



NTAC NEWS

January 2024

FROM THE EDITOR

Do you have any stories or anecdotes or photos or events you'd like to share? Send them to NTACNewsletter@gmail.com. That's NTACNewsletter@gmail.com. Did you get that? NTACNewsletter@gmail.com.



Thanks to Douglas Cunningham, David Smith, and Linda Ward for this month's articles. If you'd like a byline for next month, send your story to NTACNewsletter@gmail.com. For those of you who skip to the last sentence of every paragraph, that's NTACNewsletter@gmail.com.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Hi Neighbors, it's Amy.

(No it's not!)

I hope you all had a great January and stayed warm.

(C'mon Newsletter Editor, I can see your fingers moving. You're typing Amy's column!)

If you have any interesting trips planned or stories you want to share, send them to NTACNewsletter@gmail.com.

(Really Newsletter Editor? Now you're just co-opting Amy's column to solicit content for the newsletter!)

Our excellent Newsletter Editor is always looking to receive your journalistic contributions.

(This is outrageous! You can't do this! Do you think Amy won't notice?)

So sharpen your pencil and put your creative writing cap on and send your stories to NTACNewsletter@gmail.com.

Too much! Who talks like that? Who uses pencils any more? Creative writing cap?

—Amy

(NOT AMY!!!)



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2024 SOLAR ECLIPSE

Continuing our ongoing serial leading up to the 2024 Solar Eclipse. Some of the content will repeat so you don't have to look back to past issues. I don't know about youse guys, but I'm really enjoying this stuff. — Editor

Astronomer's Corner

Amy and **Scott** are still keeping up the Eclipse page on our website—<https://ntaci.com/2024-solar-eclipse-@-ntac>. The page is not just for our guests. You'll find a schedule of NTAC-sponsored happenings as well as links to Hillsboro events and other eclipse resources. The winning polo shirt logo is displayed there too. Be sure to check back for updates as the event nears.

McDonald Observatory—<https://mcdonaldobservatory.org/eclipse>. Click for a writeup from McDonald Observatory regarding next year's eclipse. Notably, they have a Facebook page that anyone can follow and also subscribe to their mailing lists.

Sky & Telescope, Sky at a Glance—<https://skyandtelescope.org/observing/sky-at-a-glance/>. The Hill Country Astronomers forwarded this link.

Blanco County Friends of the Night Sky—<https://www.blancocountynightsky.org/newsletters.php>, from **David Smith**. Check new issues as April nears. You may find more on the upcoming 2024 eclipse.

Solar and Heliospheric Observatory—<https://soho.nascom.nasa.gov/home.html>. With the solar eclipse around the corner, there is a very interesting NASA Solar website which tracks daily and historical activity, including flares, and sunspots.

Asterisms

Here's a follow-up from **David Smith** on last month's article about **Orion Nebula M42**, which, intriguingly, is captured in a photo on our [NTAC home page](#).

In the link below from the Hill Country Astronomers, there is a mention of Asterisms. Asterisms are shapes that groupings of stars make. One of the more visible Asterisms in the winter sky is the previously discussed Orion, and in particular, Orion's belt. The stars that make up an asterism might be light years apart, but from our perspective, they appear to be in a 'connect the dots' shape.



Photo by Amy Van Artsdalen (in case you can't read the signature down there in the lower right corner).

There are many really nice asterisms: the constellation Sagittarius makes the very geometric shape of a T-Pot with a handle. The Big Dipper and Little Dipper make the shapes that their names describe.

One of my favorite is NCG 457 which is located near Cassiopeia, (the Queen). This asterism is the Owl Cluster, or I like to call it the ET Cluster. This is visible with a small scope, or binoculars, and Cassiopeia is always viewable on a clear night near the Big Dipper, depending on the position of the earth, Cassiopeia roughly resembles a 3, or a M, or a W, or an E as the earth's rotation changes our view of the constellation.

Mike Mack and I are members of the Central Texas Astronomy Society. If you have an interest in astronomy, reach out to either one of us. If you want to tour an awesome Observatory, there is a monthly open house at the Meyers Observatory near Clifton, approximately an hour away. This houses a stunning 24 inch refractor scope and this scope is continuously being used to participate in scientific studies in conjunction with McDonalds Observatory, and other well known Observatories around the world.

From the Hill Country Astronomers:
Here are the viewing opportunities link for January 26 – February 4 from Sky and Telescope:

<https://skyandtelescope.org/astronomy-news/observing-news/this-weeks-sky-at-a-glance-january-26-february-4/>



More Links from Sky & Telescope

- What are Bailey's [Beads](#)?
- Smartphone [Photography](#).
- How to [Frame](#) an Eclipse.
- How to Photograph the [Eclipse](#).

Eclipseboro is Hillsboro, Texas

This is an Eclipseboro promotional piece written and photographed by Douglas Cunningham.

Hillsboro, Texas, a small city of 8,510 people, will soon be a seventh wonder of the world, in a manner of speaking. Come April 8, 2024, the city will experience an exciting seventh-best viewing of the total eclipse of the sun, right over the famous Hill County Courthouse. Hillsboro

residents and city administration officials are gearing up for an expected 30,000-plus travelers and visitors arriving to see the city shine under a dark sun.

Nobody knows for certain what will happen, when Hillsboro, unofficially called Eclipseboro, is deluged with visitors as far away as Europe. It is fact that the local motels, hotels are already filled with reservations from as far away as Germany, the Netherlands and South Africa. Some would say Hillsboro is one of Texas' sleepy towns, but not quite. Although its population has remained basically stable for a hundred years, the city, surrounded by agriculture, hosts thousands of guests at its yearly **ChurroFest** and **AutumnFest** events. In addition, the historic **Bonds Alley Art Festival**, coordinated now by nonprofit **Hillsboro Arts League**, has been a success with both artists and visitors since 1964. Surely, a few extra guests arriving to observe the only total solar eclipse seen in Texas since 1878 (Fort Worth) can be handled by Eclipseboro City.



Stacey Hunt

Welcoming friendliness rings true throughout Hillsboro, but it seems to begin at **Overflow Coffee**, where owner **Stacey Hunt** greets all travelers and locals coming in from Texas highway 22, which runs through downtown. Hunt converted the T.B. Bonds oldest Texas pharmacy into a fabulous, old-style emporium, with coffee as the star. Everybody stops there for meetings, friends, food and, of course, coffee. She and her husband, Scott, also revitalized an historic saloon next door into **Sweet Joy Ice Cream Parlor**.

Hunt looks ahead to serve eclipse visitors. "We look forward to introducing thousands of new friends to our out-of-this-world coffee, eats, and ice cream...but we weren't certain we could accomplish that with our tiny, but mighty, staff. So I've asked many of my former employees if they'd like to rejoin the team for this astronomical event. Many have said yes, and we are excited to all be back together for a few days."

That there will be thousands of people converging on Hillsboro is not assured, but city officials are certain they must be prepared to be overwhelmed. Total solar eclipse chasing is universally popular. All commercial lodging is already reserved months before April 8, with city officials encouraging home and ranch owners to take in boarders and campers when they arrive. Some visitors will fly in to stay at **Hillsboro Municipal Airport**, or the defunct I-35 outlet mall (where entertainment awaits, by the way). Others will glide into the **North Texas Airstream Community**, park their shiny trailers and gaze carefully skyward. Think of it. Many people from everywhere, thousands, converging on quiet Hillsboro-Eclipseboro, the week leading up to April 8, 2024.

Aside from lodging, other issues are being addressed: porta-potties for the masses, enough food supply in restaurants, traffic patterns in the area. Eclipseboro citizens may walk more, or get out the bicycles to get from one part of town to another. A big concern is, as always, security and safety.

Hillsboro City Manager **Megan Henderson** has a lot on her plate. It comes with the job, but she is enthralled with the upcoming drama in the sky. "The approaching eclipse has given me two wonderful opportunities: to revisit my love of science and the natural world, and to see my community through the eyes of potential visitors," she remarks. "Hillsboro's position on the line of totality in 2024 has given me a heavenly mandate...The rarity of finding myself with such a front-row seat will not be lost on me in this." Henderson continues, "As I consider the people who will be coming, to think about what it will be like to see our historic courthouse and downtown, our unique neighborhoods, businesses and amazing people, visitors are in for a treat."



Megan Henderson

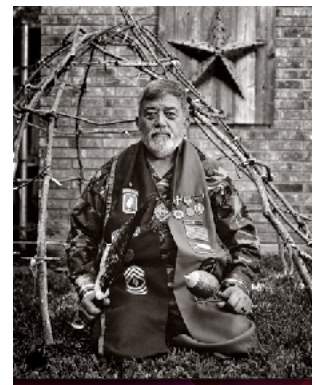
Billy C. Clark, apostle of **The Good News Fellowship Believers Christian Cathedral**, succinctly expressed it all. "I'm sure [the eclipse] will bring lots of money to Hillsboro. I hope the restaurants have plenty of help and food. There will probably be food trucks to offset food issues. There will probably be a lot of good people and a lot of undesirable ones, so I hope the law officials can handle the crowds...Just wondering how crime rates were affected [in cities] during previous eclipses."



Apostle Billy C. Clark

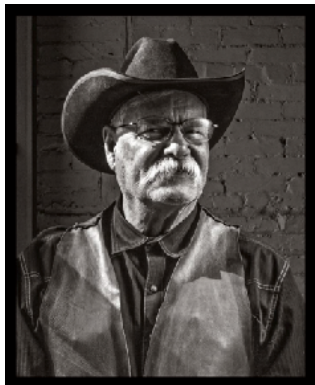
All in all, the sun does not care about human concerns, nor does the moon, but problems to solve aside, people in Hillsboro are excited about the coming four minutes of darkness. The common thread expressed is one of hope that people join together.

"This eclipse is a once-in-a-lifetime event," says Army veteran **Dave Mojica**, president of the **Hillsboro Optimist Club**. "It's going to bring people together, bring out the good in people. We will all have something in common. People will be more humble, because we share a part of cosmic history," Mojica said.



Dave Mojica

Local celebrity cowboy, bookbinder and artist **Rick Pinner** is hopeful societal change will occur with the arrival of the eclipse. "I hope to promote this rare phenomenon of an eclipse to encourage people to watch the sun dim and die, as some indigenous folks believe," Pinner remarked, "then see it overcome the darkness and continue its travels."



Rick Pinner

Pinner also hopes "Americans can also overcome the darkness of our society and use this illustration to continue get through problems and renew the spirit of our country."

Amy Van Artsdalen, of **North Texas Airstream Community (NTAC)**, four miles from Hillsboro town center, led the silver-trailer group in planning for eclipse visitors parking at NTAC's terraport camping area. "During my first eclipse I was brought to tears, and as I listened to those around me, I realized they each were experiencing totality in a different way," Van Artsdalen recalls. "Someone nearby began singing **Amazing Grace**, some were laughing, some were silent. I couldn't believe I was actually witnessing the grandeur of that moment. That's what the 2024 Eclipse means to me, personally--helping others to experience a moment just like this." Van Artsdalen expects NTAC to park 38 Airstream trailer visitors, after all is said, done, and arranged, a boon for the nonprofit community.



Andre Lujan

At the well-known **Texas Through Time** fossil museum, right off courthouse square, Executive Director **Andre Lujan** speaks with scientific enthusiasm, "The upcoming eclipse for residents of Hill County is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to witness a spectacular natural phenomenon, as well as showcase our beautiful city and county...I am excited to showcase the best little fossil museum in Texas. When the stars align, or sun and moon in this case, magic can happen."

Three blocks away from Hillsboro's fossil museum is **Carroll Estes'** ever-present and unique **Roadside America Auto Museum**, which showcases a love for classic automobiles and classic automotive paraphernalia. In many ways, Estes is an example of all Hillsboro entrepreneur business owners, who have good products, and faith that such products make for success. With the attraction of the solar eclipse, Estes expects far more visitors than he has had in recent years. Of course, while he is not alone with that expectation, he verbalizes a feeling that every Eclipseboro citizen must be feeling and thinking.

"The residents and merchants of Hillsboro, Texas, are super excited about the solar eclipse event happening April 8th, 2024," says Estes. "Hillsboro is one of the top locations to view this historic event. We look forward to welcoming thousands of visitors to our city, especially those who have never been here. Hopefully, they'll be aware of all we have to offer, and come see us again."



Carroll Estes

Hillsboro people are proud of their small city, and becoming more proud as the big event approaches. Preparations are being made. The Texas red carpet is being laid out. Carroll Estes sums up. "Our beautiful downtown courthouse, antique shops, restaurants, and, of course, the museums, make our town a great destination."

FROM OUR MEMBERS

Ladies Afternoon Tea

from Linda Ward

Following on from the Newsletter of March 2023 and the retro look at the history of the Ladies Afternoon Tea. An NTAC Afternoon Tea has not completely gone away. It was a very enjoyable event but the last one open to the outside community was not well attended, was a huge amount of work and then of course Covid stopped everything.



Don Gubrud and Norma Collier won our 1940s Baby competition!

The event was resurrected by Linda Ward and for the last two years it has been co-hosted by Linda and Amy Van Artsdalen and changed from a Christmas event to a February High Tea event and was

open to all NTAC residents. This year it is being hosted by Linda Ward and is again open to all NTAC residents. You can certainly register a friend or relative from outside our community to attend and sit with you. The new version of the NTAC Afternoon High Tea started with *Our Love of Airstream Afternoon Tea* and last year the theme was *The Roaring 1940s*, with music and dancing from that decade and a celebration of those members that were born or living in the 1940s.

This year the theme will be *A Teddy Bear's Picnic* with "Specialty Teas"



Various members dressed to impress!



Linda Ward and Amy Van Artsdalen—we knew we had the same lovely shirt!



Steve Zeringue and John Van Artsdalen showing great taste and flocking together.

being mixed and served by our own Tea specialists Randy & Dawn Truesdell. More details and how to register will be announced shortly but in the meantime save the date of Tuesday 5th March at 4:00pm.



The Truesdells with Steve Woodward and Anna Brandon at the Specialty Tea bar.

We hope to see many NTAC members enjoying the NTAC High Tea again this year.

FROM OUR MEMBERS

A Humorous Interlude

from Channing Fell

I relabeled all of the jars in my wife's spice rack. I'm not in trouble yet, but the thyme is cumin.

I just read a book about marriage that says treat your wife like you treated her on your first date. So tonight after dinner I'm dropping her off at her parent's house.

The best way to get back on your feet is to miss two car payments

I asked a supermarket employee where they kept the canned peaches. He said, "I'll see," & walked away. I asked another & he also said, "I'll see," & walked away. In the end, I gave up & found them myself, in aisle C.

I told my physical therapist that I broke my arm in two places. He told me to stop going to those places.

A guy walks into a lumberyard and asks for some 2x4s. The clerk asks, "How long do you need them?" The guy answers, "A long time. We're gonna build a house."

I just burned 1,200 calories. I forgot the pizza in the oven.

I hate it when people act all intellectual and talk about Mozart when they've never even seen one of his paintings.

So my neighbor knocked on my front door at 3 am. 3AM!!! Luckily I was already up playing the bagpipes.

Instead of cleaning my house, I just watch an episode of "The Hoarders," and think, "Wow! My house looks great."

A Piece of History

from Linda Ward

A piece of history has been removed from our NTAC property and will be placed in a museum. We now have a new mail box installed. The Blue 1948 Original Cast Iron U.S. Post Office Public Mailbox was in service for seventy six years! In 1948 Israel was proclaimed a Nation, Cheetos the snack was introduced, Harry S. Truman defeated Republican Thomas E. Dewey and Babe Ruth passed away.

Notice the date—1948—at the lower left corner of the side of the mailbox.
—Editor



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Editor's Note—I'm pulling these birthdays and anniversaries from the directory published at the beginning of the year. That gives short shrift to members who joined during the year. I suppose an apology is due those folks, but, rest assured, your time will come.

Happy February Birthday!

Lisa Forsyth (1st); Ruth Ann Walker (2nd); Lynne Mack (4th); Norm Beu (6th); Lou Lowther (8th); Tom Collier (9th); Chun Smith (13th); Pam Beckwith (16th); Harvey Craig (20th); Cheryl Moniz (22nd); Bruce Morrow (23rd); Don Bell & Jim Flores & Charles Scott (24th); Keith Enstrom (29th). *(If Keith only has a birthday every 4 years, is he even old enough to live here? Would he ever be? —Editor)*

Happy February Anniversary!

Larry & Judy Bettencourt (1st); Jimmy & Marque Mooney (14th); Keith & Ellen Enstrom (15th); David & Kim Majkowski (20th); Ed & Debbie Landers (27th).

PHOTO OF THE MONTH

A group photo from our New Year's Eve Pajama Party, courtesy of Doug Cunningham. Doug says, "I can make physical copies (8x12) for anyone at \$20 each. Digital copies can be circulated by email."



NTAC ONLINE

Please visit our Social Media and Internet Web sites frequently for updates. Don't forget to share with others!

NTAC Website—www.ntaci.com

NTAC Public Facebook Page—<https://www.facebook.com/AirstreamCommunity/>

NTAC Instagram Account—<https://www.instagram.com/northtexasairstreamcommunity/>

NTAC Twitter Account—<https://twitter.com/NTAirstreamComm>

NTAC Private Facebook Group—<https://www.facebook.com/groups/NorthTexasAirstreamCommunity>

COMMUNITY CONTACTS

There is a lot to do in Hillsboro and the Hill County area. Here are some links to explore. We will check these periodically to ensure they are still active and have not moved. If you find dead links, please report them to the editor at NTACNewsletter@gmail.com.

Hill County

Home page—<https://www.co.hill.tx.us/>

Appraisal District—(254) 582-2508, <https://hillcad.org/>

Office of Emergency Management—(254) 582-2023, <https://www.co.hill.tx.us/page/hill.Emergency> or <https://hilloem.com/>

Tax Office—(254) 582-4000, <http://hilltax.org/>

Hillsboro

City of Hillsboro—<https://www.hillsborotx.org/>

Hillsboro Arts League—Cheryl Moniz, (682) 847-6126; <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100089085022912>

Hillsboro Chamber of Commerce—(254) 582-2481, <https://hillsborochamber.org/>

Hillsboro City Library—(254) 582-7385, <https://www.hillsborotxlibrary.org/>

Hillsboro Reporter—(254) 582-3431, <https://hillsbororeporter.com/>

Hill College

Home page—<https://www.hillcollege.edu/>

Athletics—<https://www.hillcollege.edu/Athletics/index.html> (click on each sport for links to the current schedule)

Continuing Education—<https://www.hillcollege.edu/JobTraining/index.html>

Performing Arts Series—<https://www.hillcollege.edu/CampusLife/PerformingArts/PASeries.html>

Texas Heritage Museum—<https://www.hillcollege.edu/Museum/Index.html>

@NTAC (Activities Calendar Highlights)

For the latest updates, please check the [online version of the calendar](#) in the *Shareholder Resources* section of our website, or the printed copy posted in the hallway of the clubhouse.

North Texas Airstream Community Activities Calendar						
February-24						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					9-10A Yoga	10A HAM Rally Exploratory Meeting - Card Room
				9A NTAC Walkers - Meet in front of the club house	Closed Executive Session - Card Room Closed	
				10A Knitting & Such @ Mary Ellen's Villa 311	10A Bridge - Card Room	
				1-2P Book Club Card Rm	6 PM - Movie Night - Rally Rm Red 2 w/ Bruce Willis	5P Shop Talk - Pavilion
				2-4 Canasta Card Rm		
				9A NTAC Walkers	8:30A Weight Training	
				Meet in front of the club house	9-10A Yoga	
				10A Knitting & Such @ Mary Ellen's Villa 311		
				2-4 Canasta Card Rm	10A Bridge - Card Room	
				1:00PM - Hall Refresh - Neighbors		
				7P Viewing - Live to 100: Secrets of the Blue Zone Ep. 2		5P Shop Talk - Pavilion
				Rally Room		
				9A NTAC Walkers	8:30A Weight Training	
				Meet in front of the club house	9-10A Yoga	
				10A Knitting & Such @ Mary Ellen's Villa 311		
				2-4 Canasta Card Rm	10A Bridge - Card Room	
				10A - Rally Room Refresh - Neighbors		
				7P Viewing - Live to 100: Secrets of the Blue Zone Ep. 4		5P Shop Talk - Pavilion
				Rally Room		
				9A NTAC Walkers	8:30A Weight Training	
				Meet in front of the club house	9-10A Yoga	
				10A Knitting & Such @ Mary Ellen's Villa 311		
				2-4 Canasta Card Rm	10A Bridge - Card Room	
				10A - Rally Room Refresh - Neighbors		
				7P Viewing - Live to 100: Secrets of the Blue Zone Ep. 4		5P Shop Talk - Pavilion
				Rally Room		
				9A NTAC Walkers	8:30A Weight Training	
				Meet in front of the club house	9-10A Yoga	
				10A Knitting & Such @ Mary Ellen's Villa 311		
				2-4 Canasta Card Rm	10A Bridge - Card Room	
				Heart of Texas Winnies Rally		
				9A NTAC Walkers	8:30A Weight Training	
				Meet in front of the club house	9-10A Yoga	
				10A Knitting & Such @ Mary Ellen's Villa 311		
				2-4 Canasta Card Rm	10A Bridge - Card Room	
				Heart of Texas Winnies Rally		
				9A NTAC Walkers	8:30A Weight Training	
				Meet in front of the club house	9-10A Yoga	
				10A Knitting & Such @ Mary Ellen's Villa 311		
				2-4 Canasta Card Rm	10A Bridge - Card Room	
				Jolly Good Sams Rally		
				9A NTAC Walkers	8:30A Weight Training	
				Meet in front of the club house	9-10A Yoga	
				10:15 Ladies Club		
				5P Ladies Social Hr Card Rm & Shop Talk-Pavilion		
				6:30 Joker Card Rm		
				Jolly Good Sams Rally		

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