

## **RMAA Annual Report, 2023–2024**

The following summary on activities of the Rocky Mountain Anthropological Association (RMAA) covers the period October 15, 2023 through October 14, 2024. Previous annual reports can be found on the “[RMAA Reports](#)” page of the website.

### **RMAA Board Meetings**

Three RMAA meetings of the Board of Directors (BOD) were held during the past year, two via Google Meet video conference calls and one in person. The first of these meetings took place on October 22, 2023, an online event that served as the annual business meeting (as announced in advance on the website and Facebook page). Agenda items discussed during this meeting were as follows:

- RMAA Treasurer’s report
- RMAC 2024 planning for Laramie, WY
- Financial assistance to students for RMAC 2024
- Fundraising progress through merchandise sales
- Website updates
- Social media outreach (Facebook)
- RMAA annual report 2022-2023
- RMAC 2025 scheduling and venue
- RMAA Board of Directors election
- Adding website links to current research projects
- Posting job announcements on website and Facebook

The draft minutes of this meeting were made available for review to Board members on November 13, 2023 and were finalized during the BOD meeting on January 19, 2024.

The second meeting of the Board of Directors took place on January 19, 2024. Agenda items discussed during this online meeting included:

- RMAA Treasurer’s report
- RMAC 2024 planning and progress
- RMAA annual report 2022-2023

- T-shirt design contest
- RMAA Officers for 2024-2025
- Social media outreach and platforms
- RMAA participation and rules, “membership”
- Scheduling the 2024 annual business meeting

The draft minutes of this meeting were made available for review to Board members on January 25, and the final version was approved at the BOD business meeting on May 3, 2023.

The third, final meeting of the year took place as the annual business meeting on May 3, 2024 during RMAC in Laramie, WY. Because the business meeting is usually scheduled for the fall season, the selection of a springtime meeting date required a special vote of the BOD. Agenda items discussed during this public, in-person meeting were as follows:

- Recognition of recently deceased archaeologists and colleagues
- RMAA Treasurer’s report
- RMAC 2025 venue options, approval of location in Alamosa, CO
- Fundraising status and t-shirt design contest
- Student assistance for RMAC
- Social media outreach; adding Instagram platform

The draft minutes of this meeting were made available for review to Board members on May 19, 2024 and the final version was scheduled for a vote at the subsequent BOD meeting that took place after the end of this reporting period.

**RMAA Officers and Directors**

The most current term for the BOD began on October 22, 2023 after the conclusion of an online election. The eight Officers and Directors serving this past year were: Kenneth Cannon, President; Rebecca Sgouros, Vice-President; Spencer Pelton, Treasurer; Kevin Black, Secretary; and Directors Beth Horton, Jena Sadd, Matt Stirn, and Aaron Whittenburg. Four of those eight have completed the first year of their four-year terms—Black, Pelton, Sgouros, and Whittenburg—while the other four Directors’ terms expire next autumn at the end of RMAC 2025.

With four BOD terms expiring in October 2023, an online election to select four new Directors was planned and conducted. Initial discussions took place during the BOD meeting of May 12, 2023. Several Directors volunteered to assist the RMAA Secretary in recruiting candidates to appear on the ballot. Short biographies and photographs of the candidates were submitted to the RMAA Vice-President, which were made available at the start of the balloting period on October 3, 2023.

The election was conducted using the Mailchimp platform, sent to 537 email addresses in the current RMAA list. There were five nominees listed on the ballot to fill the four open positions, including three of four current Directors whose terms expired in 2023: Kevin Black, Spencer Pelton, Sarah Rothwell, Rebecca Sgouros, and Aaron Whittenburg. Online balloting concluded on October 20, 2023, just after the start of the current reporting period.

### **RMAA Finances**

Spencer Pelton, RMAA Treasurer, provided summaries of financial activity at the three Board meetings, along with the balance current to the date of this annual report. The checking account balance was \$6,032.10 as of October 15, 2023, and finished at \$14,789.14 on October 14, 2024. The RMAA checking account has been in a Wells Fargo Bank in Laramie, WY since November 2022. The PayPal and Square accounts for RMAA are also linked to that bank account.

RMAA financial expenditure and income transactions were quite numerous this past year due to activities associated with RMAC 2024 expenses, sponsorships, and registration fees. Expenses for the May 2024 conference in Laramie totaled \$16,387.67, offset by income of \$20,660.31. The largest of the year's expenses for RMAC 2024 were \$13,065.50 to UW Catering & Events and \$1380 for the social event in the UW Anthropology Building.

Revenue related to RMAC 2024 included registration fees, sponsorships, donations, vendor fees, and merchandise sales. The highest source of revenue came from registration fees and donations, together totaling \$15,689.31. Income from merchandise sales this year has totaled \$70.58 in our PayPal account through Bonfire.com.

## **RMAC 2024**

The RMAC 2024 committee was composed of four members, including RMAA Treasurer Spencer Pelton, University of Wyoming (UW) archaeologist Marcel Kornfeld, Marcia Peterson (Wyoming Assistant State Archaeologist), and Amanda Casteneda with the Wyoming SHPO. Additional assistance was provided by Sarah Allaun, Conner Johnen, Gwendolyn Kristi, McKenna Lytinski, Kimberly Troendle, and Judy Wolf. Committee planning for RMAC in Laramie, WY was on-going throughout the first half of the past year. The venue was the Conference Center on the UW campus, where events were held on May 2-5, 2024 in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Wyoming Archaeological Society (WAS).

Publicity about RMAC 2024 increased significantly beginning in late January with announcements on the Facebook page and website, and occurred more frequently in the following three months leading up to the conference. The first call for papers was posted in mid-February, with a final reminder sent out in early April 2024. Options for lodging in Laramie were announced in late March, as were sales of RMAC-themed t-shirts, the choice of a keynote speaker, and a summary schedule of events. In early April, a t-shirt design contest was posted and advance sales of RMAC t-shirts came to an end. The final, complete conference program was posted in late April 2024.

One problem that cropped up in advance of RMAC 2024 was that a number of email addresses in our mailing list were being blocked, primarily from government and academic archaeologists as well as those with Canadian email addresses. No method of unblocking those emails by the sender was found, but it was suggested that personal email addresses be supplied by those in government and academic positions.

The concurrent meetings of RMAC 2024 and WAS were successfully held on May 2-5, beginning with the Early Bird reception on Thursday evening, May 2. Paper and poster presentations took place on Friday and Saturday, with a reception held in the UW Anthropology building on Friday evening. On Saturday night, WAS hosted a banquet featuring Dr. Kelly Graf as the keynote speaker. RMAC 2024 concluded with a field trip on Sunday, May 5 to a cluster of sites east of Laramie: the Sherman ghost town, the Ames Monument, and the Dale Creek bridge (all associated with the Union Pacific transcontinental railroad line).

In sum, RMAC 2024 & the WAS annual meeting featured 46 papers and 21 poster presentations. Registration levels were in line with expectations, totaling 160 attendees of whom 133 registered in advance. There were 132 professionals and 28 students in attendance. Eleven vendors hosted tables at the conference, and 32 organizations and individuals made donations to help sponsor RMAC 2024. Ultimately, the 2024 conference earned the organization \$3,757.04.

RMAA student assistance for RMAC 2024 was in the form of monetary donations totaling \$215 that were used to pay the registration fees of every student volunteer at the conference. These donations helped pay for the registrations of five UW student volunteers.

### **RMAA Fundraising**

Fundraising efforts during the past year continued the two major activities of recent years. The primary approach has been with sales of various kinds of merchandise available online at <https://www.bonfire.com/store/rmaa-merchandise/>. Proceeds from such sales helped fund RMAC 2024 and provide financial assistance to students who attended RMAC. Among the items that can be purchased through the website are mugs, long sleeve and short sleeve T shirts, sweatshirts, and hoodies in several styles and colors. Also, merchandise sales this year included t-shirts specifically branded with the RMAC 2024 logo of a tipi camp in the mountains, designed by Tyson Arnold.

The second method of fundraising has been direct appeals for donations, both as undesignated cash contributions and sponsorships sold to fund RMAC events and student support. To facilitate such contributions, there is a “Donate” button appearing on multiple pages of the website and on our Facebook page, all linked to our PayPal account.

### **RMAC 2025**

At the beginning of this reporting period in October 2023, a venue for RMAC 2025 had not yet been confirmed. A few months prior to that, the RMAA Secretary had been contacted by Dr. Chris Merriman of Adams State University in Alamosa, CO about potentially hosting a future RMAC. Dr. Merriman had been on the RMAC 2021 organizing committee for that ill-fated conference, cancelled due to continued

Covid-19 pandemic concerns. However, he was unable to attend the 22 Oct 2023 meeting of the BOD to discuss this issue.

Several months later, in mid-March 2024, Dr. Merriman again contacted the RMAA Secretary about hosting RMAC with Alamosa, CO as the venue, potentially in 2025. He was then invited to attend RMAC 2024 in Laramie, and specifically to attend the annual business meeting there when the issue of a host for RMAC 2025 would be a primary topic. At the business meeting on May 3, Dr. Merriman was asked by the BOD if he was willing to help organize the next conference, and he graciously agreed to be a part of the organizing committee so long as he received some assistance with the many tasks involved. Multiple people at the meeting pledged their assistance in various ways. There was much discussion that followed about the facilities available, field trip opportunities, travel challenges, and potential date conflicts with other regional conferences.

With the BOD having stated a preference to hold future RMACs during the autumn in odd-numbered years, Dr. Merriman noted that October 2025 was likely to be the best time for a conference in Alamosa since the local university has a break during that month when potential conference facilities would be more available for RMAC use. With no alternatives in sight, and with much gratitude, the BOD voted on 3 May 2024 to accept the offer to hold RMAC 2025 at Adams State University in Alamosa, CO.

### **RMAA Social Media and Website**

Just prior the beginning of this reporting period, on 3 October 2023, webmaster Mary Sullivan submitted an annual report on website activity to the BOD. Kevin Black, RMAA Secretary, continued as the lead contact for prospective changes and updates.

During the year, all ten web pages were updated, of which one new page was added: “About RMAA.” Updated pages are as follows:

“Home” page: Multiple changes to this page occurred in five updates. In late October 2023, obsolete news about the annual business meeting was deleted from the popup screen. In mid-January 2024, registration news about RMAC 2024 was posted.

Later that month, new text was added regarding participation in RMAA with a link to be added to the master email list. Following completion of RMAC in May 2024, revised text was posted about both RMAC 2024 and RMAC 2025 on both the main page and popup screen in June 2024.

“About RMAA”: One formatting change to this page was made in January 2024 by moving the page link to a separate tab heading, from a dropdown menu located on the Home page.

“Member Projects”: One new article link was added to the list on this page at the beginning of this report period, titled [A Reflection on the Application of Archaeology to the Understanding of the History and Ecology of Holocene Bison in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem](#), by Kenneth P. Cannon, Molly Boeka Cannon, and Houston L. Martin (2023).

“RMAA Reports”: In January 2024, a link was added to the recently approved annual report for 2022-2023, and a minor typographical error was fixed the next month.

“Past Meetings”: One addition to this page was made in June 2024, a list of conference organizers for RMAC 2024 including a link to the final conference program.

“News/Announcements”: This page had the largest number of changes made during the year, with updates completed on eight different occasions. Two edits were made in late October 2023 with the addition of the results of the RMAA Board of Directors election, and the removal of the outdated news about the 2023 annual business meeting. Two announcements were added in January 2024, regarding the annual report for 2022-2023 and the addition of a website link for a Native American internship opportunity. The next month, a link to Brigham Young University’s Redd Center awards and grants program application was added, and a small text error was corrected. In June 2024, news about the completion of RMAC 2024 and preliminary information about RMAC 2025 was posted. Finally, in mid-August 2024 a link was added regarding a job opening in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Wyoming.

“Links”: A single change was made to this page by webmaster Mary Sullivan, as a result of her review of the functionality of all URLs on the page. This update involved the consolidation of two links for the Idaho state professional and avocational organizations to a single link labeled Idaho Archaeological Society.

“RMAC 2024/2025”: This page was also revised many times throughout the year, initially in early November 2023 with updated news about RMAC 2024 as well as editing the page heading to reflect the revised date of the conference. Further RMAC updates were made in January 2024, adding conference information with a link to the Jotform registration form. In March 2024, news about lodging options in Laramie was added, followed in late April with a link to the final RMAC 2024 conference program. News about the successful completion of RMAC 2024 with preliminary news about RMAC 2025 was posted in June 2024.

“Donate”: This page provides an additional option to make donations via our PayPal account, with identical “Donate” buttons also on other pages of this website. Two updates were made this past year, adding text in late October 2023 about merchandise availability and a link to the Bonfire.com website for such sales. A second text change occurred in June 2024, reflecting completion of the Laramie conference.

“Contact Us/Join”: Three changes to this page were made during the past year. First, in late October 2023, the BOD list was updated to reflect the results of the election, with Aaron Whittenburg replacing Molly Boeka Cannon as Director. In November 2023, text was added thanking Molly for her four years of service on the RMAA Board of Directors. Duplicate language from the Home page was added in January 2024 regarding participation in RMAA with the link to be added to the master email list.

RMAA’s Social Media Committee manages the organization’s Facebook page. [RMAA Facebook](#) (FB) currently has just under 2,500 followers. Over the past year the committee has been using our FB for outreach to provide updates about the organization, RMAC 2024 news, merchandise sales, regional research, and recent publications. New postings were more frequently added in the first four months of 2024 leading up to the conference in Laramie, comparable to the updates also made



on the website such as registration information, lodging options, student assistance, the t-shirt design contest, a summary of events, and the final conference program.

In addition, the committee and the BOD as a whole have discussed ways to broaden outreach efforts beyond FB, the website and email blasts through MailChimp, such as by adding an additional media platform to our offerings. These discussions came to a head during the January 2024 BOD meeting, when it was decided to focus on creating an RMAA space on the Instagram social network service. This effort was spearheaded by Director Jena Sadd, who began researching the process of creating RMAA's Instagram presence the following month. An update on this effort was provided during the annual business meeting at RMAC 2024 but, as of the end of this reporting year, an RMAA/RMAC Instagram space was not yet available.

### **Annual Report 2022-2023**

Last year's report was prepared by the RMAA Secretary, as stipulated in the bylaws. After soliciting information from the Directors, a draft copy of the annual report for 2022-2023 was distributed to the BOD for their review just prior to the BOD meeting of 22 October 2023. The report covered the period from October 15, 2022 through October 14, 2023. Edits were made to the report after that meeting through the end of October, but no other changes were made before the next BOD meeting in January 2024. At that meeting, the final version of the report was formally approved, and it was then posted on our Facebook page and website in late January 2024. All annual reports since 2017-2018 can be accessed on the [RMAA Reports page](#) of the website.

### **Miscellaneous RMAA Business**

Three unrelated topics were discussed by the BOD at the request of president Ken Cannon, all at the start of this report period in late October 2023. The BOD declined to participate in the Krispy Kreme "Digital Dozens" fundraiser after an email exchange prior to the 22 October board meeting. Two other recommendations made by President Cannon were approved by the BOD, however. The board supported the nomination of former RMAA treasurer William "Bill" Eckerle to receive the

[Wyoming Association of Professional Archaeologists' \(WAPA\) Distinguished Service Award](#), which was approved by WAPA and awarded at their spring 2024 meeting in Laramie, WY. The board also voted in favor of President Cannon's suggestion to make a gift of an RMAA merchandise item for each RMAA Director departing at the end of their term of service on the BOD.

The revised text posted in late January 2024 on the "Home" and "Contact Us/Join" pages of the website regarding participation in RMAA was in response to a January 18 email inquiry to RMAA Secretary Kevin Black from Colin Ferriman, an archaeologist with CRA, Inc. in Sheridan WY asking about RMAA "memberships." The timing of this inquiry fortuitously occurred immediately prior to the board meeting that month. This led to a brief BOD discussion on the topic during the meeting and subsequent website updates.

No other RMAA business was reported during the year.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kevin Black  
RMAA Secretary