



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

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

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Benchmark

Volume 39, Issue 6

July 2025

President's Message

I hope that everyone had a fantastic June and holiday. We are looking forward to the second half of 2025 and the opportunities that are lined up. It sounds like the TAS Field School was a huge success and many very cool sites were documented. Several of our NTAS members attended the field school. Congratulations to Simon Jerden who received an NTAS scholarship to attend and also to Marisa Harris who received an NTAS scholarship toward the Crow Canyon CRM Field School currently in session.

Monthly archeological opportunities will continue to be offered to our members: investigations at the Joe Reed site with Dana Ritchie and SMU archeological laboratory work. Those dates and points of contact are always enclosed in the newsletter and email blasts. If you have not had the opportunity to join, we invite you to fulfill your curiosity. No experience necessary.

We are stacked with speakers this season, beginning with our July presenter, Kim Cox who will discuss current research in rock art studies in archeology and will demonstrate that investigations in Texas are leading the field. Please



come out next Thursday to hear him present on this thrilling topic.

Looking ahead, volunteer opportunities are available to members, particularly for Texas Archeology Month (October). It always sneaks up on us. Each year we get together to assemble pinch pot kits, which are a common toolset in public archeology events to stimulate young people to engage in archeological concepts, and are very easy to assemble with materials donated by THC. To join us Saturday, September 6 in Fort Worth, reach out to our Publications Editor, [Molly Hall](#).

October 18 NTAS will be posted up at the Grand Prairie Farmer's Market conducting our usual low-

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For general inquiries, please contact info@ntxas.org

North Texas Archeological Society

key public demos and bringing archeology to the public. Please reach out to [Charlene Erwin](#) to assist. These are comfortable and casual forums to share with folks what we do and that archeology is accessible to everyone. It's kind of our thing. Following is the annual Denton Dig-It which will be held on **November 1** in Denton. This all-day event consists of an elevated level of demonstrations, topics, and hands-on activities that reach a wide audience. It is held in conjunction with the Denton Farmer's Market and the county historical commission will generally feed volunteers lunch. If you are interested in participating in this heavily attended event, please contact [Gen Freix](#) for more information.

Registration will soon be open for the [TAS Annual Meeting](#) in McAllen. A call for papers, posters, and symposia has been announced. NTAS offers scholarships for the annual meeting and the applications are open to anyone who would like to [apply](#). It's never too early to apply!

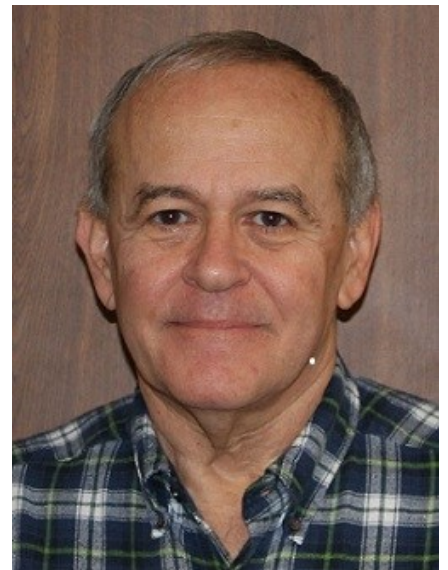
The July 10th 2025 monthly meeting will be a hybrid meeting (in person and via Zoom) held in our usual meeting room on the University of North Texas Health Science Center (UNTHSC) campus in the Research & Education Building, Room 114 (see page 3 for map). The meeting will start at 7:00 pm and we look forward to seeing you in person at the UNTHSC or on Zoom for the hybrid meeting.

Alexandra Younger

July Speaker: Kim Cox

Rock Art Studies in the Ascendancy: The Unlikely Story of How a Little Regarded Subdiscipline Went Mainstream

Within the past ten years, the archaeological subdiscipline of rock art studies has undergone major changes that have fundamentally changed our understanding of why prehistoric populations drew pictures on rock canvasses. Texas archaeologists have led the nation in this regard, pioneering innovative techniques and interpretive studies that have established a new paradigm. This talk is about the enormous impact of the last ten years and why the study of rock art has become so important to the field of American archaeology.



Kim Cox has directed or participated in archaeological field work in Texas, New Mexico, Belize, and Honduras since 1971. He worked with Shumla on recording and analyzing the White Shaman rock art site from 2006-2016. He has been a director of The Maya Research Program, Blue Creek, Belize since 1991, and in 1997 he co-founded Youth Odyssey, Inc. where he helped develop the initial goals and programs dealing with extreme outdoor education for at-risk youths.

Kim has made multiple contributions to the scholarly literature of rock art including contributions to the book [The White Shaman Mural: An Enduring Mythological Narrative](#) published in 2016 by the University of Texas Press.

In addition to his archaeological work, he is an attorney focusing on business and real estate law.

News from the NTAS Executive Committee

The NTAS Executive Committee (EC) meetings (typically held two Tuesdays before the monthly meetings) are open to the membership, and minutes from the meetings can be obtained from the President or Secretary.

During the June 3, 2025 EC meeting, Alexandra Younger (President) appointed Elizabeth Bittner to the vacant Internet Chair position.

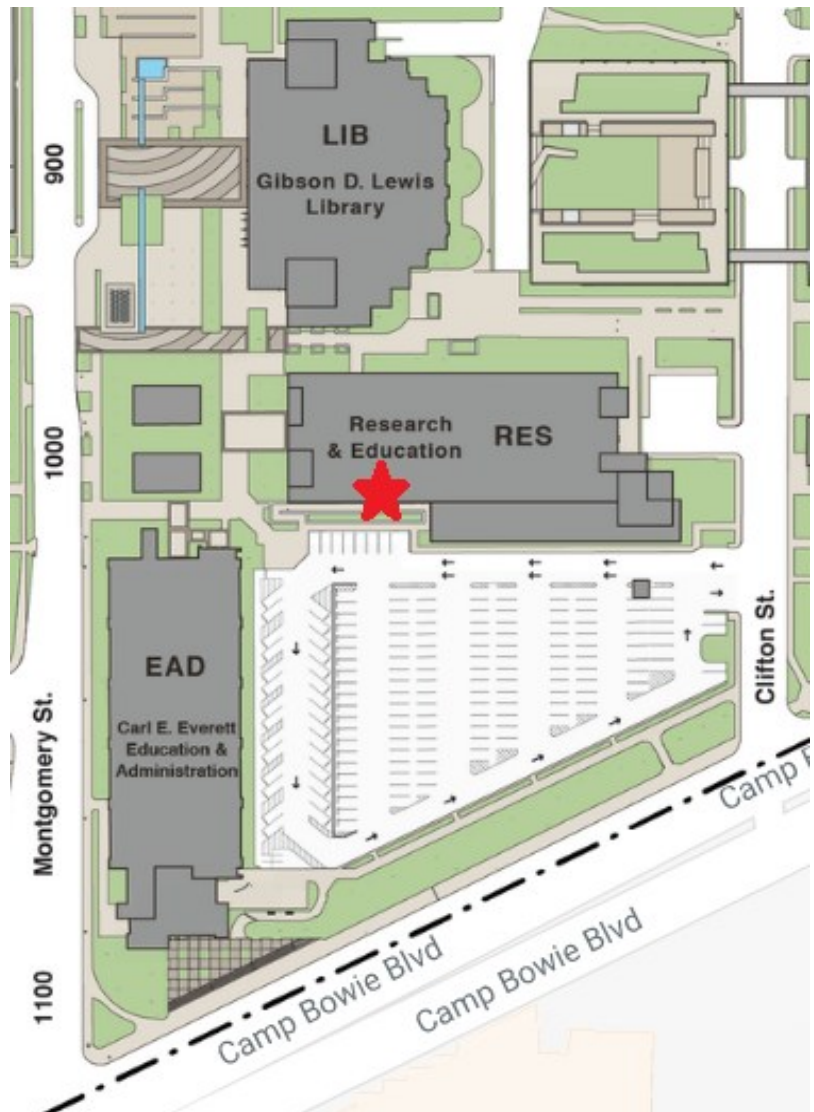
The following item passed unanimously via vote during the interim between the June 3 and July 1, 2025 EC Meetings.

- The purchase of a 10x10' branded canopy for \$455.93. Approximately \$247 were covered by remaining Humanities TX mini grant funds and \$209 by NTAS funds.

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.



One Person's Experience at TAS Field School 2025, Milam County, Texas

Thomas Standefer

Although this was only my second Field School, from what I understand, this year's plan was somewhat different than most years. The majority of our work was survey, with only around 15-20% of the workforce doing excavation. Some of our sites were pre-historic, some historic, and some blended. Some were surveyed primarily by metal detector, others almost exclusively through shovel testing. The crew I was fortunate to be a part of was assigned a shovel test around a known pre-historic site. The expectation as I understood it going into our week, was that this was a late pre-historic site, probably limited to an acre or less, with a possible scattering of artifacts nearby the prime area where the youth group was excavating.

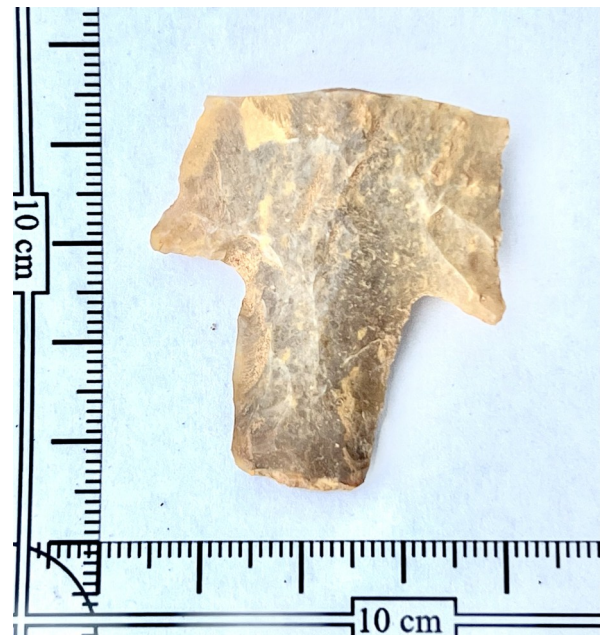


Our first day, Saturday, was spent in the meeting room with instruction on the proper documentation and forms we would be using during our shovel test survey. Our holes were to be dug to a depth of 80cm or to a clay or rock base whichever we reached first. We were to record this in four zones; 0-20cm-1, 20-40cm-2, 40-60cm-3, 60-80cm-4.

We began day two, approximately 170 meters south of the youth group with the plan to do a 30 meter grid until one hole was positive and then to shift to 15 meter spacing, where two negative holes to each north, south, east, and west direction would allow us to return to our 30 meter grid. This plan fell apart almost immediately with the discovery of a broken point on our very first hole, followed by positives 15 meters to the south and west of the first. This brought some excitement to the crew, though this excitement proved to be a bit premature as these were the only positive holes out of the 11 holes we completed on day one.

Early on day two we got back on track with a nice chert flake followed by two more positive holes to the north and two more to the east. All of our positives thus far were located within 30-40 meters of the edge of a steep drop off, as the location of our site is at the top and end of a high ridge that rises approximately 150 meters above the surrounding Little River bottomland. Any test holes near the edge of the bluff where the slope begins to fall fairly steeply were negative, possibly due to erosion. The test holes we dug inland from the ridge, on a much less noticeable incline, were negative as well. As one might expect, the majority of positive holes were in the area where the ground was relatively flat, and close enough to the edge to enjoy whatever breeze might be available. Day two ended with five positive holes out of 23 dug by our 4 two-person teams.

On day three, the excitement returned as 7 of the 18 holes we dug were positive. Additionally, two approximate 1 me-



ter high and 5 meters in diameter mounds were discovered. Speculation began almost immediately as to the origin of these mounds.

On day four, our crew arrived a bit weary from the persistent humidity of the week, yet excited, as we were getting nearer to the point of the central plateau of this ridge—the area most likely to hold signs of earlier habitation. And we were not disappointed. Of the 16 holes we completed, 11 were positive; this included several holes with positives on all levels, and one hole that we extended below the 80cm as flakes were continuing to be



discovered all the way to the clay base that was more than 80cm below the surface. Additionally, in the hole immediately south of 80+cm hole, another broken point or blade was found that was estimated to be Middle-Archaic, much older than the early historic period artifacts we expected to be found in this area. Add to this the fact that this Middle-Archaic point was found in the 30-40cm range, while we were finding



flakes twice that deep in flat, undisturbed soil, on top of a ridge where flooding and sedimentation have not occurred leads one to wonder just how long this site has been used by humans.

On day five, all but three of the 21 holes we dug were positive, some with chert found in all levels, and some with a dozen or more pieces in a single hole. We also discovered two likely hearths, and though we did not collect or record burnt sandstone pieces, a great number were found. We did attempt expanding our search both west and south, both directions parallel to the edge of the bluff; however, in both cases, multiple crew members were attacked by aggressive wasps, stung several times, and at least one member continues to suffer from this attack! I am not sure what, if anything to make of these attacks, both at the extreme ends of our search area. Perhaps the spirits were protecting sites even more revealing than those we discovered?

In all, for the week, our crew completed 110 holes, and recorded over 300 objects, including two broken points/blades, several obvious tools, and a bit of charcoal.

As I understand it, we began the week trying to identify the boundary of what was expected to be a late pre-historic or possibly even historic Native American camp covering possibly as much as 1/2 acre. What we learned was that this was a popular camping/meeting site, visited repeatedly, century after century, for possibly thousands of years and covering at least 6 acres.

From the Archives

Charlene Erwin

Since the founding of Tarrant County Archeological Society (TCAS) in 1955, known as the North Texas Archeological Society (NTAS) since 2019, one of our collective strengths has been the dedicated members who have attended our monthly meetings, supported the archeological outreach opportunities in North Texas, and supported the activities of the Texas Archeological Society (TAS). Jerry and Deana Grubis attended their first TAS field school in 1990, and are life time members of TCAS/NTAS. Mike Shannon profiled the couple in the [TCAS Benchmark](#), Vol. 26, No. 2, 2012, which is now available online as part of the MavMatrix NTAS archives. Jerry is famous for his screens, as well as the excavation unit shades/covers that were used at RD66 at the Palo Duro Canyon field school. Deana has excavated and also served as part of the TAS FS lab crews for many years. NTAS, one of the most active archeological societies in Texas, is always well represented at the TAS FS, and Jerry and Deana have each made significant contributions each time they participated. Thanks to Deana for sharing a few of their memories of those early years at FS.



Deana Grubis

Jerry and I attended our first archeology field school in 1990 at Utopia. There are two reasons we became interested. As a teacher I was encouraged to get hours of educational workshops and Texas Archeology had a program to do that in archeology. The second reason was Laurie and Julia Moseley were members of the TAS and inspired us to join with all the stories they told of their years of attending field schools.

At that Utopia Field School I worked at the Blue Hole Site. It seemed like we were finding 10 to 20 points in every 10 cm level. I was excited even as I carried large heavy buckets of dirt to the screening area. Jerry worked at another site with Bill and Jean Parnell where they were not finding anything. He was not excited. Then on Thursday he found a large point with two notches. No one had ever seen one like it and everyone got excited.

In fact, they were so excited they had the local news and photographers come see it. Then Thomas Hester got down in the hole and acted like he was finding the point and held it up for all to see. When the picture was published you could see Jerry's boots at the top of the hole where he was standing. So much for fame and glory. However, it did get him interested in going again to field schools.

The next two field schools we attended were at Ida Bell, Oklahoma. Both years it rained so much that many left and went home early. One night we had to shelter in the barns because of the threat of a tornado. The dig was across the Red River in Texas. Every day the holes had to have the water drained out before we could dig. Our shoes stayed wet and muddy all week.

There was so much rain in front of the food trailer that wooden pallets were placed along the walkway so we could get our food. Some humorous person made a small sign that said "Lake Ida Bell" and placed a tiny boat in front of it. As miserable as it was, we had a lot of stories to tell about both those years.

We have attended most of the field schools since then. Also, we were invited to a dig in New Mexico and had many adventures there through the years. As we have gotten older, we don't do so well at digging. That is Jerry's favorite thing to do. Actually, the name Grubis means digger of holes (or well digger).

Learning about archeology and finding artifacts is wonderful and interesting, but the memories and camaraderie with fellow campers are some of the best things about attending an archeology field school. We made many friends through the years and could write a book about the funny and interesting events that happened.



Deana and Jerry Grubis (courtesy of the [NTAS Website Photo Gallery](#)).

Doss Summer Camp - Digging Detectives



Collage of NTAS members working with kids at the Doss Summer Camp. Photos Courtesy of Susan Everett.



Update Your Calendar - NTAS Monthly Meeting Speakers

August 14: Christopher Ringstaff (Buttermilk Creek Ranch Sites)
September 11: Ken Lawrence (Rio Grande Radio Carbon Dating)

Archeological Events & Opportunities

Please see the [calendar](#) on the NTAS website for the latest updates to archaeological 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.

July 15 - *Exploits of the High Five Gang* with Doug Hocking

August 19 - *The Texas Calaboose and Other Forgotten Jails* with William E. Moore

September 16 - *Fort Worth Mexican American History* with Peter Martinez

October 21 - *Sand Creek Massacre* with Ray Sumner

November 18 - *Buffalo Bone Trade* with Keith Wondra

Joe Reed Site Excavation Day

July 20, 2025

Parker County, TX

See pages 8-9 of the February 2024 Newsletter for details on this excavation opportunity. Contact [Dana Ritchie](#) if you are interested in participating.

SMU Lab Days

9am-5pm, July 26, 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 and Page 3 of the May 2025 newsletter for how this activity made it all the way to the 2025 Society for American Archaeology Annual Meeting in Denver!

Pinch-Pot Kit Making Session I

9am-12pm, September 6, 2025

Fort Worth, TX

It's pinch-pot kit making season! NTAS received materials from the Texas Historical Commission to make pinch-pot kits to hand out (typically to kids) during the numerous Texas Archeology Month (TAM) events in which NTAS is participating. NTAS will need to make 1,400 kits (if not more!) to be handed out by NTAS members this year. The September 6th session will take place at the **Fort Worth Nature Center & Refuge**. **RSVP is required for this event.** Please let [Molly Hall](#) know if you plan to attend. She will send out exact location details closer to the date of the event.

Pinch-Pot Kit Making Session II

September 2025 (exact date TBD)

Dallas, TX

In addition to the Fort Worth session (see above), there will be a Dallas session at **Southern Methodist University**. The exact date will be decided soon and will likely correlate with an SMU lab day (see Page above). Please let [Molly Hall](#) know if you plan to attend. She will send out exact location details closer to the date of the event.

Texas Archeological Society 96th Annual Meeting**October 10-12, 2025**

McAllen, TX

In 2025, the TAS Annual Meeting will be held in McAllen and hosted by the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley. The meeting will be held at the Embassy Suites by Hilton McAllen Convention Center.

Grand Prairie Farmers Market**8am-1pm, October 18, 2025**

Grand Prairie, TX

Join us on October 18 at the Grand Prairie Farmer's Market to help talk to members of the public about archeology. The connections we make at events like this help people learn about archeology and the individuals with whom we speak often end up joining a society. Please reach out to [Charlene Erwin](#) to assist.

National Cattle Trails Conference**October 24-25, 2025**

Cleburne, TX

Get ready for an unforgettable experience at the 2025 National Cattle Trails Conference hosted by the Outdoor Chisholm Trail Museum! Join the Fort Worth Westerners as they celebrate the rich history of cattle trails featuring organizations like the International Chisholm Trail Association, Western Cattle Trail Association, Great Western Cattle Trail, Shawnee Cattle Trail, and the Goodnight-Loving Trail.

Denton Dig It!**November 1, 2025**

Denton, TX

Denton Dig It! is an event with lots of stimulating topics and demonstrations from various volunteer organizations and professional archeologists aimed at engaging the public. NTAS plays a central role with our members supervising young people learning to excavate and sharing NTAS programs with potential new members. Please contact [Gen Freix](#) for more information.

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!

Timothy Adcock	Gary Hayden
Dana Baggott	Laura Short
Tara Dahl	Michelle and Vince Villafranca
Rebecca Dalrymple	Christie Wilson
Irene Flores	

Donors

Mika Shannon — *Memorial Scholarship Fund*
 Anonymous — *Memorial Scholarship Fund*

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 now 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.

August Newsletter: July 31

September Newsletter: August 28

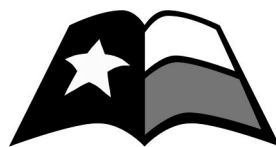
October Newsletter: September 25

November Newsletter: October 30

December Newsletter: November 28

January Newsletter: December 25

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Humanities Texas



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