New book on ancient people of the Great Basin

First-time visitors often perceive the Great Basin as a vast sagebrush sea, a monotonous and barren landscape. But for the ancient people who lived there, this sprawling land was full of beauty and rich resources. In The Great Basin: People and Place in Ancient Times (School for Advanced Research Press: October 2008), edited by Catherine “Kay” and Don Fowler, emeriti professors of anthropology, leading archeologists discuss the survival skills of the region’s ancient residents, from setting a deadfall and running a trout line in desert waters to chain-linking a hundred rabbit skins into a winter blanket. Their decorated baskets and hats, headdresses and sandals, duck decoys and antelope traps, some 10,000 years old, tell the history of resourceful, mobile people who knew the region intimately, adapted to drastic changes in climate, and left their mark upon the land in rock art and equipment caches.

The authors highlight the ingenious solutions people devised to sustain themselves in a difficult environment. The Great Basin is a semiarid and often harsh land, but one with life-giving oases. As the weather fluctuated from year to year, and the climate from decade to decade or even from one millennium to the next, the availability of water, plants, and animals also fluctuated. Only people who learned the land intimately and could read the many signs of its changing moods were successful. The evidence of their success is often subtle and difficult to interpret from the few and fragile remains left behind for archaeologists to discover. These ancient fragments of food and baskets, hats and hunting decoys, traps and rock art and the lifeways they reflect are the subject of this well-illustrated book. (See more on Don and Kay Fowler on page 64.)

Summer Session 2009 presents

Summer Concerts and Watermelon on the Quad!

Voted one of Reno Gazette-Journal’s “Best Family Outings” — free Watermelon Wednesday concerts on the Quad are fun for all ages. Bring a blanket and a picnic dinner and join us from 6-8 p.m. on these Wednesdays:

July 1: Sol’Jibe  
July 8: DG KICKS  
July 15: Reno Irish Dance Company  
July 22: Disney (Reno Municipal Band)  
July 29: Guitar Woody and the Boilers  
Aug. 5: Sol’Jibe

Food will be available for purchase.  
For more information visit www.summersession.unr.edu.

Shine with us this summer!

Concerts are presented by Summer Session in partnership with the Native American Alumni Chapter, COBAA, Alumni and Friends of the Reynolds School, and the Young Alumni Chapter.