

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

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

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Benchmark

Volume 39, Issue 10

November 2025

President's Message

Greetings, NTAS!

The North Texas Archeological Society proved to be a large (probably the largest!) presence at numerous **TAM** events across the metroplex this past October. Things are going so well that we still have more to come: mark your calendar for the Plano Archeology Fair on November 15. Come by to say 'hi' or sign up to volunteer (see below). Folks who came out to the Doss Pioneer Heritage Festival, Grand Prairie Farmers Market, and Denton Dig It! to spread the word about NTAS and archeology had a fabulous time, and we don't want anyone to miss out. If it's your first TAM ever, all the more reason to attend and bring your friends or family.

As we use these events to talk to the public and honor Texas heritage, keep in mind there is a surge of interest this year and therefore, a greater need for volunteers. Youth across Texas associated with numerous competing robotics clubs are seeking our counsel and they have been showing up to ask important questions. For those who do not yet know, the **FIRST® LEGO® League** is an educational program pertaining to youth participation in STEM. This year's robotics competition topic is Archeology ("Unearthed" or "First Age") and several archeologists across the state and country are providing consultation for these brilliant young people and their proposed designs. The Texas Historical Commission and Society for American



Archeology have provided some guidance. If anyone reading this wants to be a volunteer consultant, please email **NTAS** for more information. Several of our members have assisted these clubs in their pursuit of solving real archeological problems and I can attest to the value and satisfaction of being a part of that process, typically via a few Zoom or Google Meets calls.

A hearty "thank you" to everyone who coordinated and attended TAM events so far, especially those attending multiple—You are the real MVPs! Turn-out has been remarkable. Doss Pioneer Heritage Festival was predictably a big success; we made several new connections at the Grand Prairie Market; and Denton Dig It! had record exhibitors (more about that on pages 4-5). I encourage y'all to join us at the **Plano Archeology Fair** on **November 15 (9 am to 3 pm)**. The fair consists of excava-

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www.NTXAS.org

For general inquiries, please contact info@ntxas.org

North Texas Archeological Society

tion demonstrations, arts and crafts, and Native American guests. We still need volunteers, particularly for the afternoon portion. If you are available, please reach out to [Allen Rutherford](#) to assist.

We would like to remind members that the NTAS Executive Committee recently approved a donation to Texas Beyond History to remain a Sustaining Partner. NTAS will match up to \$250 of membership donations, but that is not the upper limit if folks want to give more. To donate through our website, select “Texas Beyond History Campaign” on our [donation form](#).

Following the 96th TAS Annual Meeting, the 2026 Academies registrations rolled out. These courses are generally held during the late winter and early spring. Popularity of this program has increased over the last few years due to quality instruction with in-depth training. For this reason, slots fill up quickly. [Zooarcheology & Osteology](#) will be held **February 28 to March 1** in Houston. [Rock Art](#) will be held **March 21 to 22** in El Paso. [Archeology 101](#) will be held **April 10 to 12** in San Angelo. NTAS offers [scholarships](#) towards these programs for anyone seeking attendance. We’d love to sponsor you!

Last month’s presentation from Dr. Matt Boulagner could not have been more perfect for TAM. His work in partnership with NTAS at the SMU Archaeological Research Collections laboratory to rehabilitate old collections is nothing short of inspiring. I think I speak for our membership when I say that we are grateful to Matt and this opportunity to do meaningful work and give space for teaching. Thank you to all of our members who joined us in person and on Zoom to hear Matt speak. If you missed out on last month’s presentation, find it on our YouTube [page](#).

We are very pleased to host Dr. Laura Short for our last meeting of the year. Dr. Short is an archeologist at HDR who specializes in the study of earth ovens and residue analysis. This is a great continuation of education for those who attended this year’s TAS Archeobotany Academy. She joins us Thursday, November 13 to present her talk entitled, “Earth Ovens on the Red River.” The Thursday, November 13, 2025 monthly meeting will be a hybrid meeting (in 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 a 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 on November 13!

Alexandra Younger

November Speaker: Laura Short

Earth Ovens on the Red River

Earth ovens are well documented across the entire United States and through much of the world. In Texas, they are largely associated with the western and central portion of the state, where they are ubiquitous. This presentation looks outside that area, presenting a preliminary analysis of earth ovens in north-central Texas and south-central Oklahoma. In addition to examining the distribution of earth ovens across the landscape and their utilization by the people of the Southern Plains, a meta-analysis of our understanding of earth ovens will also be addressed. While the presence of piles of burned rock have been well known since early studies of Texas archaeology, these features only really began to be understood in the 1970s.

Laura Short is an archaeologist with a background in earth ovens and residue analysis. At HDR she is helping to develop the artifact analysis workspace in the Dallas office and training with Leslie Bush in macrobotanical analysis. When she’s not trying to convince people of the validity of fire cracked rock as a subject of study, she is hanging out with her two cats. She got her PhD at Texas A&M and undergraduate degree at Indiana University of Pennsylvania.



NTAS at the Doss Pioneer Heritage Festival

NTAS volunteers spent the day at the Doss Pioneer Heritage Festival in Weatherford making new friends, sharing almost 400 pinch pots with children, breaking in our brand new branded pop shade, and demonstrating the newly created teaching kit.

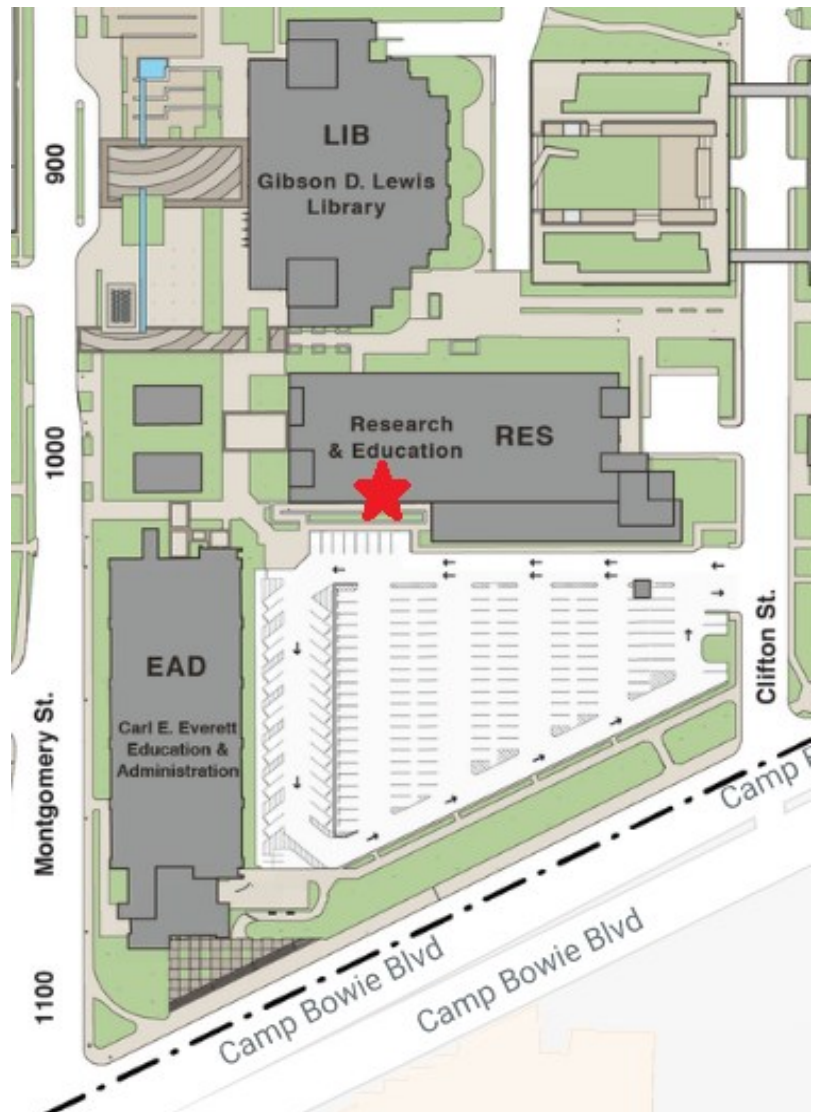


*NTAS booth at the Doss Pioneer Heritage Festival.
Photo courtesy of Tommy Standefer.*

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.



Lithic Material and Indian Artifacts That Are Found in Texas: A Reference Guide

Charlene Erwin

This modest book offers exactly what the title states. It is a well-written, easy to follow, reference guide, complete with descriptive narratives and illustrations. If you're sharing your interest in Texas archeology with the younger scientists in your family, please take a moment and review this booklet. It is a quick download from the NTAS archival website maintained by the University of Texas at Arlington. This searchable database allows us to truly learn from those dedicated folks who made significant contributions to the history of NTAS.



Complete reference:

Preston, Nolan E. 1990. *Lithic Material And Indian Artifacts That Are Found in Texas: A Reference Guide*. Fort Worth, Texas.

[North Texas Archeological Society Records, 56.](#)

About the author:

Nolan E. Preston was an archeologist and a frequent contributor to the early newsletters of the Tarrant County Archeological Society (TCAS). The September, 1976 and [December, 1976](#) issues of *The Tarrant County Archeological Society Newsletter*, the purple-ink mimeographed newsletters edited by James Everett, featured Preston's report on the "Mississippi River Valley Points from a Tarrant County Site." Issues of [The Letter](#), the TCAS newsletter published in in the late 1980's and early 1990's, often featured articles from Preston. One of his most often cited reports analyzed the McCann Site. This earlier work was published in the [Bulletin of the Texas Archeological Society](#), Volume 40, Page 167, Published by the Society, Dallas, 1969. This particular issue is available for download from [The Portal to Texas History](#) website.

Reflecting on Four Years of Denton Dig It!

Alexandra Younger

Before the archeology fair existed, Gary Hayden and I were a longtime landlord-tenant duo in Denton. I was well out of grad school when we first talked about Texas Archeology Month (TAM) and he was newly appointed to the Historical Commission. Suddenly, a committee was formed out of the ether. From its inception, Denton Dig It! was a success, and we were committed to continue developing it. The second year, we were nearly swept away in a cold, torrential downpour reminiscent of that YouTube [video](#) of a floating UNT dumpster to the tune of "A Thousand Miles" by Vanessa Carlton.

Regardless, momentum took over and we went from a handful of exhibitors to well over 20 this year. Dozens of volunteers! People naturally wanted to be a part of it and bring their talents and knowledge. I think I speak for the committee when I say that we are incredibly proud and touched by everyone's gusto to participate. Our exhibitors breathed more life into this event than we expected, and we were blown away. In addition, I have observed an uptick in TAM events across Texas, which demonstrates the success of the campaign and the unrelenting commitment of professional and avocational archeologists to do good work and then share it. In North Texas, there is clearly an impressive force of stewards here who are inspiring more and more people. A big *thank-you!* to the volunteers across NTAS and the various organizations that came together. Next year, I expect the City may have to concede that they will be both the TAM Capital of Texas as well as the Halloween Capital. Well done, everyone!



Eric Weinburg demonstrating atlatl throwing. Photo courtesy of Alex



Alex Younger demonstrating how earth ovens are made and used. Photo courtesy of Gary Hayden.



Christopher Goodmaster explaining remote sensing techniques to visitors. Photo courtesy of Gary Hayden.



A child grinding corn at the NTAS booth. Photo courtesy of Gen Freix.



Alex Younger and Gary Hayden, founders of Denton Dig It! Photo courtesy of Alex Younger.



A child making a Pinch Pot from a kit provided by the THC and distributed by NTAS. Photo courtesy of Gen Freix.

Archeological Events & Opportunities

Please see the [calendar](#) on the NTAS website for the latest updates to archeological events!

Fort Worth Westerners Zoom Programs

Third Tuesday of the Month

Zoom

If you are not a FW Westerner member, click [here](#) to request guest access to the Zoom meetings.

November 18 - *Buffalo Hunting and Dodge City* with Keith Wondra

SMU Lab Days

9am-5pm, Nov 29, 2025

Dallas, TX

Assist in organizing, cataloging, and re-bagging artifacts from the 1971/1972 TAS Field Schools. For more information or to sign-up, contact [Brian Luetchford](#). See page 5 of the March 2025 newsletter for some highlights from a recent SMU Lab Day.

Plano Archeology Fair

9am-3pm November 15, 2025

Plano, TX

NTAS will be at the Plano Archeology Fair at the Plano Conservancy from 9am-3pm on Saturday, November 15th. If you're interested in participating, please contact [Allen Rutherford](#).

31st East Texas Archeological Conference

9am-4pm, February 28, 2026

Tyler, TX

The ETAC is hosted annually to bring together people interested in the archaeology and cultural heritage of east Texas. Registration (\$20) begins at 8:30. **Hotel:** Homewood Suites, 3104 Golden Road, Tyler, TX. **Call for Papers:** Topics should be related to the prehistoric and historic archeology of east Texas. Presentations will be 20 minutes long and should present original research. Deadline for submission is December 1, 2025. Titles and abstracts (100 words) and queries can be emailed to tguderjan@uttyler.edu.

Zooarcheology & Osteology TAS Academy

February 28-March 1, 2026

Houston, TX

This TAS Academy offers classroom and hands-on laboratory sessions that introduce the identification, analysis, and interpretation of archeological animal and human skeletal remains.

Rock Art Academy

March 21-22, 2026

El Paso, TX

This Academy explores regional rock art archeological sites, Mogollon archeological sites, and how investigators use this information to interpret the human and natural histories of an area.

Archeology 101 Academy

April 10-12, 2026

San Angelo, TX

This three-day TAS Academy teaches participants about site identification, recording and proper excavation techniques in the field of archeology. Classroom lectures address the larger field of archeology to help orient new learners with respect to goals, methods, and concepts. Field sessions are also included.

Mark Your Calendar - 2025 Holiday Party Details

Saturday, December 6, 5:30pm, in the home of Tommy and Cyndi Standefer (120 Denver Trail Court, Azle, TX 76020 — overflow parking is available next door at the dentist office and clinic).

Please RSVP to Tommy 817-781-9076.

Tommy and Cyndi will provide dinner (Mexican Stack-Up), picante sauce and chips, iced tea, coffee, soft drinks. Guests can bring appetizers, desserts, and adult beverages of their choice. Guests should also bring a wrapped gift of their choice to exchange with others during the party.

Celebrating Texas Archeology Month at the Grand Prairie Farmers Market

Charlene Erwin

NTAS celebrated Texas Archeology Month at the Grand Prairie Farmers Market on October 18th. This was our second year to visit and talk about all things archeological with the folks in Grand Prairie. Thanks to Jimmy Barrera, Gen Freix, Katrina Nuncio, Bill Perdue, and Tim Sullivan for making this event so successful. Special thanks to NTAS President Alexandra Younger for her assistance in coordinating the application process with the Farmers Market. Thanks also to the members of the Anthropology Club at the University of Texas at Arlington, both for their support in publicizing the TAM event on campus and for personally coming out to visit with us at the event.

We gave away 97 pinch pot kits! The brochures from the Texas Historical Commission and the bookmarks from the Texas Beyond History website were also much in demand. The NTAS artifact demonstration kit, created and assembled by Jimmy Barrera, with the assistance of Dr. Matt Boulanger at Southern Methodist University, provided a bunch of fun “hands-on, please touch” moments for students and parents. By promoting the many opportunities to study archeology at the TAS Field School, and discuss the various scholarship programs from NTAS and TAS, we were able to demonstrate that real-time archeological experiences are available throughout Texas for students. Of course, we also talked about the NTAS website, our monthly meetings, and all the other wonderful ways to learn more about archeology by joining NTAS.

Overall, it was a fun morning and a great way to celebrate Texas Archeology Month. See you next year!

Gen Freix, Bill Perdue, Tim Sullivan, Charlene Erwin, and Katrina Nuncio at the Grand Prairie Farmers Market.

Photo Courtesy of Bill Perdue.



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 future volumes of the 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 submission year. For submissions and inquiries regarding the journal, please contact the [Publications Editor](#). The current volume (2024) is available digitally to members by logging in [here](#). Digital copies of Volume 1 and Volume 2 are available to the public [here](#), and physical copies of all volumes are available for purchase on [Amazon](#).

North Texas Archeological Society (NTAS) Membership Application Form

(renew online by clicking above)

Name(s) _____

Address _____ Phone _____

City\State\Zip _____ Email _____

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

Choose One:

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

Choose One:

- New*
- *New memberships paid for in Oct-Dec include membership for the following year.
- Renewal

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: \$ _____

Where should your donation go? General Fund Memorial Scholarship Fund BaahKu Project

Would you like to remain anonymous? Yes No

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!

Welcome, New Members!

Jennifer Bankston
Janet Barritt
Roger Barritt
Laura Cohen
Allison Dejnozka
Autumn Gallegos
Andrew Goebel
Thomas Goodwin
Hasti Mirkia

Gareth Nutt
Jon Paugh
Arash Sangari
Darian Sangari
Lily Sangari
Zaira Vidrio

Donors

Ken Lawrence - *NTAS Memorial Scholarship Fund*
Jimmy Barrera - *Texas Beyond History Campaign*

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 scholarships are available to ANYONE who applies for TAS Events, NTAS Events, or accredited field schools in the United States.

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

NTAS - Preserving the Past for the Future

Executive Committee

Alexandra Younger
President

Gwen Durrant
Treasurer

Charlene Erwin
Historian

Stephen Lowe
Vice President

Thomas Standefer
Secretary

Elizabeth Bittner
Internet Chair

Brian Luetchford
Vice President of Projects

Allen Rutherford
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.

December Newsletter: November 28
January Newsletter: December 25
February Newsletter: January 29

March Newsletter: February 26
April Newsletter: March 26
May Newsletter: April 30

All material published in the newsletter or other publications of the North Texas Archeological Society (NTAS), or on the NTAS website becomes the copyrighted property of NTAS.