



The

# Cyrano



Newsletter

## President's Note

Andrea Howard



**T**he People. That's what I say when asked why I am a Master Naturalist, why I joined in the first place. What is my favorite part? The people. I was a naturalist long before I became a Master Naturalist thanks to my dad. Fossil hunting, insect collecting, fishing, gardening, nature shows...were all a normal part of life, a special connection the two of us shared. When he passed away 7 years ago, I lost my nature buddy and best friend; the one person in my life who understood my deep connection with the natural world, the one person who would traverse into the wild with me. Then as fate would have it, in time, and through some crazy circumstances, I found my tribe. A group of people called the Master Naturalists who were a bunch of crazy, earth-conscious, land steward educators, who weren't afraid to get dirty, just like me.

It's been a crazy ride, but here we are, still doing what we have been doing all along; not because we have to, or because we feel obligated to, but because it is who we are. A deeply ingrained love for the natural world that comes as natural to us as breathing. We don't think about it, or work for it, it is just a part of what makes us us. And the beauty of the Master Naturalists is the collection of all these unique people who share a common thread...when you step back and look at our Chapter, what you will see is a beautifully crafted tapestry of individually unique people who come together to make something amazing.

The past several years have been challenging to say the least, and to be honest. I have no idea what the future holds for our

### The 2022 TMN Brazos Valley Chapter Board

**President**

Andrea Howard  
[president@txmnbv.org](mailto:president@txmnbv.org)

**Vice President**

Simon Burton  
[vp@txmnbv.org](mailto:vp@txmnbv.org)

**Secretary**

Bruce Neville  
[secretary@txmnbv.org](mailto:secretary@txmnbv.org)

**Treasurer**

Amanda Chau  
[treasurer@txmnbv.org](mailto:treasurer@txmnbv.org)





## *Continued from Page 1...*

Chapter. As things shift, so do we. My ultimate goal for our Chapter is to keep us together, doing what have been doing all. I hope to continue expanding our volunteer opportunities, and would love to see the Junior Master Naturalist program take off here. It is also my goal to increase our presence and activity level in other counties, not just Brazos. There is going to be a steep learning curve for me, and some very big shoes to fill in looking at the past presidents for this Chapter.

It is my pleasure to continue working alongside you all, and a great honor to serve this chapter as President. Here's to the unknown ahead. I don't know for sure where we are going, but the path will be made of dirt, and we will go together.

Andrea Howard

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## A Parting Word from our Past President

*Donell Frank, President 2018-2021*

Fellow TMN Chapter Members,

January brings a new year and new beginnings and with that the time has come to usher in a new President and send the previous President on to greener pastures filled with native flora and fauna. Literally I might add since I will still be the Director of the Habitat Restoration and Maintenance (HRM) committee. As the Director of HRM I hope to restore and maintain those pastures with the help from the hard-working HRM committee and our dedicated TMN members.

It has been my great honor to have served as the President of the Brazos Valley Chapter for four years. I could not have done it without the help and support of the board members. They are amazing and I owe a great deal of gratitude to all of them for making sure my job went smoothly, especially at the board meetings. The board was one of the main reasons I was inclined to stay on for two more years because I knew I could count on them for guidance and encouragement for anything that was thrown my way.

I would also like to thank the TMN membership for always being ready to answer the call and assist in numerous events throughout the years. In doing so you helped the chapter spread the word of the TMN mission of outreach, education, and service to our community. You are all rock stars!

Andrea Howard, our newly crowned incoming President, is awesome! Andrea has been instrumental to the success and forward motion of our chapter. She received the first Outstanding Volunteer of the Year Award in 2019, she served as Secretary for four years, and she single-handedly reinstated the Junior Master Naturalist Program. We are very lucky she has accepted the call to be the next President of our chapter. Andrea has my full support and confidence to take our chapter to the next level and with her passion, commitment, knowledge, and dedication our chapter is in good hands.

If you have not had the chance to meet Andrea yet, get ready to be impressed. If you have had the pleasure of meeting her then you are already aware of her energy and for that you will definitely love and respect her.

Cheers,

Ms. Donell Frank

[habitats@txmnbv.org](mailto:habitats@txmnbv.org)

# Chapter Field Trips

*Kathryn Sneed, Coordinator*

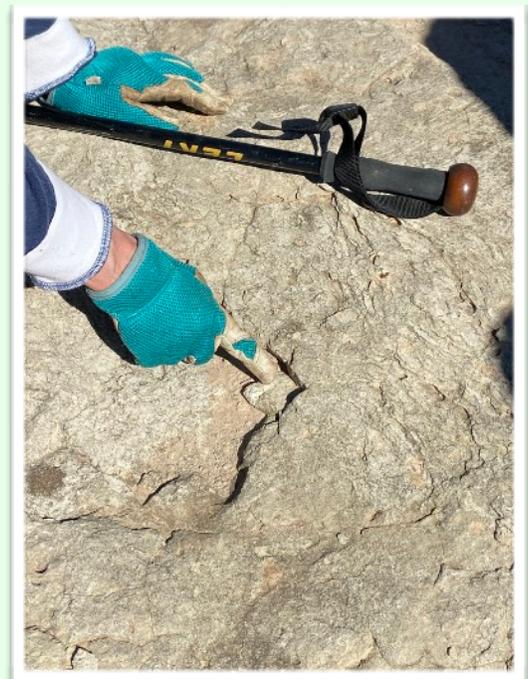
On November 6, 2021, TMNers were able to participate in an interesting tour and presentation by Geologist Cheryl Metz on the history and geology of the Brazos River in the Hidalgo Falls area. She explained how the various layers of sedimentary rock and reworked volcanic rock contributed to the formation of the rapids there and the rich fossil remains in the area. Among other things, we learned to identify bone fossils by licking them (bone fragment in bottom right image)! Due to the cold water, we decided to put off the kayaking there until later in the spring, when we can arrange for a settled four-hour ride from Hidalgo Falls to Highway 105.

Until the Omicron variant burns itself out, our upcoming field trips for the immediate future will be more of a meet-up group style for hiking, mountain biking, and kayaking. They won't be considered for advanced training credit. Our meet-ups will be subject to trail conditions and weather, so dates will be tentative, with most occurring on Sundays. Be watching your email for details about the first meet up! We'll be mountain biking at Double Lake Recreation Area in the Sam Houston Forest. If the weather isn't too cold, we'll aim for February 20th.

**Where:** McKinney Roughs Nature Park near Bastrop

**When:** Sunday, March 27, 2022

**What:** Our long-delayed kayak trip to McKinney Roughs Nature park has finally been rescheduled! We will have a two-hour guided program and float led by a naturalist from the park.



# Leading by Example

## 2021 Re-certifying Members:

- Jim Anding*
- Kitty Anding*
- Dwight Bohlmeier*
- Simon Burton*
- Amanda Chau*
- Katharine Cupps*
- Bill Eisele*
- Donell Frank*
- Jackie Girouard*
- Caron Henrichs*
- Andrea Howard*
- Julie Hunt*
- Megan Konarik*
- Bruce Neville*
- Greg Pitts*
- Katie Reed*
- Susan Reed*
- Dana Roese*
- Kim Roese*
- Vappy Severs*
- Susan Smith*
- Kathryn Sneed*
- Mike Stecher*
- Betty Vermeire*
- Sue Welfel*
- Liz Worsham*

## Class of 2019 Certification:

- Tali Lewis*



## *Congratulations!*

Six members reached distinguished milestones in 2021! Pictured left to right above are: Donell Frank (1000 hours), Simon Burton (500 hours), Dana Roese (500 hours), Mike Stecher (500 hours), and Katie Reed (250 hours). Not pictured: Kathryn Sneed (250 hours).



TMN Brazos Valley Chapter members who re-certified in 2021, reaching 40 or more service hours and 8 or more advanced training hours.

# Welcome Class of 2021!



*Let's extend a welcome to the newest members of the TMN-BV Chapter:*

- Karla Baker\*
- Ian Gerke
- Ashley Nicole Guentzel
- Glen Hill\*
- Kelly Hill\*
- Sarah Mason
- Ann Boehm
- Carlos Davila\*
- Alison Fisher
- Janeen Judah
- Jayne Miller
- Katy Garcia\*
- Laura Tankersley

*\*Pictured above*

# Volunteer of the Year Award 2021

*Donell Frank*



The recipient of our 2021 Volunteer of the Year Award goes to our Recent Past President and our Habitat Maintenance and Restoration Director Donell Frank. Donell has spent countless hours supporting our chapter in all ways imaginable. Her passion and enthusiasm for our chapter and what we stand for as TMN has helped carry us to new beginnings and to survive Covid.

*Congratulations!*

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## Habitat Restoration and Maintenance

*Donell Frank, Director*

**H**appy New Year! It is time to get to work on the many HRM adopted gardens and start acquiring those volunteer hours as well as get back outside and have some fun!

I am creating a calendar for the last Saturdays of every month with the locations and times of where we will be meeting to continue our efforts of improving and maintaining the gardens. The calendar can be found on the TMN website (<https://txmn.org/brazos/>) under Calendar. Hopefully I will have this information uploaded to the calendar in the very near future. Don't forget the second Saturdays of the month are standing workdays at the BRTC from 8:00AM-11:00AM. Once the calendar is uploaded, I will send an email to the membership so that everyone can start saving the dates for the workdays.

I am still in need of some creative and energetic people who would love to get involved and design native pollinator and demonstration gardens, help plan and organize our fall plant sale and create signage

to inform visitors the common and scientific names of all native plants and non-native plants found within the gardens. I already have a template to use for the signs I just need someone to volunteer to add the information.

If there are members who have a desire to know more about how to grow native plants, please let me know. I have been contemplating about scheduling a HRM fieldtrip to Mark Morgenstern's Morningstar Prairie Plants native plant nursery ([morningstarprairieplants.com](http://morningstarprairieplants.com)) in Damon, Texas. Mark is a TMN member of the Coastal Prairie Chapter. It is by appointment only so if I have interested members, I will contact him and find out more information about how to schedule a trip.

If you would like more information or are interested in helping with any HRM projects, please email me at [habitats@txmnbv.org](mailto:habitats@txmnbv.org).

Cheers,  
Donell



# A Note from the Cyrano Editor

*Megan Konarik*

**H**appy 2022, fellow TMNers! Just like that, we begin a new year full of opportunities and new beginnings!

The year 2021 was one for the record books. As I put the first newsletter of the year together this evening, I'm reflecting on the many changes and new challenges that have led us to now. It was the year we began to get out there again and find some semblance of normal. Our first venture was sharing nature with the kids at the St. Thomas Early Learning Center's Spring Festival. We then trimmed and mulched the overgrown Jay Pritchard Trail, maintained a garden at Bee Creek Park, kept our parks clean, sold native plants to the community, and even went on our first field trip since the Spring of 2020 to Hidalgo Falls.

We ended the year on a cheerful note by bringing back our annual holiday social, where friends were able to catch up over delicious food and challenge their nature smarts with a quiz, and

support our local chapter by taking home some treasures from the silent auction. There was joy all around!

Despite the challenges that 2021 brought us, 2022 looks to be a brighter year as we get back to what we love the most: nature. We welcome and encourage all of you to make our comeback even better!

As always, I am happy to accept any nature-related submissions that you may find interesting and wish to share with your fellow TMNers. The Cyrano Newsletter is the work of those that make TMN-BV so wonderful: you! Simply email me at [cyrano@txmnbv.org](mailto:cyrano@txmnbv.org) if you have any items of interest, like eye-opening nature finds, exciting excursions to a state park, or some knowledge to share.

Happy Exploring!




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## *Keeping our Parks Beautiful*

On November 13, 2021, TMN members gathered on a chilly fall morning and picked up litter in Gabbard and Brison Parks in College Station.



**We take care of Gabbard and Brison Parks twice a year! Watch your email for a notice and visit our website for updates!**

<https://txmn.org/brazos/>



## Upcoming Events

### Monthly Chapter Meetings

#### When:

February 17, 6:30 p.m.

March 17, 6:30 p.m.

April 21, 6:30 p.m.

May 19, 6:30 p.m.

June 16, 6:30 p.m.

**Where:** Brazos County Extension Office, 4153 County Park Court, Bryan

Please watch your email for details on each meeting

### BRTC Workdays

Second Saturday of each month from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

**Where:** BRTC, 3380 University Drive E, College Station

### Habitat Restoration and Maintenance Workdays

Fourth Saturday of each month from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

**Where:** Check the website or watch your email for specific location

# HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE



SATURDAY  
**APRIL 23<sup>rd</sup> 7AM - 2PM**

(RAIN OR SHINE)

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BUSINESS GENERATED WASTE



Enter HWY 30/Harvey Rd.

If traveling East from Hwy 6, take the first LEFT AFTER Veteran's Park.

\*NO ENTRY ALLOWED FROM UNIVERSITY DR. EAST/HWY 60

**HHW is a FREE EVENT for the residents of Brazos Valley.**

**Please visit our website for updates about our upcoming TMN events!**

<https://txmn.org/brazos/>

## Contact Us:

Outreach Director

***Katie Reed***

[outreach@txmnbv.org](mailto:outreach@txmnbv.org)

Volunteer Director

***Mike Stecher***

[volunteer@txmnbv.org](mailto:volunteer@txmnbv.org)

Publicity Manager and Cyrano

Newsletter Editor

***Megan Konarik***

[publicity@txmnbv.org](mailto:publicity@txmnbv.org)

[cyrano@txmnbv.org](mailto:cyrano@txmnbv.org)

Field Trips Coordinator and  
Stream Team Coordinator

***Kathryn Sneed***

[fieldtrips@txmnbv.org](mailto:fieldtrips@txmnbv.org)

New Member Training Director

***Kim Roese***

[education@txmnbv.org](mailto:education@txmnbv.org)

Historian/Archivist

***Wendi Gibson***

[historian@txmnbv.org](mailto:historian@txmnbv.org)

Habitat Restoration and  
Maintenance Director

***Donell Frank***

[habitats@txmnbv.org](mailto:habitats@txmnbv.org)

Communications Director

***Vapprrrenon Severs***

[communications@txmnbv.org](mailto:communications@txmnbv.org)

Youth Programs

***Andrea Howard***

[youthprograms@txmnbv.org](mailto:youthprograms@txmnbv.org)

Advanced Training Director

***Betty Vermeire***

[at@txmnbv.org](mailto:at@txmnbv.org)

Advanced Training Director

***Betty Vermeire***

[at@txmnbv.org](mailto:at@txmnbv.org)

Hospitality

***Kim Roese***

[hospitality@txmnbv.org](mailto:hospitality@txmnbv.org)

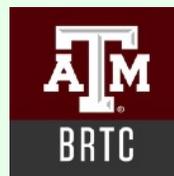
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