

***Keynote Address: Significant Facets of Verde Valley Archaeology and History Newly Revealed* by Carla R. Van West, Ph.D.**

Abstract: Despite its renown as a tourist destination, the pre-Columbian and historic peoples of the Middle Verde River Valley are relatively unknown in comparison to their northern and southern neighbors—the Ancestral Pueblo and Hohokam. Yet, the peoples of the blue-green valley have a fascinating and important role to play in the human history of the American Southwest. This illustrated talk highlights recent contributions to our understanding of the archaeology of the Middle Verde River Valley and its surrounding terrain. These contributions include a newly published 1,481-year dendro-climate reconstruction (AD 571–1988) that complements earlier streamflow and flood reconstructions; new understandings on settlement and land-use patterns from the Archaic to Protohistoric time periods; evidence for the cultivation of at least four species of domesticated agave; and data that address historical processes related to immigration, political and economic alliances, cooperation and conflict.

Bio: Dr. Carla R. Van West earned a Ph.D. in anthropology from Washington State University, a M.A. in anthropology from the University of Arizona, and a B.A. in anthropology from Elmira College in New York State. She also holds a teaching certificate for community college education from the State of Arizona and is an Adjunct Assistant Professor within the Department of Anthropology, University of New Mexico. Dr. Van West is the Director of Research Programs for the nonprofit SRI Foundation in Rio Rancho, New Mexico—an organization dedicated to advancing nationwide historic preservation programs and practice.

Dr. Van West has more than 40 years' experience in the archaeology of the U.S. Southwest and also has engaged in fieldwork in Scotland, Cyprus, and Egypt. Dr. Van West's frequently cited dissertation involved an innovative approach to linking Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technology with paleo-climatic data for locations in southwestern Colorado. Before joining the staff of the SRI Foundation, Dr. Van West was Senior Principal Investigator at Statistical Research, Inc. in Tucson, Arizona and a Research Associate with Crow Canyon Archaeological Center in Cortez, Colorado. Her current research interests include tree-ring based reconstructions of past climate, pre-Columbian agricultural strategies, and sustainable human settlement.