



# PASTIMES

Newsletter of the Panhandle Archeological Society

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HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!





## Current Research in Determining the Sources of Obsidian in the Northern Rio Grande and Beyond

**Dr. Matthew Boulanger**

**Southern Methodist  
University**

### **Abstract**

Obsidian-sourcing data has frequently been used to provide insight into the economies and social connections of archaeologically studied populations. Indeed, current discussions about the migration of people out of the Mesa Verde region (southwest Colorado) into the Northern Rio Grande of New Mexico have relied heavily on obsidian-sourcing data to propose ties between these two regions. Yet, despite over 100 years of archaeological research, very little information exists about the sources of obsidian used by people inhabiting the northernmost Puebloan settlements of the Northern Rio Grande. Indeed, discussions of in-migrations of people into the Rio Grande Valley seem to virtually ignore the three northern Pueblos of Pot Creek, Picuris, and Taos. This presentation reports on current efforts to remedy this situation, and provides a current discussion on work involving the sourcing of a large number of obsidian artifacts from sites across the Taos Valley. This work draws largely on existing collections from amateur and professional-led archaeological research alike conducted over the last half century. These data demonstrate that despite the diverse histories and identities of the region's indigenous peoples, systems of exchange and interaction that brought obsidian into the Taos Valley were remarkably stable over millennia. These systems appear to have been disrupted, however, during the massive population movements out of the Mesa Verde and Kayente regions in the late 13<sup>th</sup> century. Because these northern Pueblos were, after 1300 CE, closely tied to peoples of the southern Plains, this disruption in obsidian procurement may also be detectable in obsidian found at sites in the Panhandle regions of Texas and Oklahoma.



### **Biography**

Dr. Matthew T. Boulanger is a Lecturer in the Department of Anthropology at Southern Methodist University. He holds a B.A (anthropology) from Luther College, an M.A. (anthropology), graduate certificate (geographic information science), and a Ph.D. (anthropology) from University of Missouri. Prior to coming to SMU, he was a Senior Research Specialist at the Archaeometry Laboratory at the Missouri University Research Reactor. He is interested in multidisciplinary approaches to studying human behavior that combine aspects of evolutionary theory, physical geography, middle-range research, and geoscience. His work has been published in *Journal of Archaeological Science*, *American Antiquity*, *Antiquity*, and *The Oxford Handbook of Archaeological Ceramic Analysis*. Although most of his work has focused on Indigenous peoples of the Eastern Woodlands, his colleagues in Texas and New Mexico assure him that archaeological research in the Southern Plains and the Southwest is equally rewarding with many fewer mosquitos.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- January 19      Regular PAS meeting, 7:00pm, held via Zoom and Southwest Library, 6801 SW 45th Ave, Amarillo, Texas
- February 10    North Texas Archaeological Society monthly meeting, held via Zoom and in person at the University of North Texas Health Science Center in the Research and Education Building, Room 114. Request a Zoom invite at [info@ntas.org](mailto:info@ntas.org).
- February 16    Regular PAS meeting, 7:00pm, held via Zoom and Southwest Library, 6801 SW 45th Ave, Amarillo, Texas





## Payment of Dues and Social Media Resources

For payment of membership dues and any donations, please mail your payment as a check made out to the Panhandle Archaeological Society at **P.O. Box 814, Amarillo, Texas, 79105.**

The membership dues are as follows:

Individual Membership: \$15 per year

Family membership: \$20 per year

Student membership: \$10 per year

Institution: \$20 per year

Please find the membership forms on our website at [membershipforms2021.pdf](#) ([dirtbrothers.org](#))

Also, please remember that the Panhandle Archaeological Society currently has the following social media pages:

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/PanhandleArchaeologicalSociety>

**Instagram:** [https://www.instagram.com/pan\\_arch\\_soc/](https://www.instagram.com/pan_arch_soc/)

**Twitter:** [https://twitter.com/pan\\_arch\\_soc](https://twitter.com/pan_arch_soc)

Please help our society grow by liking, following, and sharing the pages and the posts!

# Panhandle Archaeological Society

## Membership Form



The PAS is open to all individuals interested in history and prehistory of the Texas panhandle and adjacent areas. Annual membership fees are as follows: Individual \$15, Family \$20, Student \$10, and Institution \$20. Membership in the PAS includes receiving the monthly newsletter, workshops and fieldwork organized by the society, volunteer opportunities and field trips organized by the society, as well as a membership in the Southwestern Federation of Archaeological Societies. PAS encourages membership in the Texas Archaeological Society. Members of PAS must abide by all terms and conditions of the PAS Bylaws and all Federal and State antiquities laws or regulations.

Membership (Individual/Family/Student/Institution): \_\_\_\_\_

Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Cell phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Highschool/College/University/Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Amount enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Along with this form, please mail a check made payable to the Panhandle Archaeological Society to the following address:

**P.O. Box 814  
Amarillo, Texas  
79105**

# First Call for Papers

## **Southwestern Federation of Archaeological Societies 56th Symposium**

**Saturday, April 9, 2022**

Hosted by the Panhandle Archeological Society  
at the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum,  
Canyon, Texas

**Proposals for individual papers are now being accepted on any topic relating to the cultural or natural history of the Federation region, broadly defined as eastern New Mexico, western Texas, and the Southern Plains.**

Papers accepted for presentation will be published in the *Transactions of the 56<sup>st</sup> Regional Archaeological Symposium*, available in 2023.

*Please submit your abstract (maximum of 200 words) along with this form*

**Deadline for submission is March 5, 2022**

AUTHOR(S): \_\_\_\_\_

PRIMARY AUTHOR ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY, STATE, ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

HOME PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ OFFICE PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

AFFILIATION(S) (to be included in the program):  
\_\_\_\_\_

PRESENTATION TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL IS THE PREFERRED METHOD FOR SUBMITTING YOUR ABSTRACT INFORMATION. Attach the completed form and abstract to your message and e-mail the information to:

**Paul Katz, Symposium Organizer: [prkatz44@gmail.com](mailto:prkatz44@gmail.com)**

Address any questions and comments to the above email.