

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 40, Issue 2

February 2026

## President's Message

Greetings, NTAS! After an icy end to January, we can start to look ahead at longer, warmer days. I am sure that the Dirt Archeologists are grateful that the worst of winter is over. As a reminder, **membership renewals for Year 2026** started on January 1 and will end in March. We are grateful to those continuing to support this great organization as well as the generous donations towards supporting educational and outreach opportunities.

Luckily, the weather did not impede productivity at the SMU Lab where a large volunteer member force showed up to do some curatorial rehabbin' of some pretty hefty collections. I've never seen so many projectile points! Kudos to our volunteers who put in the good work. Laboratory work has gained popularity and will continue **February 21**. Reach out to [Brian Luetchford](#) to find out more. Drs. Boulanger and Sheridan did their fair share of hosting another local robotics club during lab hours. Those tenacious FIRST LEGO League teams are ramping up now that it's competition season, and they are hungry to absorb as much from professional and avocational archeologists as they can. There are still opportunities to provide teams feedback on their designs. So, any members willing to do a quick Zoom or Google Meets call with one, reach out to [info@ntxas.org](mailto:info@ntxas.org). Feedback on designs does not require engineering background, rather, your opinion of design feasibility, implementation,



economics, and practicality for an archeological problem.

Joe Reed Site archeological investigations will pick up again on **February 28**, and I'll bet the weather will cooperate. Send an email of interest to [Dana Ritchie](#) to get involved and enjoy some dirt therapy ahead of Spring gardening.

No shortage of activities and educational opportunities this winter. Coming up, **February 28** is the 31<sup>st</sup> East Texas Archaeological Conference held at Tyler Soules College of Business at UT Tyler (registration on-site; 9 am to 4 pm). Shortly following is the 5<sup>th</sup> [Oklahoma Archaeology Conference March 5-7](#) in the Thurman J. White Forum Building on the University of Oklahoma campus.

We are very excited to have an NTAS group tour of the famous Gault site on **March 14!** RSVP to [Tommy Standefer](#) and register on the [Gault School web-](#)

## Connect with NTAS:

[facebook.com/NTXAS.org](https://www.facebook.com/NTXAS.org)

[www.NTXAS.org](http://www.NTXAS.org)

For general inquiries, please contact [info@ntxas.org](mailto:info@ntxas.org)

**North Texas Archeological Society**

[site.](#)

The Texas Archeological Society (TAS) Academy registrations are nearly full. Fortunately, a few seats are open for [Archeology 101](#), held **April 10-12** in San Angelo. NTAS offers [scholarships](#) that remain available to Academy attendees.

Thank you to all who attended our January meeting in-person and on Zoom. We had an outstanding speaker, Kary Stackelbeck, who shared updates and insight regarding the search for victims of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre. We will absolutely invite her back for more updates in the future. We are delighted to welcome back Dr. Charles Frederick on February 12 who will share with us his program entitled, "Time, Taphonomy and the Quixotic Quest for Short-Term Occupation Surfaces in Texas Archeology." The **Thursday, February 12, 2026** 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).

I look forward to seeing you all at the February 12 meeting!

*Alexandra Younger*

## Update Your Calendar - NTAS Monthly Meeting Speakers

**March 12: Leslie Bush (Panhandle/Southern Plains Archaeobotany)**

**April 9: Kate Lesciotto (Biological Profiles of Skeletal Remains)**

**May 14: Kelton Sheridan (Indigenous Ceramics in Spanish Missions)**

## February Speaker: Charles Frederick

### *Time, Taphonomy, and the Quixotic Quest for Short-Term Occupation Surfaces in Texas Archeology*

Understanding the geologic processes that create and preserve short-term occupation surfaces has been a theme in my research and contract archeological work for most of my career. I strive to use this knowledge to obtain the best, and clearest archeological opportunities, which facilitate understanding ancient behavior. This talk chronicles the formation of two sites in different geologic settings (one an alluvial site in central Texas, and the other a shell midden on the upper Texas coast) that in the field appear similar, but in fact are probably quite different. Employing new opportunities provided by advances in radiocarbon dating, I explored the age structure of a suite of discrete occupations to better understand site formation processes. The results were not what I anticipated and challenge how we view the formation of coastal shell middens.

These are both part of the same site. Which one would you dig?



Stratigraphically separate occupations

A massive, dense shell midden

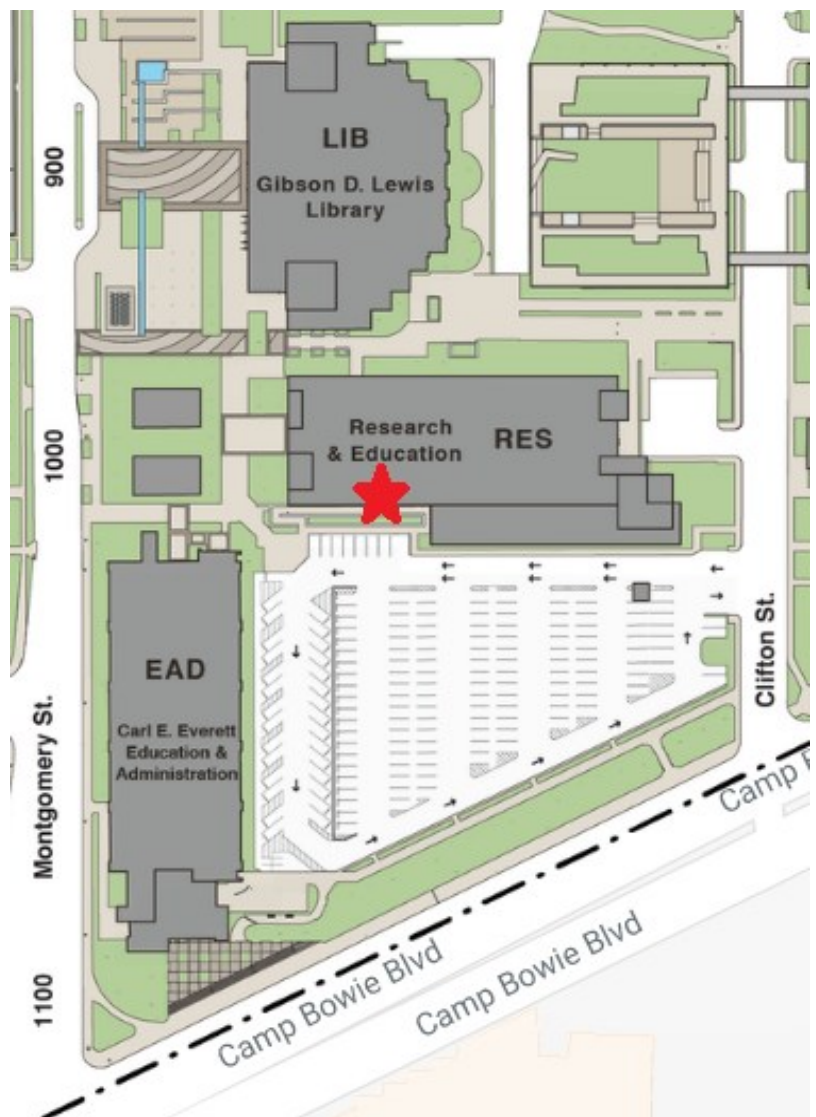
**Charles Frederick** is a self-employed geoarchaeologist and research fellow in the Department of Geography and the Environment at the University of Texas at Austin. His work takes him from his home in the cross timbers of rural north-central Texas all over the state and occasionally abroad (loosely defined as “outside of Texas”). When not writing or in the field he can generally be found in his lab which is cloaked as a 1950s dairy barn, where he interrogates unsuspecting dirt samples in hopes of learning all sorts of strange things. Some of which are occasionally useful...



## 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.



## Local Archeology Matters

### Eric Weinberg

When asked about archeology, what probably comes to mind for most people are sites like Machu Picchu, Stonehenge, Pompeii, or the Pyramids of Giza. Ancient civilizations, particularly those of Mesoamerica, the Fertile Crescent, and the Yellow River Valley are undeniably fascinating, such that they live iconically even in the general public's collective consciousness. However, what lay audiences often don't appreciate is that below the very sidewalk they walk their dogs on, underneath their living room's hardwood floors, beneath the school playground, millennia of stories of mankind are buried. Here, there is a particular value that I believe is not replicated at the awe-inspiring rock-cut architecture of Petra, or the meticulously excavated streets of Pompeii.

Local archeology is a cornerstone of community cultural heritage. What better unites a society than a shared history? Values, purpose, struggles, and triumph forged through the American Revolution healed a cracked country in the decades following the civil war, and continue to do so in our cosmopolitan nation today. When a small group of farmers, plumbers, and school teachers huddles around an archeological team as they lift out a prehistoric scraper from a neighbor's backyard, the same unifying power of a common past is present, even if on a less grandeur scale. Early Clovis people may have used that very tool to prepare dinner, just as a local mother might use a knife to cut vegetables for a salad that very night, just a few feet and thousands of years away. That sort of mutual experience is a powerful reminder to communities that their history is neither distant nor abstract, but rather ongoing and joint.

Moreover, there is a communal effort to bring those stories to life. For evidence of this, look no further than the North Texas Archeological Society and Southern Methodist University. Every month, fellow archeology-interested Dallas community members and I have the opportunity to head down to Dr. Matthew Boulanger's SMU lab and sort through old collections, rebagging and relabeling as we go to preserve the lithics for future research. NTAS sends a small team to archeology fairs, where we engage the public. All are invited to the Texas Archeological Society field school in June, and there are many other such occasions. As a whole, these efforts show that archeology endures not through institutions alone, but through communities willing to come together to preserve the past.

I believe archeology is at its most powerful as a discipline when its torch is carried by a cooperative effort. Furthermore, when this effort is made by a group united in both passion and shared residence, archaeology becomes a civic activity rather than a remote academic pursuit.

## Attention Members! NTAS Gault Tour

### Tommy Standefer

On **Saturday, March 14, 2026** NTAS is organizing a tour of the Gault Site in Central Texas for NTAS members. The [Gault Site](#) is located just west of Salado, approximately 150 miles south of Fort Worth, just off I-35. The cost for the tour is \$20/adult and \$10/child.

We will meet at the site at 10am. NTAS will **not** be organizing carpooling, but encourages you to check with fellow members who live near you and car-pool.

**PLEASE RSVP TO [TOMMY STANDEFER](#)** if you plan to attend so that the site staff can plan tours appropriate to the size of our group.

Following the tour, you may want to join others for lunch on the way home. Salado is an interesting small town on I-35 at the exit to the Gault Site with a number of dining possibilities. However, NTAS is **not** making lunch or car pool arrangements so please make plans with other members if you are interested in either option.



*NTAS members and guide, Tom Williams, pose in front of an outcrop at the Gault Site during a February 2020 tour. Photo courtesy of James Everett.*

## Archeological Events & Opportunities

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

### **SMU Lab Days**

**9am-5pm, Feb 21, Mar 28, Apr 18, May 30, 2026**

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 the NTAS YouTube channel for Dr. Boulanger's [October NTAS presentation](#) on the good work being done at these lab days.

### **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. The keynote speaker will be Dr. Diana M. Greenlee, Poverty Point World Heritage Site.

### **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. **Full - Wait List Only**

### **5th Oklahoma Archaeology Conference**

**March 5-7, 2026**

Norman, OK

This Conference will meet in the [Thurman J. White Forum Building](#) on the University of Oklahoma campus. Registration is open. Inquiries to the OAC can be directed to [Tommas Pace](#).

### **NTAS Gault Site Tour**

**10 am, March 14, 2026**

Florence, TX

The North Texas Archeological Society will be touring the Gault Site on March 14, 2026 starting at 10am. The cost for admission is \$20 per adult, \$10 for kids under 13. If you're interested in joining the tour please contact [Tommy Standefer](#). See Page 4 for more information.

### **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. **Full - Wait List Only**

### **Nature Con - Fort Worth Nature Center & Refuge**

**March 28, 2026**

Fort Worth, TX

A family event with fun outdoor activities, exploration, and learning about conservation. NTAS is looking for a coordinator and volunteers; if interested, please email [info@ntxas.org](mailto:info@ntxas.org).

### **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.

## 2025 Drones in Archaeology Field School Report

### **Will Ryan (NTAS Scholarship Awardee)**

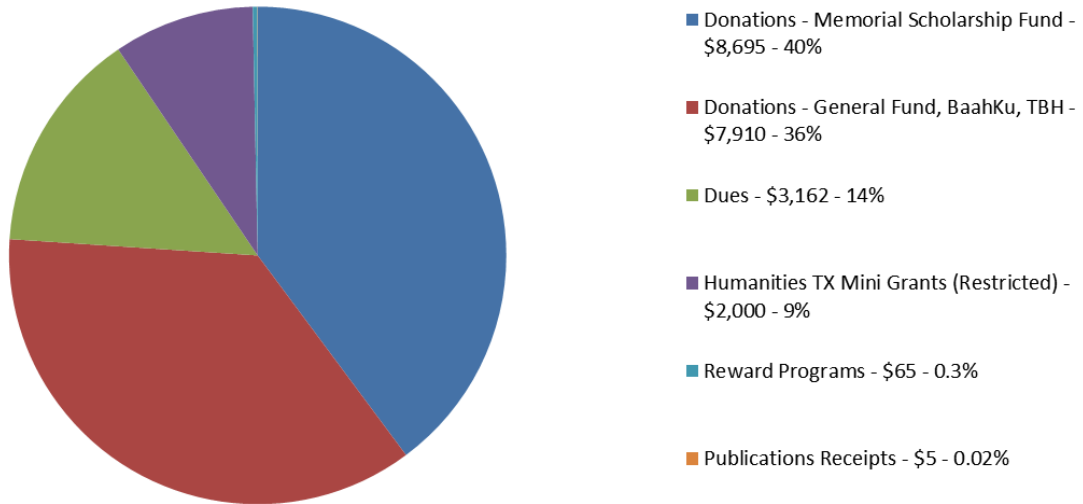
My experience at this field school was fantastic. It was hosted by Northern Arizona University (NAU) in Flagstaff, Arizona, and provided an excellent opportunity to work in the Southwest in Coconino National Forest, assisting the U.S. Forest Service to document sites using a combination of aerial survey, photography of sites, creating 3D photogrammetry models, and generating maps using GIS software, QGIS in this case. Another benefit was using and seeing cutting edge technology in the field, such as drones equipped with LiDAR, multispectral, thermal, and even GPR. Along with working experts in the field, this field school also draws a wide array of students, from undergraduates and graduate students to owners of CRM firms and university professors who have inherited or are starting their own drone programs who need training. This diverse blend of students led to a unique experience of insights, networking, and getting to learn about work happening in other regions of the world. This course is designed to give students an understanding of Part 107 regulations, be ready to take the test to become a licensed pilot, conduct aerial surveys, create photogrammetry models, and create maps for reports for clients. As I was part of the first class, this course should become more and more refined as it is planned to be taught in both the summer and winter.



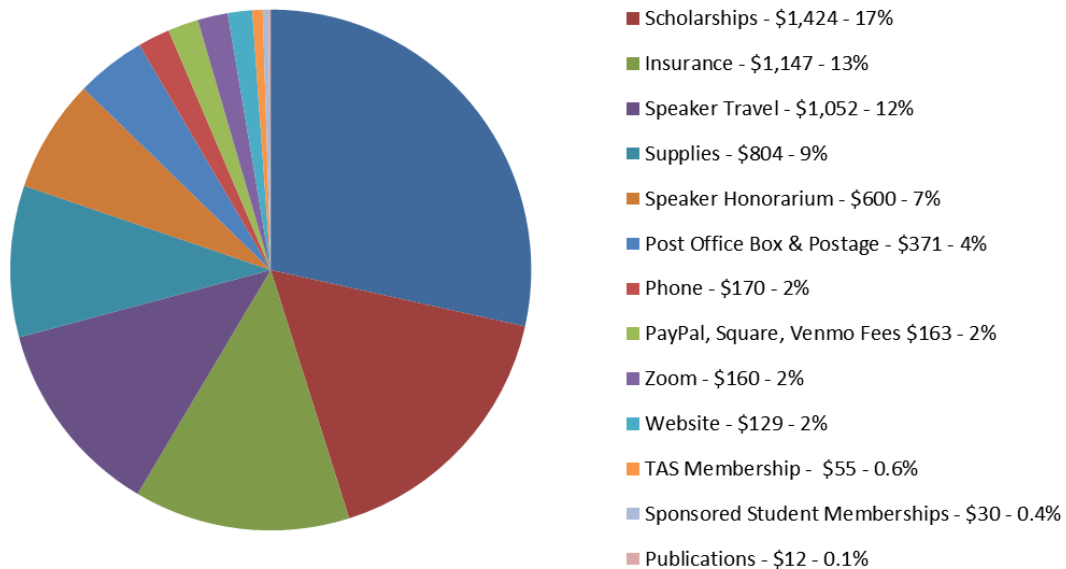
# NTAS Income & Expenses

January 1, 2025—December 31, 2025

## Income \$21,836



## Expense \$8,552



• <b>Total Assets:</b>	<b>\$60,602.97</b>
• Unrestricted Cash	\$47,154.27
• NTAS Memorial Scholarship Fund	\$13,197.95
• BaahKu Project	\$190.75
• Sponsored Student Membership Fund	\$60.00

## New Series: Children's Book Reviews

### Molly Hall

In each of the 2026 NTAS Newsletters I will highlight a children's book about archeology. As a professional archeologist, daughter of a passionate elementary science educator, and mother, I've long held an interest in reading and spreading the fascinating world of archeology to younger generations. Over time, I've found a few books that I love, and I hope to add to my collection this year while sharing these finds with you. If you have a children's book about archaeology that you love, [please let me know](#) and maybe I'll include it in a future issue.

### **Archaeologists on a Dig (Kid Scientist Series) by Sue Fliess**

Reading age: 4-8 years

#### **Professional Archeologist**

*This book puts the children in the center of the action as archeologists on a dig site in Cambodia. It covers essential archeological skills, like planning before heading out to a site, mapping and documenting, making connections between what you learn from your background research and what you find day-to-day, and drawing logic-based hypotheses about how the items you find were used in the past (even if you are unsure if they are correct).*



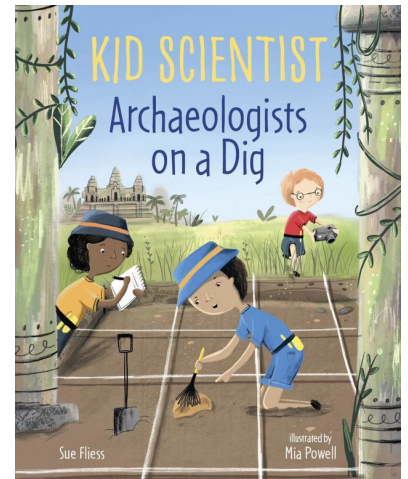
#### **8 year-old**

*I liked the pictures and story telling. Thermoluminescence sounds really cool! The setting in Angkor Wat made it extra interesting.*



#### **5 year-old**

*I really liked when they found the ceramics puzzle and made a face and crown.*



## 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 (2025) as well as all past volumes are available digitally to members and the public [here](#). 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 ([publicationseeditor@ntxas.org](mailto:publicationseeditor@ntxas.org)) or Secretary ([secretary@ntxas.org](mailto: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!

Brent & Penn Family  
Emanuel Castro  
Nichole Clemmons  
Abdelrhman Hassan  
Sri Lalith  
Kiera Layne  
McCormick Family  
McMillan Family

Teresa McNeil  
Smith Family  
Gina Steiner  
Jamie Vandagriff  
Lisa Zealey

## Donors

Bill & Vicky Perdue - *General Fund*  
Robert J. Lovett - *General Fund*  
SWCA, Inc. - *General Fund*  
Kary Stackelbeck - *General 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 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. Upcoming deadlines are listed below.

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

July Newsletter: June 25  
August Newsletter: July 30  
September Newsletter: August 27

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