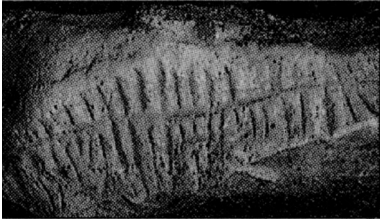


SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2005



## ANCIENT LIGHT

Twice a year the National Forest Service folks who mind the Comanche National Grassland southwest of Springfield open the gate on Crack Cave in Picture Canyon for a modern-day view of carvings plains Indians created maybe 700 years ago to mark the equinoxes.

"It really is breathtaking," says Yvonne Taylor, who'll lead a group to the cave before dawn Thursday morning. "You're sitting there looking at it, and there's a little light, and then BAM! It's just brilliantly lit up."

The notches are illuminated for 10 minutes and then fall back into the shadows until the next equinox, which comes on March 20. "We get there right before sunrise, so it's still a little dark. You can just sit and imagine what it felt like to be in a wagon train or to be a plains Indian," she says. "It's pretty humbling."

**Go:** Meet Yvonne Taylor at the Forest Service Office in Springfield, 27204 U.S. 287, south of the old drive-in theater, at 5:15 a.m. Thursday. Caravan about 34 miles southwest to Picture Canyon. Info: 719-523-6591.

This article appeared in the Sunday *Denver Post* as a sidebar to a section featuring tourism attractions in southeastern Colorado. The selected image is actually not within the Crack Cave and has no known archaeoastronomical alignment, although it could be Ogham. This inscription is actually found in a large amphitheater like cave tucked in a northwesterly facing cliff in a nearby bend in Picture Canyon.

The article's contention "*of carvings plains Indians created maybe 700 years ago to mark the equinoxes*" was investigated by those of us who advocate the alternative theory of an Indo-European authorship.

The *Denver Post* responded that a Forest Service archaeologist had told the reporter that studies had determined plains Indians had made the equinox sunrise alignment marks in the Crack Cave. However, when Phil Leonard requested in writing from Thomas S. Peters, District Forest Service Ranger for the Comanche National Grassland a reference to the studies allegedly conducted that arrived at that conclusion, no documentation of such a study was found to exist.

Thus, yet another example that assumptions are being made in the absence of any serious academic study of the Crack Cave and other abundant evidence for pre-Columbian Indo-European archaeoastronomy and inscriptions in southeastern Colorado.

Why the reluctance? Why the misleading assumptions in lieu of true scientific research?

--- Scott Monahan