

TCAS BENCHMARK



AUGUST, 2007

VOLUME 21, ISSUE 8

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



The unusual amount of rain that we have received this year throughout Texas has been overdue and overdone; but greatly appreciated and needed. However, it has changed many of our plans, more than a few times. The Sprague site, like any that are near a river or creek has been flooded numerous times in the past few months. TCAS has had plans to expand our scope of activities out there, all have been postponed, but hopefully we will be able to get back to work

soon. Thanks to Carol Macaulay, Brian Jameson and an outstanding crew of Baylor students, some very unique and important features have been recorded in Area D. Multiple shell middens, hearths, lithic reduction station and a tool making area have been uncovered; all at the same level and general proximity. Clearly, we have more work to do there; we will be returning soon, but first must get some backhoe work done, site preparation and new units laid out.

I would also like to thank a few of other members, Mickey Miller, David Opper and Glynn Osburn. Mickey gave us a very informative and professional presentation last month at our July meeting. We have mostly professional speakers at our meetings; but I find it especially gratifying when one of our own members can make a professional presentation too. David took on the daunting task of being our newsletter editor this year and I think we can all agree that he is doing a wonderful job. David, like all of our past editors is always looking for something written by our members to include in our publication. So far this year we have had a few submitted. Recently two good articles were written by both Glynn - on Understanding Archeological Classifications (I saved that one for my Field book); and most recently by David with a humorous recap of his experience of being a crew chief for the first time this year at TAS Field School. As mentioned at our last meeting we would really like hear from any of our members on any of your archeological specialties, events or outings, even if only by some photos that you took and a small caption on each of them.

Lastly, I want to remind everyone that the TAS Annual Meeting in San Antonio on October 26-28th. Please plan on attending this year; if you have never been before, you're missing out on one of the best events to keep you abreast of Texas Archeology.

Hope you are having a wonderful summer.

Jay Hornsby

REFRESHMENTS Thanks to **CHRIS MEIS** for providing refreshments in July and to **BILL and SHIRLEY GREEN and BILL STALLINGS** for this month

Calendar of Activities

AUGUST

- 6-10** UTSA Center for Archeological Research Camp ~ages 10-12
- 9** TCAS Meeting 7:30pm UNT-HSC
- 9-12** 2007 Pecos Conference
Pecos National Historical Park, New Mexico

SEPTEMBER

- 13** TCAS Meeting 7:30 UNT-HSC
- 22** STAA-HCAA Joint Meeting
Riverside Nature Center
Kerrville
- 28-30** 2007 Arkansas Archeological Society
Annual Meeting
Ozark Folk Center Mountain View, Arkansas

OCTOBER

- 1-30** TEXAS ARCHEOLOGY MONTH
- 11** TCAS Meeting 7:30 UNT-HSC
- 13** Rio Grande Delta International Archeology Fair
Palo Alto Battlefield
- 26-28** TAS Annual Meeting ~ Menger Hotel,
San Antonio ~ see page 4
- 14-19** Pecos Experience: The Art and Archeology of
the Lower Pecos
SHUMLA campus Comstock

NOVEMBER

- 9-10** Center for Big Bend Studies 12th Annual
Conference
Alpine

TCAS BENCHMARK

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AUGUST PROGRAM

LARRY BANKS

“A Look at the non-lithic cultures of the Gulf Coast and human adaptation to hostile environments”

Mr. Banks, Registered Professional Archeologist, has had a lengthy 40 plus year career in archeology. He has served in executive positions in numerous city, county and state and National archeological societies and programs. He retired from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as their senior archeologist for twenty seven years, in April 1993 and was recruited out of retirement in April 2006 to work in the Hurricane Recovery Program. He has been and still serves as Research Associate in the Department of Anthropology at Smithsonian Institution since 1977. He served in various executive positions and finally as President of the Society of Professional Archeologists from 1993 to 1995. He is the author of a number of articles monographs and books. His special interests and expertise includes Paleo-American Archeology, Caddoan Archeology, and Lithic Resources Identifications. He has served in adjunct professor positions at UTA, Wichita State University, and as Senior Fellow at the Institute Study of Earth and Man at SMU. For those who have worked on the Stallings Site excavations, it can be noted that Larry was co-founder of that site with Gary Sykes and was co-organizer of the Valley of the Caddo Archeological Society in Paris.



NAME THAT POINT

This is one of the largest Late Prehistoric Texas points.

Can you name it?

The answer is on page 7

Average size:	120mm-150mm
Morphology:	Triangular stemmed
Description:	Straight to convex edges that are frequently serrated Prominent barbs that are pointed; stem is divided and recurved with projections that may curve upward or downward
Distribution:	Central and South Central Texas
Age:	Late Prehistoric (900AD–1040AD)

A NEW TAS WEBSITE

TAS PRESIDENT CAROLYN SPOCK TAKES US ON A TOUR

Co-Webmaster Butch Fralia moved online the TAS website that has been under development for about a year and a half. It has a new look and a new organization, though essentially all that was there previously is still there.

Navigation should be much easier on the website now. The top menu has drop-down menu items that will, in some cases, take you directly to the page you seek. Where there are multiple pages in an area (true in a number of cases, such as with the various TAS activities), each area's home page will have a supplemental menu in a textured box that will move you to a destination in the next level of pages. That textured menu box will be at the top of each of the area's pages, allowing you to move around in that venue. There is also a site map to help you navigate the new pathways. It would probably be a good idea to remove old bookmarks and start setting up new links. An intercept page has been provided that should redirect users of out-of-date links to the new TAS Home page.

The new site has some new interactive areas.

<> Still under development (though portions are active) is the **Members Area** linked from the Home page. This area is accessible through a password login. Information about TAS business may be found here, and you may make changes to your personal profile, updating addresses and contact information. TAS members must register here and be accepted before they can enter this section. A caveat: one of the administrators with a current membership list must approve the applicant, so please do not expect acceptance to be immediate. This function is new to all of us.

<> Already available is a redesigned, **database calendar**. Registered members may log in and post/update items to the list. Members may only work on their own submissions; administrators may work on everyone's submissions. As the date of an event passes, the item is removed from the viewable calendar.

<> A Whatzit page has been discussed but not yet implemented. The current system of submitting items to Bob for posting to the Listserv will continue.

<> Also a treat to come is a **section on artifacts**, based on documentation published in the TAS Bulletin. Some contributions in this section will be there with the stipulation that they be available ONLY to members.

And, the site boasts some new additions.

<> **Curricula for each of the Academies** has been added; this should help readers gauge what each course contains. An archive of previous Academy information is online, as are most of the reports that were generated from the Archeology 101 courses.

<> An **archive of previous Field School information** is also online, as well as some new information intended to help newcomers find out what to expect at Field School. There is a page of generic camp rules; currently on that page are lists of items one should bring to Field School – field and camp equipment. There will be photographs of some of the equipment posted later.

<> **Annual Meeting** also sports archives from previous years – of course, everyone should be looking at the information for this year and planning to attend the meeting at the Menger Hotel. Registration may be done online.

<> There is a section for each of the **committees**. At this time the committee description in the Bylaws is the primary component.

<> There is a spot for each **region**, and a place for a profile and picture of the Regional Director.

<> **Scholarships and Grants** are now in the top level of menus.

<> A page on **recording collections** links to the THC's PDF of their brochure.

<> There is a new section that Pam has supplied that provides **press releases on upcoming events** for the media.

<> A **FAQ page** is up but still being developed.

<> A **glossary page** will be prepared.

<> There is the **Site Map** that was mentioned above.

When you get a chance, please check out the revised TAS website. We think you will like it. Of course, suggestions for new items or modifications are always welcomed!



2007 PECOS CONFERENCE

Deliberately informal, the Pecos Conference affords Southwestern archaeologists a superlative opportunity to talk with one another, both by presenting field reports and by casual discussions. It is a chance to see old friends, meet new ones, pick up fresh information, organize future conferences, and have a great time.



The tradition of research collaboration and sharing that began in 1927 at Pecos Pueblo returns to its home at Pecos National Historical Park, under the guidance of dedicated archaeologists, Federal, state and local agency sponsors, and tribal representatives...

This year, 2007, marks the 80th anniversary of the Pecos Conference, first convened by Alfred V. Kidder at Pecos Pueblo, New Mexico, in 1927. Because the Conference was not held during certain years (due to World War II and other circumstances [cf. * Woodbury 1993]), this year's meeting will not be the 80th annual gathering. This year is, in fact, the 70th annual meeting of the Pecos Conference. In the early 1990s, the numbering of the Pecos Conference became confused, when the anniversary year was substituted for the actual count of prior conferences. Clearly, we cannot mend past problems with the numbering of the Pecos Conference. Our solution is to indicate that this year's conference will be the 70th occurrence and refer formally to this year's event simply as the Pecos Conference 2007.

Need more information about the 2007 Pecos Conference? Visit [SWA's page on the 2007 Pecos Conference](#).

DEBITAGE

noun: lithic debris and discards found at the sites where stone tools and weapons were made.

From HARRY SHAFER

The TAS meeting in San Antonio may end up to be all party and no papers. I have received only three paper abstracts thus far and no symposia. Submission for symposia deadline is **August 15**. Get going folks, and send me your abstracts. Otherwise you will have to put up with Elton dressed as Devine in Hairspray.

From Marvin and Rebecca
glasgow

Texas Archaeologist Jay Blaine Given SAA Crabtree Award Allen archeologist Jay Blaine turned a hobby into a profession that has gained him national recognition, he was presented with the Society for American Archaeology's Crabtree Award for his services to the archaeological communities. "There were thousands of people there from everywhere," Blaine said, "I was tickled to death, because this was the first plaque I had gotten. There it was a piece of wood with all that stuff on it."

From Katrina Nuncio

The August 2007 issue of National Geographic Magazine has a 41 page article / pictures that is titled "*Maya, How a Great Culture Rose and Fell.*" There is also one of those wonderful map supplements of Mexico and Central America in this issue that should be a great item to have.

I have not had time as yet to read the article, but the photography and maps alone are worth the purchase price of the magazine if you are interested in Mesoamerica.

ON THE CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER 22nd

SOUTHERN TEXAS AND HILL COUNTRY ASSOCIATIONS HOST JOINT MEETING

The Southern Texas Archaeological Association and the Hill Country Archaeological Association will host a joint meeting and barbecue social at the Riverside Nature Center. Dr. Harry Shafer will be our esteemed speaker for the occasion.

While the meeting will be free and open to the public, the barbecue social will be \$10 per person. Barbecue meats are coming from Bill's Barbecue- repeatedly voted the best in Kerr County year after year by the Kerr County Times reader's poll. Coffee, water, and ice tea will be available although soda and beer will be allowed for those that choose to bring them.

Location Details

Riverside Nature Center
150 Francisco Lemos
Kerrville TX 78028

SEPTEMBER 28th—30th



2007 ANNUAL MEETING

The 2007 Annual Meeting of the Arkansas Archeological Society will be held **September 28-30, 2007**, at the Ozark Folk Center in Mountain View, Arkansas. This should be a particularly enjoyable meeting because of all the fun activities the Ozark Folk Center has to offer. In addition to their regular music and craft demonstrations, that weekend the Folk Center will also be hosting the Arkansas State Fiddle Championship.

As usual, activities at the Society Meeting will include the Friday evening reception, Saturday paper presentations, book room, ARF auction, and banquet. Our Keynote Speaker will be Sam Brookes, Heritage Program Manager at the National Forests in Mississippi—a very entertaining speaker! Bonus activities on Sunday will include a tour of Blanchard Springs Cavern and nearby historic sites by Sue Foster.

A block of rooms has been reserved at the newly remodeled Ozark Folk Center Lodge. Rooms will be \$65.00 per night single or double occupancy, which can be booked at that rate until **September 23** by calling 1-800-264-3655, or 1-870-269-3851. Susan Young is graciously serving as arrangements chair.

Paper presentations currently are needed. If you would like to present a paper, send an email to Mary Kwas at mkwas@uark.edu with your title and abstract by **August 13**. Time slots for papers are limited and will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis.

IN THE NEWS

A LINK BETWEEN THE ANASAZI AND CLIMATE WARMING?

Weekend Edition Sunday, July 29, 2007 · As modern officials try to assess the risk global warming might present to the American Southwest, they're paying a lot of attention to what scientists say about how climate changes affected the region's ancient past.

Archaeologist Kristen Kuckelman has spent many years digging in the ruins of ancient farming villages on the Colorado Plateau and analyzing the artifacts and specimens she takes from them.

The people who lived in these ancient villages, which are known as pueblos, were part of a large culture that thrived for several hundred years in the high desert plain that covers parts of modern Utah, New Mexico, Colorado and Arizona. Archaeologists call them Anasazi, or Ancient Pueblo People. One of the best known of their pueblos is in Mesa Verde National Park in Colorado.

But sometime in the late 1200s, the Anasazi abandoned all of their pueblos. And for more than a hundred years, archaeologists have been perplexed about why.

Kuckelman thinks she may have found the answer. "I think we're finally really making some important inroads into answering that question," says Kuckelman, who works for Crow Canyon, a nonprofit archaeological center in southwestern Colorado. "It had to have been a pretty important reason (for them) to leave and never come back."

Kuckelman thinks the reason was climate change. A major drought hit the area in the 1270s. Kuckelman says her research from one of the villages, Sand Canyon Pueblo, shows that the drought destroyed the people's ability to grow corn to feed themselves and their turkey flocks. They were forced to revert to hunting and gathering.

She figured this out by analyzing their garbage. She compared refuse from the early days of the settlement to what was left in the kivas when the residents moved away.

"I wasn't particularly looking for anything," Kuckelman says. "At some point, it just sort of jumped out of the data at me."

It was turkey bones, lots of them.

"The percentage of turkey bones is 96 percent of the identified animal bones — 96 percent! That's huge," Kuckelman exclaims.

But of the bones left over from the final days of the pueblo, only 13 percent were from turkeys. Most were from wild game.

"That can't be accidental," she says. "It has to mean something. And what it means is, when they first moved here, they were eating primarily turkey. And at they very end they weren't. So why?"

This and other evidence convinced Kuckelman that the corn crops that fed the ancient farmers and their turkeys failed because of the drought.

She believes other villages' corn crops failed, too. There wasn't enough wild food to go around, so people were hungry, and that led to violence.

Kuckelman puts it simply: "The system fell apart."

Kristen Kuckelman couldn't have come up with her theory if it weren't for the work of scientists who study the growth rings of trees. The rings reveal important secrets about the distant past, such as when kivas were built, and when the great drought hit. That information enabled Kuckelman to link the collapse of the pueblo's crops and turkey flocks to the Great Drought of the 1270s.

A few hundred miles northeast of where Kuckelman is digging, University of Arizona Climate Science Professor Connie Woodhouse was doing her summer field work, high in the Rocky Mountains.

Her team uses a chainsaw to cut slices of the remnants of old dead trees to take back to the lab for analysis.

To sample live trees, Woodhouse drills into one with a hand tool, called a tree borer, and extracts a sample of the tree's rings the size and shape of a drinking straw. It shows distinct sections, each of which holds information about the past.

"The wide rings are wet years and the narrow rings are dry years," Woodhouse says. "And when you put together the information from the tree rings into what we called the tree ring chronology, it gives you a picture of the moisture in that area where we collected it."

Woodhouse and her colleagues recently presented an alarming picture of the ancient history of the Colorado River. They sampled the oldest trees they could find — dead and alive — and used them to estimate stream flows all the way back to the year 762. Their results show that the droughts over the last hundred years weren't as severe or as long as earlier droughts. And in fact, the first part of the 20th century was unusually wet.

"Not only was it wet in the context of 100 years, but there was not a wet period like that for at least 400 years," Woodhouse says.

That has major ramifications for modern people who rely on the Colorado River for water. The laws that are used to divvy up the river assume that the extremely wet period was normal.

Woodhouse says the lesson from the tree rings is that longer dry spells, like the one that chased the pueblo farmers from their villages, could return.

Some experts believe they already have.

Eric Kuhn, the chief water manager for western Colorado, says the rivers are flowing at only 70 percent of their normal rate. Other tributaries of the Colorado are flowing at only 40 percent.

It is the seventh dry year the river has had in the past eight years.

"The water community is all hoping that this is a drought," Kuhn says. "Drought implies things will return to normal someday."

But he doesn't think they will. Kuhn believes the lower river levels over the last several years represent a new, drier normal. And because of climate change, he expects the river to become even drier in the future.

With that in mind, Kuhn thinks that the tens of millions of people who rely on the Colorado River to irrigate their fields, water their lawns and fill their bathtubs, should take the experiences of the ancient pueblo farmers seriously.

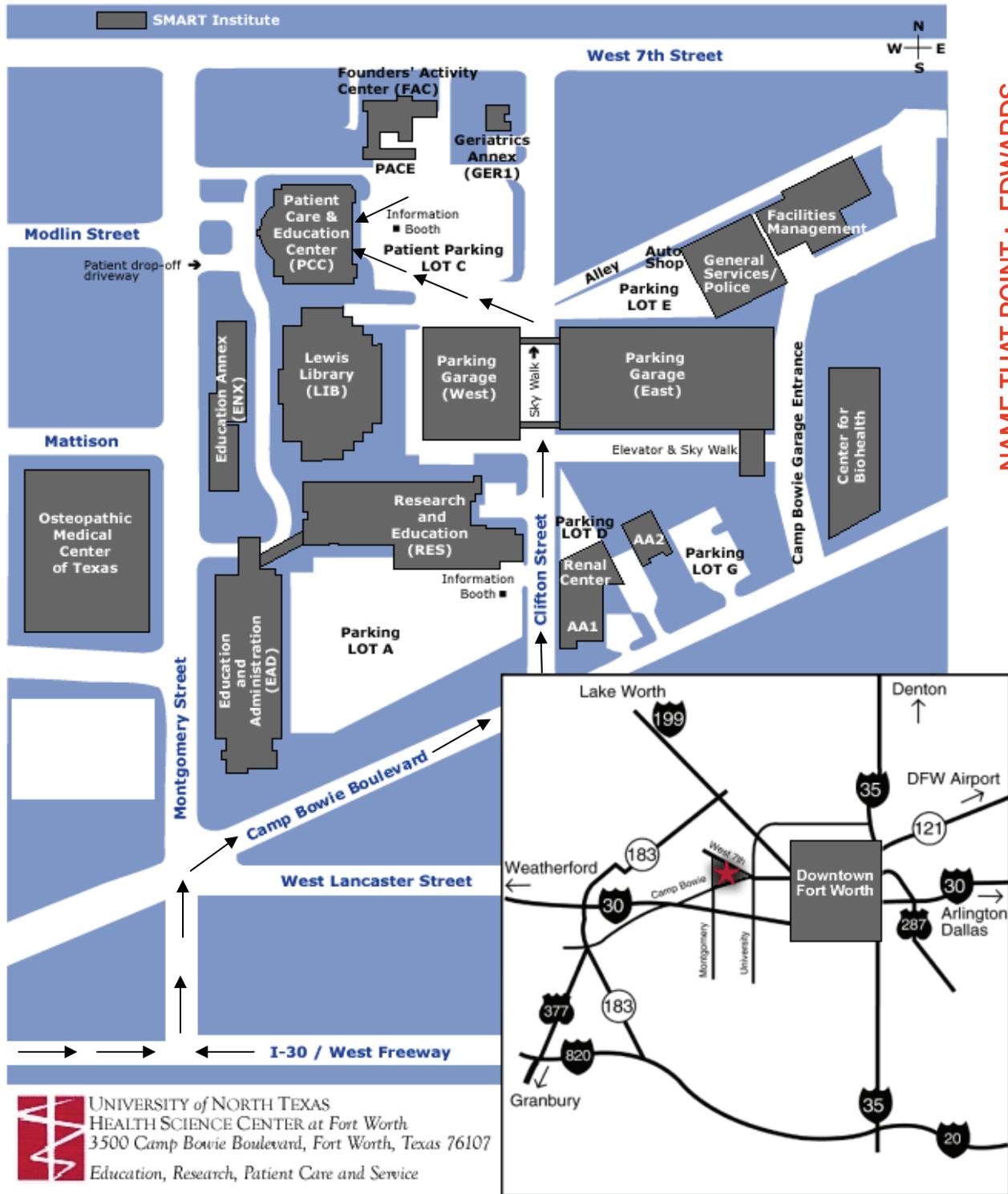
"They obviously didn't have our technology. They didn't have Hoover Dam and Glen Canyon Dam. And when there was a change in the climate, they could not adapt to it," he says.

Kuhn notes that while modern society has a lot of technology, it also has a thirst for the Colorado that is greater than its supply. He believes that what happened to the ancients could still happen today.

"We're used to a certain amount of water," he says. "If that changes just a little bit, it's going to cause some big disruptions in how we deal with life here in the southwest."

TCAS BENCHMARK

TCAS meets at 7:30PM, the 2nd Thursday of each month at the University of North Texas Health Science Center (UNTHSC), 3500 Camp Bowie Blvd., in Fort Worth. The location is centrally located in Tarrant County near the intersection of Camp Bowie and Montgomery Street about two miles west of downtown. Take Clifton Street off of Camp Bowie (one block east of the Montgomery intersection) to Parking Lot "C" on your left (west). Park in the patient spaces (after 5PM) and go past the information booth into the underground parking garage. Turn left down the corridor at the double doors in the center. Proceed down the hallway until you come to room 110.



NAME THAT POINT : EDWARDS

TARRANT COUNTY ARCHEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Membership / Renewal Form

Name(s) _____

Type of Membership:

Renewal ___ New Member ___

Address _____

___ Individual ___ \$20.00

City/State/Zip _____

___ Family ___ \$25.00

Home Phone _____

___ Student (H.S., active univ. degree candidate through age 25)

Employer _____

___ \$10.00

___ Contributing ___ \$30.00+

Email _____

___ Lifetime ___ \$250.00

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 practice 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 ground for expulsion from the Society.

Signature(s) _____ Date _____

TARRANT COUNTY ARCHEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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