

This month's Member Spotlight is Peter Berzanskis!



I am Peter Berzanskis, TMN member, Llano Estacado Chapter class of 2016 (more about that later).

I was raised up and down the East coast, attending high school at Brien McMahon high school in South Norwalk, Connecticut. Yes, he was Ed McMahon's older brother (yes, that Ed McMahon, Johnny Carson's side kick) and as Senator from Connecticut, chaired the first Atomic Energy Commission of the US Senate.

I love learning new things, and thoroughly enjoyed High School and College. I wish they could have gone on forever! In fact, as I was working toward a double degree in Civil and Mechanical engineering, Cheryl discovered that I had the credits to graduate in Civil Engineering, and convinced me to cut my studies at Georgia Tech short and go to work! We

also had one child already, and another on the way, so I reluctantly joined the working world.

While working, I discovered that a lot of employers would reimburse me for education costs, and I took full advantage of that! Over the years, I've taken courses in Accounting, Routes and Tariffs, advanced mathematics, chemistry, Dale Carnegie, poker classes, blackjack classes, Microsoft Word, and, when I finally settled in Texas, got my Master's degree in Engineering from Texas Tech with their now defunct Flying Professor evening program. Now it is all online. Later I went on to earn an MSFE (master of science in Finance and Economics) from WTAMU. I thoroughly enjoyed every minute of my classes and interaction with the professors.

I've worked in engineering or project management my whole career, and I have enjoyed working through problems and building new things. Mostly I was in the chemical or oil and gas business, but I did serve in public service almost 5 years as Assistant City Engineer during which time I worked on constructing, among other things, the Rails to Trails all along Plains Avenue, and the McDonald lake at 45th and Coulter.

In my last job in Odessa, Texas, I was approaching the end of my career, and so in 2016 Cheryl and I looked at what we could do after retirement. I took bridge lessons and continue playing now. As a couple, Cheryl and I decided to learn about and become Master Naturalists. That was during my last year of working. It was with the Midland Llano Estacado chapter. The learning about our environment and natural world with TMN has been exquisite!

We decided to come back to Amarillo to retire. We love the BIG clear skies and the variable weather. We were able to transfer our membership to the Panhandle chapter of TMN. We discovered that the classes down there were different from the classes up here, so we basically went through all the training classes again. It was another learning opportunity! The activities with TMN help us to stay engaged with the world, and by leading hikes for children as our volunteer service, we get to share our love of learning with them.