

Benchmark

Volume 35, Issue 1

January 2021

The **NORTH TEXAS ARCHEOLOGICAL SOCIETY (NTAS)** meeting for **January** will be **on Zoom**.

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

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President's Message

Happy New Year and Welcome to 2021! Unfortunately, we had to cancel the annual NTAS Christmas party last month but now we are in the long-awaited 2021! Our hostess for the past several years, Paula Vastine, was just as disappointed as everyone else that we had to cancel the party. And along these lines the NTAS monthly meetings continue to be held virtually via Zoom until the Executive Committee decides it is safe to resume in person meetings. January brings more opportunity to work on the TxDOT excavations in Bolivar, Denton County. If you have not had the chance to participate, please do as the excavations are supposed to complete this month. Watch the newsletter and emails for upcoming dates on this field work opportunity. This month's newsletter features an article on the exciting Bolivar excavations and NTAS volunteer participation.

Don't forget to register for one of the upcoming TAS Academies. The Ceramics Academy is going to be held virtually February 20-21, the Archeology 101 Academy virtually March 13-14 with hands-on experience during the half day of excavation on your choice of March 20th or 21st, and the Archeobotany Academy will be held virtually April 24-25. This the first time TAS has held any academies virtually and I know great effort has gone



into these events to ensure that participants have fun and learn a lot of archeological information for each academy. Each academy provides an incredible manual, which is full of great information and references for each topic, and both Ceramics and Archeobotany are providing kits so that virtual participants receive hands-on experience! The TAS Academies are a great bargain and consistently taught by top-notch instructors. If interested in having your TAS membership cost and academy registration fee covered please consider applying for an NTAS scholarship or TAS scholarship, these are for both students and non-students. Here is the NTAS link for scholarship applications: <https://ntxas.org/scholarships> and here is the

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www.NTXAS.org

info@ntxas.org

President's Message

Continued from Page 1

TAS link for 2021 academy details including scholarships: <https://www.txarch.org/tas-academies>

Over the past month the NTAS website has been updated to include information about the 2021 monthly Guest Speakers, a blurb about volunteer opportunity at the TxDOT excavations in Bolivar, and other details. Check it out here: <https://ntxas.org/>. The NTAS Internet Chair, Annaliese Sonntag, created our new NTAS YouTube channel to host recordings of monthly meetings. Many thanks to Annaliese for her efforts to ensure we are keeping up out there online and in social media, it is a lot of effort behind the scenes!

As you can see there will be ample opportunity to participate in archeology during the first quarter whether from the comfort of home or out getting your hands in the dirt! Our tradition of having great monthly speakers continues as Dr. Charles Frederick will address our group at January's meeting. Dr. Frederick's research focuses on mima mounds (or pimple mounds) and what is known about the context and integrity of archeology found within these features. It is sure to be an interesting talk so hope to see you there on the 14th!

Jimmy Barrera

Notes from the Editor

Over the last year (primarily thanks to most of us being relatively isolated due to the pandemic), the newsletter has featured a stupendous amount of content from members. I, along with the rest of the NTAS Executive Committee, would love to continue to see that sort of content fill our newsletter. We are privileged that our newsletter is primarily distributed digitally and, therefore, we have "space" for as many quality entries as we receive.

We like to include a variety of content. The following are just some ideas of the types of things that **YOU** could contribute:

- Highlights from NTAS volunteer opportunities. This could simply be photographs, but text describing your experience to the other NTAS members would be appreciated as well.
- Summaries of archaeological research and field projects that you are working on.
- Announcements and internet links to events, exhibits, media, and publications that would be of interest to the membership
- Displays of archeology-related skills such as flintknapping, trowel making, basket making, etc.

Moving forward, there will be a section near the end of the newsletter with the monthly deadlines for newsletter submissions. Not to fear — if you miss a deadline, I will happily collect entries for use in upcoming newsletters, no matter how early they are submitted! We've also developed a copyright statement that will appear in the newsletters henceforth (and can be seen on page 11 of this newsletter), and official NTAS submission guidelines will (hopefully) be established sometime this year.

Correction: The December 2020 newsletter mistakenly omitted the author of the article entitled, "Preservation Dallas Education Award to Tim Sullivan." This was written by Tim Sullivan.

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.

January Speaker: Charles Frederick

Mima (Pimple) Mounds in Texas

Some thoughts on the context and integrity of prehistoric occupations that lie within

Mounds of mystery. Although the origins of mima mounds are still debated, the context and integrity of cultural material found within them is generally poor. This is in large part due to bioturbation by gophers, that are currently thought by many to be the architects of these enigmatic mounds. Recent fieldwork in coastal and northeast Texas on sites found in mima mounds has yielded some new observations on human use of these microrelief landforms. Although many consider these features to be of recent age, it is apparent in some landscapes that these mounds are ancient features that have stood proud since Paleoindian times and perhaps much longer. Furthermore, many of these features found in forested landscapes are relict landforms, no longer forming today, and this change in formation status has implications for the context of the debris left by past populations who once lived upon their crests. This talk will explore the weird world of mima mounds, ideas on how they form, and how spatially and temporally dynamic vegetation change may dramatically affect the context of prehistoric materials left upon their surface.



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 Is on YouTube!

Check out the brand new NTAS YouTube channel where three of our 2020 programs can now be viewed and where future presentations will be stored.

To access the NTAS You Tube channel, just click on the link below:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UChDKM9I3UdiYizPyG3duohQ/featured>

Update Your Calendar - NTAS Monthly Meeting Speakers

February 11th: Dr. Catrina Banks Whitley

March 11th: Josh Haefner

April 8th: Jack Johnson

NTAS (& TCAS) Christmases Past

Normally, the January newsletter would be full of photos of the previous month's annual Christmas party. Because we opted to forego 2020's party, Gen Freix suggested we display some photos from happier, non-COVID times and contributed several pictures to share with you all.



Left: Max Ratheall and Ona B. Reed; Right: Glynn Osburn, Kathleen Hughes, Chris Meis, and Jim Blanton with Art and Diane Tawater in the background.



Left: Joe Nuncio and Tim Whitley; Center: Mike Shannon; Right: Catrina Whitley and Kathleen Hughes

Archeology Events & Announcements

Volunteer to Help Screen on the TxDOT Bolivar Project

January 5-15, 2021

Contributed by Catrina Whitley

Cox/McLain Archeologists hope to return to work on January 5 and work for 10 straight days, which puts them there over the weekend of Jan 9th and 10th. Catrina Whitley will try to organize a volunteer day on the 10th. In the meantime, if you are available to help us screen dirt on any weekday(s) between January 5 and January 15, please let Catrina know.

Fort Worth Westerners International Meeting

January 19, 2021

Contributed by James Everett

On January 19 at 7pm, Tom Ashmore will present a program on "The Butterfield Overland Mail's Horsehead Crossing Station" for the Fort Worth Westerners International meeting. The Zoom meeting begins at 7:00 pm. If you are interested in participating in this Zoom meeting, please contact James Everett (jce1542@gmail.com). Tom spent 21 years in the Air Force as a special intelligence analyst and he has worked as a contractor teaching intelligence skills for the Air Force Intelligence School at Goodfellow AFB, Texas. As a member of the Concho Valley and Iraan Archeological Societies he headed up archeological investigations of Butterfield's Overland Mail's Johnson's Station in Irion County, Grape Creek Station in Coke County and Horsehead Crossing Station in Crane County. He also led investigations of Paint Rock 1800s Historic Camp Sites in Concho County, Tower Hill Military Lookout in Sterling County and ancient rock shelters in the Lower Pecos region of Texas. He completed a book in 2019 on his Butterfield Trail investigations, 'The Butterfield Trail Through The Concho Valley And West Texas.' He is a member of the Iraan Archeological Society and Texas Archeological Society and has written numerous reports for the Southwest Federation of Archeological Societies.

TAS Ceramics Academy: The Stories Found in Pottery

February 20-21, 2021

Contributed by Jimmy Barrera

An exciting academy to be held VIRTUALLY via Zoom, this academy will introduce the importance of archeological ceramics in terms of technology, chronology, dating, trade, subsistence, and cultural identity. Definitions and origins of ceramics, decoration and how pottery was embellished, sherd analysis and how pottery is classified and typed, and interpretations including what we can learn from pottery analysis. Each participant in the Ceramics Academy will receive an excellent class manual and they will receive a KIT with materials for hands-on exercises that will be virtually instructed such as making pottery and identifying vessel types, age, and firing. *Instructors: Marybeth Tomka, Dr. Chris Lintz, and Rebecca Shelton.*

Registration deadline: February 6, 2021

For more details: <https://www.txarch.org/academy01>

TAS Archeology 101 Academy

March 13-14, 2021

Half day of excavation - March 20 or 21, 2021

Contributed by Jimmy Barrera

Another exciting 2021 TAS Academy is the Archeology 101 Academy. Class instruction for this academy will be held VIRTUAL via Zoom, with a hands-on field component scheduled to be held at San Felipe de Austin State Historic Site, located in the town of San Felipe, Texas. This academy provides background information on the archeology of the state and how to identify archeological sites, both pre-European and historic in nature. Instructions are provided for accurate site recording that allows archeologists to assess the importance and significance of a site or sites, and contribute to the synthesis of the state's cultural heritage. *Lead Instructor: Dr. Jon Lohse; Principal Investigator for field excavations: Dr. Sarah Chesney*

Registration deadline is February 27, 2021.

For more details: <https://www.txarch.org/academy02>

Archeology Events & Announcements *(continued)*

Kimbell Art Museum presents Queen Nefertari's Egypt through March 14, 2021

Contributed by Catrina Whitley

Finally – an archaeological exhibit to go see! Unfortunately, we cannot go as a group for a NTAS outing, but it will be a great excursion on your own. It is an amazing exhibit. My family checked out the exhibit ourselves to see about the COVID protocols and wait times.

Nefertari was the favorite wife of Ramesses II (reigned 1279-1213 BCE) and was one of the most celebrated queens of ancient Egypt. She was educated and could read and write hieroglyphs. All of the works in the exhibit are from the Museo Egizio in Turin, Italy.

As the Kimbell describes on their website, the exhibition celebrates Nefertari and many other powerful royal women from the New Kingdom period and brings them to life through some 230 exceptional treasures. The exhibit includes reconstructions of Nefertari's tomb, explores the life of the women in the royal household and the status and rights of women in Egypt, the artisan village of Dier el-Medina, the rituals of death, and much more.

The Kimbell Art Museum is located in Fort Worth and has very strict COVID protocols to keep everyone safe. They are limiting the number of people in the exhibit and the wait can be up to two hours, but the museum will not rush you while you are inside the exhibit so you will have plenty of time to explore, read everything, stand with your face practically pressed against the glass to see the tiny details, and have docents letting you know to squeeze around the back side of the case to see the hieroglyphs and painting on the back of the statues.

Tickets are available on their website at <https://www.kimbellart.org/exhibition/queen-nefertaris-egypt>

The Museum is open Tuesday through Sunday. Half-price admission to special exhibitions on Tuesdays from 10 am–5 pm and Fridays from 5–8 pm; tickets have to be purchased at the museum. Tickets can be bought in advance on all other days.

Archeobotany Academy: An Introduction to Archeobotany April 24-25, 2021

Contributed by Jimmy Barrera

The 2021 TAS Archeobotany Academy will be offered VIRTUALLY via Zoom with an emphasis on Caddo ancestors and the plant species of east Texas. The academy will introduce participants to how archeologists understand the relationships between people and plants in the past. The recovery and analysis of macroremains (actual bits of plants), pollen, phytoliths, and chemical residues from archeological sites will be discussed in detail with examples from East Texas and the Ozarks. The wealth of information that can be gained from replication of ancient technologies will also be covered, as will the value of historical accounts, traditional stories, memories, and the ancestral knowledge held by modern Native people.

Lead Instructor: Dr. Leslie Bush (Macrobotanical Analysis)

Registration deadline is April 10, 2021.

For more details: <https://www.txarch.org/academy03>

TAS Academy Scholarships Available

The Texas Archeological Society is offering 3 academies next year. The Archeobotany and Ceramics academies will be virtual and the Archeology 101 Academy will have a virtual classroom portion with a hands-on day of excavation. See details about the academies on pages 5-6 of this newsletter.

NTAS offers scholarships that can be used for these academies (or other TAS educational events). For details, please visit: <https://ntxas.org/scholarships>

In recent years, the NTAS scholarships have had very few applicants. This means that there is a fabulous opportunity for multiple, deserving people to get scholarships. If you are not qualified to apply for a scholarship, please pass the word along to someone who is.

Frank Sprague Memorial

Bryan Jameson

Frank Sprague June 3, 1940 – December 3, 2020

The passing of Frank Howard Sprague comes with great sadness and an unmistakable sense of loss to all of us who knew him. He is survived by his wife, Evelyn, two children – Howard Sprague and his wife Lisa of Hamilton, and Kathy Sprague Lovelace and her husband Tommy of Belton and their children, John, Clay and Lance Sprague and Kallie and Garrett Lovelace. After receiving a degree in Wildlife Management from Texas A&M University in 1963, Frank worked as a wildlife biologist with the USDA Conservation Service. Frank worked at several locations throughout Texas, but his longest tenure was as a State Biologist in Temple. After his retirement in 1995, he and Evelyn moved to Hamilton. He enjoyed hunting, fishing, shooting sports, golf, and reading. He was an active member of the First Methodist Church in Hamilton.

Frank loved Texas history and he shared that love with his children and his grandchildren. His library was filled with many books on Texas history and Native American culture. He also had a deep concern for the preservation of the cultural heritage of Texas, as well as in Hamilton County, where he served as a Commissioner for the Hamilton County Historical Commission. With the discovery of two archeological sites on his property, Frank joined the Tarrant County Archeological Society which led to a longtime friendship with many of our members. Frank also joined the Texas Archeological Society and later on, he became a member of the Texas Archeological Stewardship Network of the Texas Historical Commission, Archeology Division.

Frank's association with the Texas Historical Commission (THC) and the Tarrant County Archeological Society started in June of 1997. After several days of heavy rainfall, Frank was walking along the steep riverbank of the Leon River that cuts through his property and to his surprise, he observed artifacts eroding out of the cutbank of the river and realized that ancient people in the prehistoric past had made this stretch of the river their home. He knew that the cutting action of the river would continue to destroy the site, so he contacted the THC for information on how best to preserve it. After an initial visit by Dan Potter, Brett Cruse, and Bryan Jameson, a trinomial number of 41HM43 was assigned to the site.

In May of 1998, test excavations were undertaken to evaluate this site for a possible State Archeological Landmark (SAL) designation. Under the direction of THC staff archeologist Dan Potter, THC Archeological Stewards and members of the Tarrant County Archeological Society tested the site and from these efforts, the site was nominated for an SAL designation.

In May of 2000, due to continued erosion of the site by the Leon River, Frank observed a basin-shaped rock-lined earth oven eroding out of the cut bank at the site and at his request, excavation of this feature was undertaken by Dan Potter, THC Archeological Stewards, and members of the Tarrant County Archeological Society.

A few years later, Mr. Sprague became aware of a second archeological site on his property and again reached out to the Tarrant County Archeological Society for assistance in investigating this site. In 2004, testing revealed a large archeological site and a trinomial number of 41HM54 was assigned to the site. Limited test excavations of the site were then accomplished by members of the Tarrant County Archeological Society which was followed up with four years of formal excavations by Baylor University under the direction of Carol Macaulay-Jameson.

Frank's friendship and hospitality to Carol, me, and anyone else whom he met was genuine, and he always made you feel welcome. He was a very good friend and he will be deeply missed.

Great Experience Volunteering in Bolivar on TxDOT Excavation!

Jimmy & Diamond Barrera

On December 4, we joined three other NTAS volunteers, another volunteer who is a direct descendent of Tom Cook (the blacksmith), Doug Boyd, and his archeological crew in Bolivar. Great weather, upbeat volunteers, and TxDOT archeologists were found across the site. Doug Boyd provided a world-class tour of the site, with many features to see including the blacksmith shop floor, possible forge, hotel well, hotel foundation, hotel fireplace, lightning rod from hotel, and more! Got our hands dirty screening soil from the archeological investigations and found a lot of material associated with Tom Cook's blacksmith shop and farrier business. We were able to participate in finding horseshoe nails, other square nails, hand forged bolts, a chisel (possible forge tool), rivets related to horse tackle, horse rasp likely for farrier work, anvil scale (lots of this!), window glass, and part of a historic syringe (maybe for horses or other livestock).

Doug Boyd, Dr. Kevin Hanselka, and the TxDOT team have provided NTAS with a tremendous opportunity to participate in a significant archeological investigation of our history right here in north Texas. Doug mentioned that at least 17 NTAS volunteers had participated to date with many of those folks coming out multiple times (wow)!! Great work NTAS volunteers!! We would like to extend our sincere thanks to Doug, Dr. Hanselka, and the TxDOT team for this opportunity as it means a lot to NTAS and has been very well received. At the time this newsletter is published there may still be opportunity to participate as a volunteer on this archeological investigation and we really encourage folks to get out there and have fun!



Sample of artifacts from site 41DN617, Tom Cook's Blacksmith Shop. Photo by J. Barrera



Horse rasp (left) and chisel (right) from site 41DN617, Tom Cook's Blacksmith Shop. Photos by J. Barrera

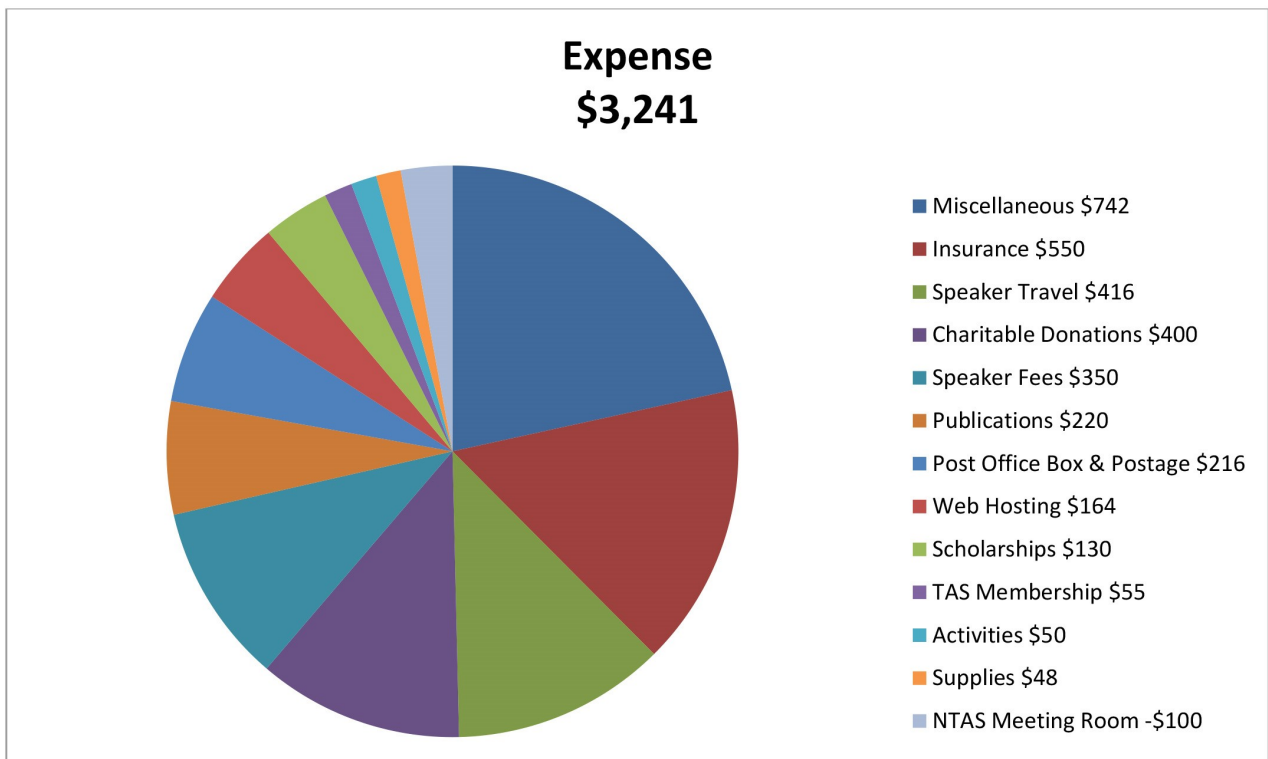
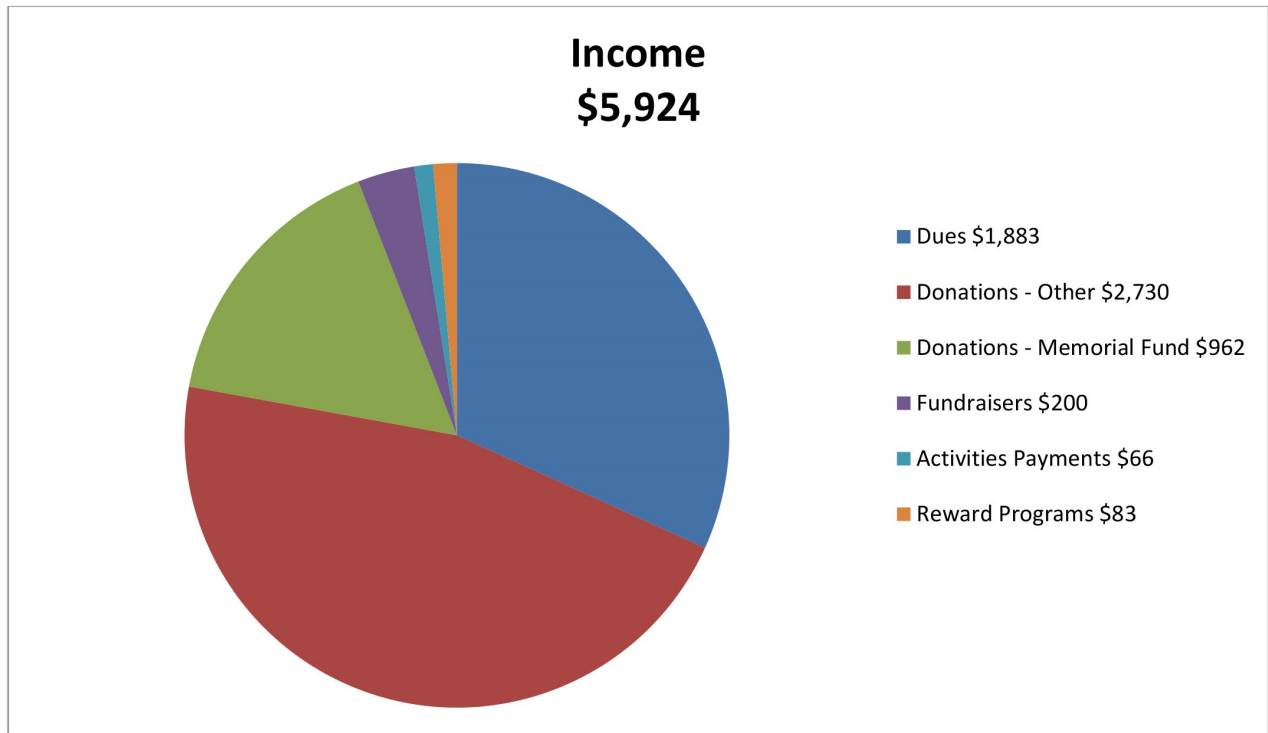


Hotel foundation
(above) and hotel well
(right) from site
41DN593,
Sartin Hotel.
Photos by J. Barrera



NTAS Income & Expense

January 1, 2020 – December 31, 2020



The Scholarship fund currently has \$2,257.

Data was provided by outgoing treasurer, Dana Ritchie, and is tentative as of December 30, 2020.

We Need *YOUR* Help!

Involve NTAS in Your Field, Lab, or Reporting Project

If you have a project and would like to involve experienced, skilled, and knowledgeable NTAS members, please let Catrina Whitley, Vice President of Projects, know. These can be field projects that are complete with need for lab and/or reporting assistance; ongoing field/lab/report projects where NTAS could provide assistance; or upcoming field/lab/reporting efforts where NTAS could assist.

Contribute Photos and Memories of NTAS Events

As we expand our social media presence and add to our website, we are looking for photos from fieldwork, public outreach events, group tours, monthly meetings, social gatherings such as the Christmas party, etc. Photos from the membership can be great tools to let others know what our society is all about—what we do, how we share our knowledge, and the social experiences that come with it all.

By providing these photos, please understand they can be used on the NTAS website and social media platforms such as Facebook.

Newsletter Content

Please share with your fellow members by contributing to the newsletter. Potential ideas include:

- Highlights from NTAS volunteer opportunities
 - Summaries of archeological research and field projects
 - Announcements and internet links to events, exhibits, media, and publications that would be of interest to the membership
 - Displays of archeology-related skills such as flintknapping, trowel making, basket making.
- If you would like to contribute to these efforts, please contact a board member by emailing us at northtexasarcheologicalsociety@gmail.com.

Newsletter Submission Deadlines

The newsletter submission deadlines are three weeks prior to the monthly meetings, and upcoming deadlines are listed below for 2021.

February Newsletter: January 21

March Newsletter: February 18

April Newsletter: March 18

May Newsletter: April 22

July Newsletter: June 17

August Newsletter: July 22

September Newsletter: August 19

October Newsletter: September 23

November Newsletter: October 21

December Newsletter: November 19

NTAS Copyright Statement

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

NTAS - Preserving the Past for the Future

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Gwen Durrant
Treasurer

Linda Lang
Historian

Bryan Jameson
Vice President

Tim Sullivan
Secretary

Annaliese Sonntag
Internet Chair

Catrina Banks Whitley
Vice President of Projects

James Everett
Immediate Past President

Molly Hall
Publications Editor

Two easy and quick ways to pay your 2021 NTAS dues!

By PayPal: Complete the Application Form and pay online with PayPal at the NTAS website, ntxas.org/membership (**PLEASE NOTE:** The browser Chrome does not interface with PayPal through our website. Please use a different browser.)

By mail: Complete the application below and mail it with your check to:
North Texas Arch Society, PO Box 24679, Fort Worth, TX 76124

January 2021 **NORTH TEXAS ARCHEOLOGICAL SOCIETY (NTAS) MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM**

Name(s) _____

Address _____ Preferred Phone _____

City\State\Zip _____ Email Address _____

Emergency Contact(s): Please provide the following information regarding the individual(s) from whom we can request or to whom we may provide information in the event of an emergency. Please consider listing at least one contact who does not live at your residence.

Primary Contact Name _____ Alternate Contact Name _____

Relationship _____ Relationship _____

Phone Number _____ Phone Number _____

I want my newsletter delivered by _____ email (\$0) or _____ by USPS mail. (\$10) **Thank you** for choosing delivery by email.

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

New Individual \$20 USPS Mail Delivery \$10
 Renewal Family \$25 Optional Memorial Fund Contribution
 Student \$10 (*enrolled in grade school through college/university whose coursework is considered to be half time or more*)
 Contributing \$30

****Please make checks payable to NTAS****

Code of Ethics (signature required): I PLEDGE THAT I 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 UNDERSTAND THAT FAILURE TO FOLLOW THESE GUIDELINES WILL PROVIDE GROUNDS FOR EXPULSION FROM THE SOCIETY.

Signature _____

Date _____