

## November Speaker

Our November speaker was Shanan Anderson who is a member of the Shivwits band of Paiute. As a Southern Paiute, Shanan told the Archeology club that the name for Paiute is actually Nuwu which means "The People". Nuwu is who they really are...what they call themselves.

There are five Southern Paiute reservations in Utah. The Shivwits reservation has 312 members; Cedar has 289; Kanosh has 143; Koosharem is at 130; and Indian Peaks is the smallest at just 48. Altogether there are 1,893 Southern Paiute members.

The Paiutes date back to 1100 A.D.; however, they will tell you that they have always been here. These peaceful people are quiet and like to tease. They pray every day. Their Creator God is Toovuts (Wolf). Suhnuv (Coyote) is the trickster. Mountain Sheep (Nah'gah) are their protectors and are sacred animals.

The slave trade, started by the Spanish in the 1700's, devastated the Southern Paiute. The Spanish stole the Paiute children, took them to California, and sold them into slavery. In 1779-1782, a Smallpox Pandemic killed many. In fact, Small Pox and Measles were deliberately brought to the people for the purpose of eliminating them completely. However, the people are resilient and will stay strong and overcome the many obstacles that come their way.

There are many interesting facts in their culture and language. For instance, in their language there is no word for "Hello" or "Goodbye". Southern Paiute women won't look you in the eye. Babies are often given a nickname, but their actual name may not be given for as long as a year after they are born. They pass their sign language on from generation to generation by picture writing on the rocks. Older members of the family eat first. When a visitor comes, the woman will get up and prepare a meal even when people aren't hungry.

Many social gatherings and dances take place. Mountain Sheep horns and bird feathers adorn their regalia. Clothes are made from buckskin and rabbit skin. Circle Dances and the Bear Dance were popular. The last time

the Bear Dance was performed was in the 1960's. They are trying to bring the Bear Dance back.

Stories are very important in the culture and are told only during the winter months. The people gather around the story teller to learn their history and stories of the Creator. We can learn much from the Southern Paiute and the strength they have to endure and overcome the hardships that continue to come their way.