



**North Carolina
Archaeological Society**

Newsletter

4619 Mail Service Center, Raleigh NC 27699-4619

<http://www.rla.unc.edu/ncas>

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Urgent Call to Action: Help NCAS Oppose New Reality TV Series *American Digger*

Two main goals of the North Carolina Archaeological Society are to promote responsible attitudes toward archaeological resources and to discourage careless and destructive activities. The Society relies on its members to help achieve these goals, and right now your help is urgently needed!

This spring, Spike TV plans to air *American Digger*, a reality series following native North Carolinian and former professional wrestler Ric Savage and his American Savage team as they plunder archaeological resources across America. According to the show's teaser, "Once the team identifies an area they think is ripe with high-value artifacts and relics, they'll have to convince the current homeowner to give them permission to dig up their backyard. If American Savage is persuasive enough, they'll get a chance to dig up the tenant's backyard using their state-of-the-art equipment, and divide the cash they get from selling the artifacts they find there with the tenant."

Last month, the National Geographic Channel (NGC) launched a similar show, *Diggers*. NGC has already aired reruns of the first episodes, and *Diggers* has become a topic of discussion in online forums devoted to metal detecting and treasure hunting.

Both of these new reality shows encourage the destruction of archaeological resources for profit and rob current and future generations of opportunities to understand and learn from history. The Society for American Archaeology (SAA), the Society for Historical Archaeology, and other professional and avocational archaeology societies strongly condemn the shows and have launched campaigns to raise awareness and encourage action.

In response, NGC has agreed to run a disclaimer informing viewers that there are laws protecting

archaeological resources. According to a recent memo sent to SAA members by president Fred Limp, NGC has also expressed willingness "to enter into discussions with the archaeological community to determine how to raise awareness of the impacts of the use of metal detectors for treasure hunting."

As of this writing, Spike TV has yet to formally respond to archaeologists' concerns. However, the *Huffington Post* reported on March 2, 2012 that the station's spokesperson Shana Tepper maintains that because *American Digger* is filmed on private property, Savage and his crew are "getting artifacts that are otherwise rotting in the ground."

Please join NCAS board members in expressing your own concerns about the airing of *American Digger* by writing the companies involved. Contact information and talking points are provided below.

Talking Points:

- Rather than encouraging a responsible attitude toward archaeological resources, this show encourages destructive and careless activities that will rob current and future generations of the chance to understand and learn from their shared past.
- Archaeological resources are limited and irreplaceable. They should be left in the ground until responsible and scientific methods can be used to ensure that important information is not lost during their removal.
- Some states (including North Carolina) have laws protecting all unmarked human burials and skeletal remains, even those located on private property.

- The methods and behaviors that *American Digger* promotes are not only irresponsible but also disrespectful toward descendent populations. By normalizing and glamorizing such behaviors, the show may encourage viewers to imitate them.

Contacts:

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You can also view and sign an online petition at:
<http://www.change.org/petitions/stop-spike-tv-from-looting-our-collective-past#>

VOICES OF THE SANDHILLS

Tells the Story of Fort Bragg's Past, Present, and Future

by Linda F. Carnes-McNaughton, PhD
 Cultural Resources Management Program, Fort Bragg

As the vespers blow through the longleaf pines on Fort Bragg, one can almost hear the voices of the past speaking to us, telling us of times of long ago, multiple voices with multiple stories. We just have to stop and listen and learn more.

As a direct product of our formal consultation process with American Indian Nations, the Fort Bragg Cultural Resources Management Program in partnership with Brockington and Associates and the United States Army Corps of Engineers created *Voices of the Sandhills*, a multimedia project that explores the unique environmental features of the Fort Bragg region and their relevance to the settlement of the area by early Native Americans and later, by their descendants. Additionally, *Voices of the Sandhills* emphasizes the importance of archaeology to

the history of the area, the legacy of the descendant groups, and the Fort Bragg mission.

The primary purpose of the VOS project is to fulfill a key program component: the education and interpretation of archaeological records for the general public. Through consultation with American Indian Nations, state-recognized tribes, and local Sandhills descendants, Fort Bragg was encouraged to develop presentations that could share our archaeology and American Indian history and culture with a larger audience. These educational, electronic tools will emphasize the scientific methods of archaeology used at Fort Bragg, describe artifacts, types of sites, environmental contexts, and cultural history synopses to provide perspectives on archaeology from contemporary voices.

The Voices of the Sandhills project encompasses two products: an interactive website also linked to educational venues throughout the state of North Carolina and a 20- minute video documentary. Through interviews with relatives of Native Americans and settlers, the documentary relays stories of the Tuscarora Nation, the Catawba Nation, the Lumbee Tribe, and the Walden-Goins families as preserved in oral traditions, archaeological sites, archival documents, letters, journals, and photographs.

The Voices of the Sandhills Project examines how the predominant ecosystem of the Sandhills – the longleaf pine savannah – was fundamental to the settlement of the area now known as Fort Bragg. The forest was essential to the lives of the Tuscarora and Catawba people, who seasonally occupied the fertile lowland portions of the Sandhills over ten centuries ago. As one of the most biologically diverse ecosystems in the world, the longleaf savannah was a treasure trove for naturalists. The pines also provided a livelihood for the Walden-Goins families, who owned an estimated 4,000 acres of land in the region and were directly involved in the turpentine industry.

The Voices of the Sandhills Project also emphasizes the conservation of archaeological resources to further preserve the past and enhance the oral histories of the descendants. The Fort Bragg CRMP maintains over 400 archaeological sites on the installation and has recovered over 300,000 artifacts related to human occupation and land use in the Sandhills. Many of the artifacts excavated from these sites – including pottery fragments, projectiles, primitive tools, and ornamental items – provide important insights into the thousands of years of history of the pre-Fort Bragg landscape and the surrounding area. In North America, 95 percent of human history happened before there was writing on this continent. Archaeology is one of the few ways we can learn about people who left no written records. Archaeological sites and artifacts exist today as fragile, non-renewable resources. It is up to us to protect them wherever and whenever possible. Indeed, “many Native American nations do not have written history so they must rely on modern archaeology to have a record of their people,” added Stuart Patterson, Chief of the Beaver Clan of the Tuscarora Nation. “Archaeology must be used as a friend,” he said.

Many descendants of the Tuscaroras, the Catawbas, the Lumbees, and Walden-Goins families remain in the Sandhills, and several of those descendants participated in the Voices of the Sandhills Project. Contributors include Goins family descendant Helena Hendrix-Frye, Stuart and Neil Patterson of the Tuscarora Nation, Dr. Wenonah George Haire of the Catawba Cultural Preservation Project, and Catawba potter Caroleen Saunders. The documentary also features members of the Fort Bragg Directorate of Public Works including wildlife biologist Erich Hoffman and CRMP archaeologists Charles Heath and Joe Herbert. Their interviews provide a modern connection to the rich history of the Fort Bragg area. “The fact that I can walk where my great grandparents walked is very moving to me,” said Hendrix-Frye.

Ultimately, the Voices of the Sandhills Project will create a greater awareness of the Army’s stewardship of cultural resources and its impact on military objectives. Fort Bragg’s mission is to facilitate the readiness of Soldiers and the CRMP’s mission is to aid in their training by inventorying and evaluating the cultural resources found on training lands while ensuring Fort Bragg’s compliance with Federal and State legislation and Army regulations. Moreover the project is designed to garner public support for historical preservation and to establish a clear link between the past, the present, and the future. Future plans call for the video and website to be included in North Carolina’s public school curriculum and incorporated into offerings provided by public television networks across the state.

“There are many things that would be lost forever in history if the archaeologists and anthropologists were not working on these things,” said Gregory Richardson, Executive Director of the North Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs. “People need to know who they are and where they came from. They need to know about their heritage.” And as long as the Fort Bragg Cultural Resources Management Program is here, the people of the Sandhills will certainly have the opportunity to understand and appreciate their origins.

To learn more, visit www.voicesofthesandhills.com. Or, visit the NCAS webpage (www.rla.unc.edu/ncas) and click on “Voices of the Sandhills.”

2011 Election of Officers

We were unable to vote on the 2012 Election of Officers at the fall 2011 meeting due to a postal delay. Additional ballot cards were mailed with the 2011 journal and newsletter in late December, for the members that didn't get a chance to vote the first time. The results are as follows: Archie Smith moved from President-elect to President (replacing Tommy Stine), Theresa McReynolds Shebalin was voted in as President-elect with Tom Beaman replacing her seat on the board. Tony Boudreaux was re-elected and Charles Heath was elected as Board Members. Thank you Tommy for a job well done.



2012 Dues

If you have not already renewed your NCAS membership for 2012, please do so as soon as possible. Your continued support is appreciated.

NORTH CAROLINA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
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NCAS Officers

President: Butch "Archie" Smith, 143 Cobble Ridge Drive, Pittsboro NC 27312

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Executive Board Members: Tom Beaman, Tony Boudreaux, Kevin Donald, Joel Hardison, Charles Heath, Clay Swindell

NCAS Newsletter Publication Schedule

All NCAS members are encouraged to submit articles and news items to Dee Nelms, Associate Editor, for inclusion in the *Newsletter*. Please use the following cut-off dates as guides for your submissions:

Spring Issue - February 28
Summer Issue - May 31

Fall Issue - August 31
Winter Issue - November 30