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Don Crabtree
Rt. 1, Box 39
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Dear Don:

I am still unsure just how long a list of benefits I should make up to describe my five weeks with the Flintknapping School this summer. I suspect I shall be dredging hidden information out of my mind for months to come, and of course, am using my general knowledge of rock mechanics nearly every day. All I can say at the moment is a general thank you, to the National Science Foundation, Dr. Swanson and Idaho State University, and especially to you and Evelyn---for your time, patience, and storehouse of information that you shared so generously.

I suspect a sociologist with years of experience in understanding small-group interrelationships might give me the proper language to describe the "experiencing" that occurred with this field school---I am a bit at a loss for words. I do know that much of the learning this summer came from the total immersion of ten or eleven people in one subject, and the opportunity to talk and think about what we were doing whether during formal daytime working hours, while washing dishes, or even while cooling off out on a log in the lake in the evenings. NSF is to be congratulated, as are you and Dr. Swanson, for setting up such a traditionally unconventional learning experience---it is amazingly efficient way of communicating a lot of information in a compressed period of time. And thoroughly enjoyable, I should add. Five weeks is not long enough to make craftsmen of all of us, and I for one would add frankly that that was not my goal. I intend to continue working with lithics, but I don't have the time for the daily work and experimentation that developing a craft takes. But I have and am learning enough to understand what you and Guy are doing, and to do some experimentation on my own while I keep up with my own specialty---the laboratory analysis of archeological materials using the information taken from the people with the "hands". Guy and I are already talking about a paper to be worked on this year, combining our two specialities of his ability and my knowledge of Paleo-Indian lithics; that is what I understand as one of the real benefits of the school to us as individuals and to our profession of prehistory as well. I have also been able to use some of my new knowledge in the analysis of the debitage of the MacHaffie Scottsbluff site this month---I know they were making huge bifaces, perhaps 10cm wide by 15-20cm long, even though no such tools have turned up in the sites. They left very diagnostic flakes behind.

Again, a heartfelt thank you to everyone involved in setting up this school and allowing me to participate. And a special thank you to you and Evelyn, for your encouragement, friendship, and that lovely food Evelyn was so thoughtful to send down to us now and again. It was a good summer.

Sincerely,

Ruthann
Ruthann Knudson

ce. 29.4.4