

The **NORTH TEXAS ARCHEOLOGICAL SOCIETY (NTAS)** meeting for **February** will be **in person and on Zoom**.

NTAS meetings are **free** and visitors are always welcome.

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Benchmark

Volume 38, Issue 2

February 2024

President's Message

It is an exciting time to be a member of the North Texas Archeological Society! Volunteer fieldwork and lab opportunities abound. Before we move on from January, I would like to thank everyone who attended our January meeting, either in person or via Zoom. Our guest speaker, Jessica Lee Hamlin, gave an excellent presentation covering Shumla's past, present, and future research on rock art in the Lower Pecos Canyonlands. If you missed her presentation, it is available on [YouTube](#) and you can learn more about Shumla, including information about their in person and virtual treks, at their [website](#). We are excited to welcome back Dr. Charles Frederick for our February 8th meeting and hope you all can join us for what is sure to be an engaging presentation on Dr. Frederick's current research.

Big thanks to Dana Ritchie for organizing a January workday at the Joe Reed site. To those folks who braved some inclement weather to join Dana, it is much appreciated, and NTAS looks forward to the next opportunity to work at the site. I would also like to thank Brian Luetchford and Dr. Matt Boulanger for organizing an ongoing lab opportunity at SMU. The first open session was held on January 27th and there will be subsequent sessions the last Saturday of every month from now through the end of May.



Not only is it an opportunity to work on TAS field school collections, but also to check out SMU's quality archeology lab space. I would urge all of you to put the dates on your calendars and read about the January 27th lab day on Page 6.

As a general reminder to the society, membership renewals for 2024 were due on January 1, 2024. The society extends a small grace period for members who are renewing that extends to March 15, 2024. As always, we appreciate your membership in NTAS and look forward to your continued participation in the society. With that in mind, if you all know anyone who has been considering joining, now is a great time to do so!

The February 8th, 2024, monthly meeting will be a hybrid meeting (in

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www.NTXAS.org

For general inquiries, please contact info@ntxas.org

North Texas Archeological Society

person and via Zoom) held in our usual meeting room on the University of North Texas Health Science Center (UNTHSC) campus in the Research & Education Building, Room 114 (see page 3 for map). The meeting will start at 7:00 pm and we look forward to seeing you in person at the UNTHSC or on Zoom for the hybrid meeting. Our February 8th guest speaker is Dr. Charles Frederick whose presentation is entitled “Our Dark Materials: Exploring the Role of Water in the Preservation of Organic Matter in Earth Ovens.” We look forward to seeing you at our next meeting on February 8th!

Allen Rutherford

February Speaker: Dr. Charles Frederick

Our Dark Materials

Exploring the role of water in the preservation of organic matter associated with fine earth fraction of prehistoric earth oven facilities

Over the last two decades analysis of the rocks (FCR) and artifacts associated with earth oven facilities (some of which are called burned rock middens) have produced insights into the behaviors that created these features. The fine earth fraction, which is typically black, sometimes greasy feeling, has generally been ignored. This presentation compares the fine-earth of a typical burned rock midden in Crane County, Texas (41CR56), with the fine-earth residues from earth ovens in Eagle Cave (41VVI67), which have been nearly completely protected from exposure to water. This presentation is the first effort to better understand what comprises the ubiquitous black earth of burned rock middens, and how water changes them through time.

Charles D. Frederick is a self-employed consulting geoarchaeologist based near Dublin, Texas, and a Research Fellow in the Department of Geography and the Environment at the University of Texas at Austin. His research interests span a diverse range of topics that include archeological site formation processes, prehistoric agriculture, earthen architecture and late Quaternary environmental change.



NTAS Lab Opportunity at Richland Campus of Dallas College

Tim Sullivan

If you are looking for a chance to work with artifacts in a lab setting, Anthropology Professor Mary Peacock of the Richland Campus of Dallas College, is offering an opportunity to work with ceramics from New Mexico and/or some lithics from Central Texas. We are looking for volunteers to help set up learning activity kits for college students (and learn themselves!). This event will take place on Saturday, February 10, from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm. Some NTAS members have worked with these collections in the past, and have expressed a desire to return. Others wishing to gain some experience handling lithics and/or ceramics may want to join in this activity. No experience is necessary. The Richland campus is located at 12800 Abrams Rd, Dallas, 75243. The lab is on the second floor of Wichita Hall, and recommended parking is in Lot D, as it is closest to the building. If interested, please notify [Tim Sullivan](#) and you will receive more information.

NTAS scholarships are now available to -ANYONE- who applies for TAS Academies, the TAS Field School, and the annual TAS Meeting.

Please visit the NTAS scholarships webpage to submit your application. [Apply now!](#)

Members Needed for 2025-2026 Executive Committee

Please consider how you can serve the NTAS community by volunteering to be on the Executive Committee for the 2025-2026 term. Specifically we are still seeking a President and Historian. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact [Allen Rutherford](#).

Update Your Calendar - NTAS Monthly Meeting Speakers

March 14th: Lance Tahmahkera (My Comanche Heritage)

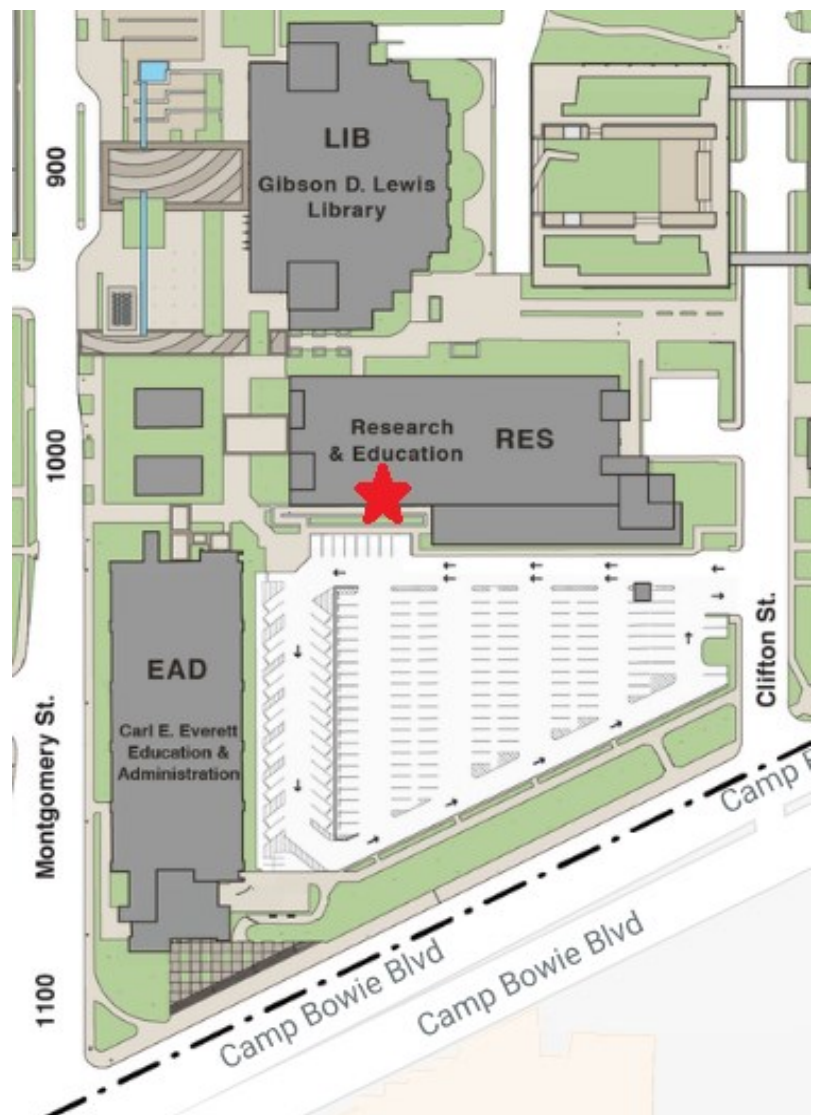
April 11th: Mike McBride (Crying Woman Ranch)

May 9th: Vicky Roberts (Nasca, Peru Research)

NTAS Monthly Meeting Location & Directions

NTAS meets at 7:00 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month (except June and December) at the University of North Texas Health Science Center, 3500 Camp Bowie Boulevard, Fort Worth (in the **Research and Education Building, Room 114**), near the intersection of Camp Bowie and Montgomery Street.

Traveling west on I-30 from downtown, take the Montgomery Street exit. Turn right on Montgomery and continue to the five-way intersection at Camp Bowie. Turn right onto Camp Bowie, followed by an immediate left onto Clifton Street. **Turn into the first parking lot on the left (Administrator and Visitor Parking).** You will drive past an information booth as you enter the parking lot. Park on the far (north/west) end of the parking lot and enter the Research and Education building. Once you enter the building, turn right and proceed down the hallway to Room 114.



Saving the Nighthawk Bison Jump

Gus Costa

In 2021, THC Steward Rick Day and wife Susan located bison bones eroding out of a slope below the Caprock escarpment on the western border of Caprock Canyon State Park in Briscoe County. TAS fellow Chris Lintz in coordination with Tony Lyle, (regional TPWD archaeologist) launched a follow up reconnaissance and documented extensive bison bones in two locations: one directly below the Caprock cliff face (41BI564) and another 125 meters east (41BI565). The surfaces around these sites yielded abundant lithic chipping debris, burned rock and a handful of notched and stemmed dart points and arrowpoints. These sites were inferred to represent a Late Archaic to Late Prehistoric bison jump kill site and an adjacent processing site. Realizing the significance of this find and potential loss due to ongoing erosion, TPWD collaborated with Drs. Brett Houk and Tamra Walter at Texas Tech University to organize a field school to test and salvage a sample from the sites in the Fall of 2022. Mid-2022, I joined the team as lead for geoarchaeology and faunal analysis and have been absolutely obsessed with bison archaeology ever since.



*TTU students excavate at Nighthawk bison jump.
Photo courtesy of TTU.*

Bison jumps are a renowned hunting method employed by Native Americans in which these animals were stampeded in mass over cliffs. Jump sites are commonplace in the northern plains, but only one site, Bonfire Shelter (41VV218, Val Verde county), has ever been documented in Texas and the southern plains in general. Although there are at least two other candidate jumps in the southern plains few archaeologists accept them. Bison kill sites aren't uncommon; however, jumps are like unicorns in the southern plains. The discovery of a jump at Nighthawk adds critical data to understanding ancient bison hunting in the southern plains.

Nighthawk in a Nutshell

Our preliminary results for Nighthawk were presented in a special symposium last year at the 2023 TAS Annual Meeting. We also had a brief story on the site in the November 2023 issue of [TPWD magazine](#).

The essential information developed on the sites to date follows:

1. A substantial amount of the archaeological deposits have been lost to erosion (>70% of sites).
2. 41BI564 is a jump site. The site is on a surface sandwiched between two cliffs (i.e., it's on an elevated surface below a cliff and the latter site surface is bounded by cliffs so bison can't get up there unless they fall from above). The jump status is also corroborated by the broad dispersion of bones (diagnostic of a non-arroyo context), their landform-deposit context (as

- compared to an arroyo fill) and indications of jump related bone trauma.
3. Currently there is limited evidence of processing of the bison remains at either site. A larger sample is needed including materials from east of 41BI565. Most bone at 41BI564 (the jump) appears to represent unused or inaccessible animals from the kill.
 4. Most of 41BI564 appears to reflect one Late Archaic event at 1,631 mean cal BP. However, high resolution XAD pre-treated radiocarbon dating on bone (with Dr. Jon Lohse) is planned to further resolve the precision of the kill event(s).
 5. A Late Prehistoric component (571 mean cal BP) is present in the gully (Areas C/D) at 41BI564; however, the deposits related to this timeframe <1,000 BP appear to be scarce and deflated.
 6. The TTU assemblage comprises 336 identifiable bison elements from the two sites. This includes eight crania, (two bulls, three cows) and five mandibles. A minimum of 11 individuals are represented from both sites. Overall herd composition indicates a cow-calf group
 7. The Late Archaic component included a 1.6-year-old mandible which indicates an early Fall jump season.
 8. Differential preservation of remains and small scattered sink basins suggest a complex site formation history with remobilization and reburial of bone.

Join Team Nighthawk

The testing work has been great, but we aren't satisfied we've learned enough about the site. The site is too rare to do nothing further. Every time we visit new bones are eroding away. Last year we resolved to expand the scope of the project to emergency salvage of the jump site along with comprehensive survey and testing of deposits that haven't yet been interrogated. Fortunately, we received a generous grant from the Summerlee Foundation and will be receiving support from TPWD to conduct our next phase of work starting in March 2024. We've teamed with the non-profit organization [Plains Archeological Research](#) to facilitate this work.

We are still looking for experienced volunteers to help with our excavation. Please note volunteers will need to be able to hike 2.2 miles (round trip) and climb/descend a 45 ft. cliff. If you are interested in volunteering this March at Nighthawk, please email [Gus Costa](#) for more information.



Ken Lawrence poses near the bone bed at 41BI565.

NTAS Lab Days at SMU

Jimmy Barrera

The first NTAS lab event at the SMU archeology lab was a ton of fun! Our host Dr. Matt Boulanger was very welcoming and provided a tour of SMU's Archaeological Research Collections which includes the main lab and an additional storage area called the "attic". We worked on collections from the 1971 Texas Archeological Society (TAS) Field School investigations at a series of sites in Kerr County including sites 41KR94 and 41KR612. During a few hours on January 27, NTAS members were able to get about a dozen artifact bags processed and transferred from old bags to new 4 mil bags with acid free tags. An important process to ensure these collections will be stabilized and better organized for research. We also counted, sorted, and weighed the materials. This data was input into SMU's lab database by a graduate student as we completed each bag.

Huge thanks to Dr. Boulanger, Dr. Mike Adler (Chair of Anthropology Department), and SMU's Department of Anthropology for being so friendly and welcoming to NTAS. We had a lot of fun and look forward to the upcoming dates for lab days at SMU. **Mark your calendars to participate in these lab days on the last Saturday of each month through May 2024: February 24, March 30, April 27, and May 25.** To sign-up please contact [Brian Luetchford](#).



Top: Dr. Matt Boulanger providing tour of SMU collections in the "attic" (BL); 1971 TAS Field School collection before processing (JB); SMU lab photo of biface from 41KR612 (MB). Middle: Brian at work on collections (MB); photo from 1971 Field School [note PA amp on chair] (no credit); Jimmy in lab (BL); Bottom: collections refreshed for curation (BL); original box label (BL); modern SMU box label (JB). Photo credits: Jimmy Barrera (JB), Brian Luetchford (BL), and Dr. Matt Boulanger (MB).



2nd Call for Papers

Southwestern Federation of Archeological Societies 58th Symposium,

Sponsored by West Texas Archeological Society

Saturday, April 27th, 2024

At Fort Concho, San Angelo, Texas

Proposals for individual papers are now being accepted on any topic relating to the cultural or natural history of the Federation region of Texas and eastern New Mexico. Papers accepted for presentation will be published digitally in the Transactions of the 58th Regional Archeological Symposium and made available on the North Texas University sponsored website, Portal To Texas History.

Please submit your abstract using this form.

Deadline for submission is March 23rd, 2024

Author(s):

Address:

City, State, Zip:

Home Phone:

Affiliation (to be included in the program):

Presentation Title:

Abstract: Please attach separately with a maximum of 200 words.

EMAIL IS THE PREFERRED METHOD OF SUBMITTING YOUR ABSTRACT

INFORMATION. Attach the completed form to your message and e-mail to: Tom Ashmore.

tcashmo@gmail.com

Joe Reed Site Update

Dana Ritchie

NTAS has had several successful workdays at the Joe Reed Site in Springtown. We are beginning to make progress as we learn about some of Parker County's earliest settlers! Our inaugural workday was held on October 21 and the weather was perfect! We had 15 volunteers working in different areas of the site. Bret Williamson led a crew shovel testing in an artifact scattered, midden-like area that warrants further exploration. The information gained helps narrow down potential areas in which to place future units. Other volunteers cleared brush and explored curious features that might be related to past areas of occupation. One of the most well-preserved and prominent features is a possible root cellar. Several volunteers worked in units in the root cellar that were initially established by students from Weatherford College. Finding the floor of the cellar and determining what kind of surface it has is one of the goals of the investigations. A few people even got to visit a neighbor's property to see some unique features that the landowner thought might be of historical significance. It was a fun and productive day!

On December 18th and 19th, a small team worked tirelessly for two days clearing brush in and around the root cellar. They also began to move the large wall fall rocks from within the cellar in preparation for future excavations. At the end of the second day an interesting surface was found that perhaps could be part of the root cellar floor!

The most recent workday was scheduled for January 20 and even with bitter cold predicted, 12 members volunteered! As the day approached and the temps looked foreboding, it was decided that the workday would be post-



Royce Baker, Jerry Grubis, and Tommy Standefer looking at an artifact from a shovel test.



Jerry Grubis teaching proper use of the screen to Caleb, Cameron, Theresa, and Sydney.



Bret Williamson leading and documenting the shovel testing. (Not pictured: Art Tawater helped on prior days with site prep and metal detecting to focus shovel test efforts.)

poned to the following weekend for the majority of volunteers. However, three brave souls who were eager for experience still chose to work on the 20th! We shortened the day to 3-hours and after touring the site worked in the root cellar on the area around the mystery surface that may be part of the floor. Even though the temperature hovered around freezing, no wind and bright sunshine made the day quite pleasant (or maybe bearable is a better word!)

As of the writing of this article the January 28th workday is still scheduled and looks promising if the rain holds off. Hopefully we will have a good turnout and nice weather for another successful NTAS workday!

Thank you to all the volunteers who came for support, work and camaraderie!



Mike Shannon & Joe Nuncio clearing an area of interest.



Royce Baker documenting the rock



Our brave polar bears on January 20th! Glenn Butler, Rio McGowan, and Sydney Lowenthal.



Working in the possible "root cellar" (Gen Freix, Mike Shannon, Cameron Ditore, Sydney Lowenthal, Flip Darce, and Caleb Davis)



Phillip Darce exploring the interesting surface that was beneath one of the large rocks.

Archeological Events & Opportunities

The Billy W. Sills Lecture Series

10am, Various Saturdays 2024

Billy W. Sills Center for Archives, Fort Worth, TX

February 17 - The Lady Makes Boots: Enid Justin and the Nocona Boot Company

March 23 - Clota Terrell Boykin and the Early Suffrage Movement in Fort Worth

Away from Home: American Indian Boarding School Stories

February 2024

Fort Worth, TX

This traveling exhibit focuses on the 1870s attempt by the US government to educate and assimilate American Indians into "civilized" society by placing children in distant, residential boarding schools. For the month of February, the exhibit will be at Tarrant County College, which will host several related events.

TAS Archeology Workshop for Educators

February 9 or 10, 2024

Nacogdoches, TX

Educators, you are invited to attend a one-day workshop about introducing archeology into your lessons. Background information will be presented, and hands-on lessons demonstrated. Sample topics include observation & inference, context & timeline, research methods, and opportunities to work beside archeologists in the field in June 2024.

Building Archeology Learning Kits

9:30am-12:30pm, February 10, 2024

Dallas, TX

NTAS is looking for volunteers to help set up archeology learning activity kits at the Richland Campus of Dallas College. If you are interested in participating, please contact [Tim Sullivan](#).

29th East Texas Archeological Conference

February 17, 2024

Tyler, TX

The East Texas Archeological Conference is hosted annually to bring together people interested in the archeology and cultural heritage of east Texas.

Location: Main Lobby and other rooms in the Soules College of Business at UT Tyler.

Hours: 9 AM until 4pm. Registration begins at 8:30am. **Fee:** \$20 which includes lunch.

Hotel: Homewood Suites, 3104 Golden Road, Tyler, TX. 903-593-7880 and mention East Texas Archeology for conference rates of \$116. Breakfast is included.

Traditional Caddo Pottery Demonstration

February 22-24, 2024

Lubbock, TX

TTU School of Art proudly presents Caddo artist Chase Kahwinhut Earles in a three-day artist-in-residency, presented in collaboration with the LHUCA Helen DeVitt Jones Clay Studio. Chase Kahwinhut Earles works using traditional Caddo pottery methods. He starts with wild harvested and hand-processed clay and employs hand-coiled clay building to form his vessels. Vessels are hand-burnished, decorated with scrolling designs and finally pit fired.

Finca de Caza Site NTAS Work Day

February 24, 2024

Jack County, TX

Recording of a historic site possible related to a stage coach route.

Open Laboratory Days

February 24, March 30, April 27, 2024

Southern Methodist University, Dallas, TX

SMU will be hosting Open Laboratory Days from 9am-5pm the last Saturday of every month through May 2024. The current focus will be on artifacts collected from the 1971 and 1972 TAS Field Schools that were held in Kerr County. For more information, please contact [Brian Luetchford](#). See Page 6 for photos and a report on January's lab day.

Nighthawk Bison Jump Site Field Work**March 2024**

Caprock Canyon, TX

Gus Costa is looking for experienced volunteers to assist in the next round of excavations at the Nighthawk bison jump site in Caprock Canyon during the month of March. Volunteers will need to be able to hike 2.2 miles (round trip) and climb/descend a 45 ft. cliff. See pages 4-5 for details.

UTA Termini Lecture**March 28, 2024**

Arlington, TX

The speaker will be Dr. David Samson, author of a new book on tribalism (*Our Tribal Future*).

Pompeii: The Immortal City Exhibit**March 30-June 23, 2024**

Arlington Museum of Art, Arlington, TX

Through a world-class multi-media experience, journey back in time with the AMA to Rome just before, during, and after the fateful eruption of Mount Vesuvius in AD 79. Hear and feel the roar of the volcano erupting while you take in the wonder of original artworks and newly-discovered artifacts.

SAA 89th Annual Meeting**April 17-21, 2024**

New Orleans, LA

The program is composed of general sessions, symposia, forums, debates, lightning rounds, posters, and workshops. The SAA Annual Meeting offers unparalleled networking opportunities in its exhibit hall, excursions, and receptions and career-development opportunities.

Southwestern Federation of Archeological Societies 58th Symposium **April 27, 2024**

San Angelo, TX

See Page 7 for the call for papers.

What Can You Do with NTAS? What Can NTAS Do for You?**Involve NTAS in Your Field, Lab, or Reporting Project**

Contact the [Vice President of Projects](#) if you know of a field, lab, data collection, or reporting project that could use the skilled labor of experienced and knowledgeable NTAS members.

Contribute Photos and Memories of NTAS Events

Photos are a great way to showcase what NTAS is all about. We'd love to share your NTAS experiences with the world immediately following NTAS events! Please send your images and captions to the [Internet Chair](#). By providing these photos, they may be used on the NTAS website and social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram.

Newsletter and Journal Content

Contribute highlights from NTAS volunteer opportunities, summaries of archeological research and field projects, announcements and links to events, exhibits, media, and publications, etc. by sending them to the [Publications Editor](#).

NTAS is now looking for articles to fill the 2024 Journal of the North Texas Archeological Society. Please consider submitting an article about your North Texas research, fieldwork, or other related topics. The lead author must be an NTAS member in good standing for the 2024 calendar year. For submissions and inquiries regarding the journal, please contact the [Publications Editor](#). The current volume (2023) is available to members by logging in [here](#). A digital copy of Volume I is available to the public [here](#), and physical copies are available for purchase on [Amazon](#).



North Texas Archeological Society (NTAS) Membership Application Form

Online membership form and payment option available at ntxas.org/join-and-renew

Name(s) _____

Address _____ Phone _____

City\State\Zip _____ Email _____

Membership Type and Fees (Membership Term: January to December)

- New Family Membership - \$25
 Renewal Total Family Members _____
 Individual Membership - \$20
 Student Membership – \$10 (18 or older student with minimum half-time course load. Those under 18 must contact NTAS in advance of applying.)

Communication Preferences: I/WE want to be added to the following lists:

- General Announcements - *For Meetings, Events, Publications, Membership Dues and NTAS Updates*
 Personal Updates - *For personal updates on NTAS members such as illnesses, and obituaries*

Digital copies of the newsletter are included with every membership. If you are interested in receiving paper copies, please contact the Publications Editor (publicationseditor@ntxas.org) or Secretary (secretary@ntxas.org) for pricing.

Donation: Amount: \$ _____ General Fund Memorial Scholarship Fund BaahKu Project

Media Release: I/WE DO -or- DO NOT (circle as appropriate) give permission to NTAS to use my/our image (photographs and/or video) in any NTAS publications, website, or social media.

Code of Ethics (signature required): I/WE PLEDGE THAT I/WE WILL NOT INTENTIONALLY VIOLATE THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF ANY FEDERAL, STATE, OR LOCAL ANTIQUITIES STATUTES CONCERNING CULTURAL RESOURCES OR ENGAGE IN THE PRACTICES OF BUYING OR SELLING ARTIFACTS FOR COMMERCIAL PURPOSES OR ENGAGE IN THE WILLFUL DESTRUCTION OR DISTORTION OF ARCHEOLOGICAL DATA OR DISREGARD PROPER ARCHEOLOGICAL FIELD TECHNIQUES. I/WE UNDERSTAND THAT FAILURE TO FOLLOW THESE GUIDELINES WILL PROVIDE GROUNDS FOR EXPULSION FROM THE SOCIETY.

Signature(s) _____ Date _____

Mail your Membership Form with check or money order made payable to:
 North Texas Archeological Society
 P.O. Box 24679 Ft. Worth, TX 76124

Thank you for renewing or joining the North Texas Archeological Society! We will send an email to confirm your membership once your payment has been processed. We look forward to seeing you at our next event!

Welcome, New Members!

Caya Crum
 Jessica Lee Hamlin
 Stephanie Hastings
 Rachel Keith
 Jordan Rivera & Family
 Allyson Williams

Donors

AR Consultants, Inc.
 Mike Shannon

NTAS Aims & Objectives

The purposes of the Society are

- (1) the promotion of scientific archeological exploration and research,
- (2) the preservation and conservation of archeological materials and sites,
- (3) the interpretation and publication of data pertaining thereto, and
- (4) education of the public to the aims of archeology.

NTAS - Preserving the Past for the Future

Executive Committee

Allen Rutherford
President

Gwen Durrant
Treasurer

Genevieve Freix
Historian

Stephen Lowe
Vice President

Thomas Standefer
Secretary

Hannah Rainey
Internet Chair

Brian Luetchford
Vice President of Projects

Jimmy Barrera
Immediate Past President

Molly Hall
Publications Editor

Newsletter Submission Deadlines

The newsletter submission deadlines are two weeks prior to the monthly meetings, and upcoming deadlines are listed below.

March Newsletter: February 29

April Newsletter: March 28

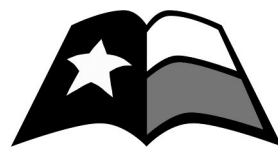
May Newsletter: April 25

July Newsletter: June 27

August Newsletter: July 25

September Newsletter: August 29

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