an animal will reunite all the races of man and restore balance to the world.

Some tribe members who visited Heider's rural southern Wisconsin farm to see the animal had expected its coat to some-

day turn from brown back to white.

Heider said Miracle fulfilled prophecy by turning from white to black, red and yellow - colors of the various races of man - before developing the typical dark brown coat of the buffalo.

"Basically, she did everything that the prophecy said she would do, except turn white again," he said.

"The prophecy said she would turn white when there's peace in the world, and we don't have much peace, do we?"

But he added, "like my wife said, when people came here to see her, she gave them a glimmer of hope."

The female buffalo's offspring included four surviving female buffalo, all born without white coloring.

Lewis and Clark group continues journey

CHAMBERLAIN, S.D. (AP) - A group re-enacting the Lewis and Clark expedition pressed its journey up the Missouri River despite objections from some American Indians who question the legacy of the original expedition.

The group set out early last week under police escort from Chamberlain, where members had camped over the weekend. There were no incidents as the re-enactors hauled their boats around Big Bend Dam.

Alex White Plume, a Lakota from Pine Ridge, had asked the group to go home, saying the

visit opened old wounds. One sign at a weekend protest said the expedition 200 years ago led to genocide of Indians and destruction of their culture.

As the re-enactors move up the river and camp this week on the Lower Brule and Crow Creek reservations, White Plume said there would be no interference from his group.

But he said he would seek guidance during a spiritual ceremony and noted future actions might be considered.

Duane Big Eagle, chairman of the Crow Creek tribe, said

he welcomed the re-enactors to his reservation and disapproved of White Plume's actions.

"We're living in modern times," Big Eagle said. "We've got to think modern and moving ahead, not living 150 to 200 years ago."

Jon Ruybalid, a member of the 25-member expedition who is also its legal counsel, said the group seriously considered the request to go home.

But by continuing their expedition, the re-enactors hope to give a voice to Indian concerns, he said.

The re-enactors - part of a

nonprofit organization called The Discovery Expedition of St. Charles, Mo. - began their Lewis and Clark trip last year and are scheduled to continue through 2006.

They expect to be in Pierre Friday through Sunday for the city's "Bad River Gathering." It is one of the last of South Dakota's National Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Signature Events.

When Lewis and Clark passed through the area of modern-day Pierre in 1804, a meeting with the Teton Sioux nearly erupted into violence.

Rancher gives buffalo to Lakota family

RYE, Colo. (AP) - Buffalo rancher Frank Red Cloud says buffalo represent a new hope for people on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota.

Thanks to a Rye rancher, another family can share in that hope.

Ken Danylchuk and his wife, Kathy, gave a small seed buffalo herd to Ed Iron Cloud.

Iron Cloud's family plans to raise the animals on the reservation and eventually give another family a gift herd. The donation was made through the

Village Earth Pine Ridge Project, a nonprofit organization in Fort Collins.

Ken Danylchuk said he already was downsizing his herd because of drought when he heard about the project.

"I told them they could have eight to 12, whatever they could get in their trailer," Danylchuk said. "They're taking two 1-year-old bulls, some yearling heifers and a breeding bull."

He said it was difficult to say how much the herd is worth. "They were selling for \$2,100

a head a couple of years ago and last year you couldn't give them away," he said.

To the Lakota, the gift represents self-sufficiency and a return to their land, some of which is part of a Bureau of Indian Affairs leasing system that rents to private ranchers for low rent.

"Our approach is land management," project director David Bartecchi said. "A lot of people (on the reservation) own 200 or more acres, but they weren't living on it."

A survey showed that 77 per-

cent of reservation residents wanted to live on their land and 25 percent wanted to raise buffalo. Red Cloud said 10 families have done so thus far.

The buffalo began their trek to South Dakota Sunday after a ceremony and symbolic buffalo barbecue on Danylchuk's ranch.

"It's the eternal dream of grandfathers and grandmothers to go back to the natural life," Red Cloud said. "We come from the buffalo. We're part of the Buffalo nation."

Remains discovered in Mystic

MYSTIC, Conn. (AP) - The Mashantucket Pequot tribe says workers building a house in Mystic have unearthed the remains of some 17th-century Pequots. Tribal members, including archaeologist Kevin McBride, were digging through piles of gravel last Friday and depositing any possible artifacts into a bin for safe keeping. The tribe is keeping the site's where-

abouts secret, fearing vandalism.

Tribal Spiritual Leader Laughing Woman said the apparent burial site is large and was just recently uncovered. She said the tribe needed some time to digest the significance of its discovery.

"It happened so fast," she told the Westerly Sun. "We're just asking people to have respect, give us time and space to deal with this."

Gallup mulls \$300,000 settlement

GALLUP, N.M. (AP) - Gallup city councilors will decide whether to pay \$300,000 to settle allegations of racial discrimination in hiring leveled by the U.S. Justice Department against the city for past actions.



Mayor Bob Rosebrough and City Attorney George Kozeliski returned with the settlement offer last week after meeting with Justice Department attorneys in Washington, D.C.

The settlement is part of a proposed Justice Department consent decree that would spare the city an admission of wrongdoing in exchange for agreeing to certain procedures.

The council will consider the offer Tuesday as a way to keep the issue out of court.

The federal government earlier this summer accused Gallup of employment practices that excluded American Indians.

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WITH THE FIRST THREE YEARS OF OPERATIONS.
 THE PLAN IS WELL LAID OUT,
 THE TIMING IS RIGHT.....

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- P** Participation by youth in athletic activities year-round.
- O** Opportunities for community groups to meet in a safe, clean environment that promotes positive interaction.
- O** Occasions to celebrate birthdays, anniversaries, family reunions, wedding parties and more can be done with this beautiful multiuse pool facility.
- L** Let's exercise! With infant & children's swim lessons, water aerobics, senior activities competitive water sports teams for young and old all done year-round!
- S** Safety first-let's provide our community with a safe place to play for kids all ages!

Discover Mortgage

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Featherstone Mortgage, a Portland area firm specializing in creative lending, has positioned itself as a resource for Native American Indian Housing Authorities.

Liz Hamilton, herself a Native American Indian, will focus on working with first time homebuyers utilizing down payment assistance programs when available, and current homebuyers wanting to refinance and do debt consolidation or lower their current interest rate.

Credit is no problem; we can work with challenged credit or good credit, bankruptcies, foreclosures, unemployment, self-employed, etc. Properties can be owner occupied, non-owner investment or commercial. We have no income/no asset programs and no appraisal options available.

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