

What's happening?

Sept. 4, 2010, Saturday

Meeting topic: Aquascaping Your Aquarium

Time: 1:30 pm

Stacy's Furniture

1900 S Main St, Grapevine 76051

Oct. 13, 2010 — Wednesday

Meeting topic: TBD

Time: 7:00 pm

Stacy's Furniture

1900 S Main St, Grapevine 76051

Nov. 10, 2010 — Wednesday

Meeting topic: TBD

Time: 7:00 pm

Stacy's Furniture

1900 S Main St, Grapevine 76051

February 26, 2011 — Saturday

Fort Worth Botanical Gardens

Next Wave 2011

Great Speakers! Terrific Raffle!
Outstanding Vendors!!!

The Aesthetics of Creating a Natural System: Aquascaping Your Aquarium

Paul Whitby, Ph.D.

One of the major hurdles people encounter when assembling a marine system is obtaining that final look that makes people stand and stare. When you sit and think about it, we are trying to do something in a few hours that nature has taken several hundred years to perfect, so what are the secrets of a natural looking environment? In this talk Paul will discuss the theory of composition to create harmonious structure as well as showing some tricks employed by landscape architects, photographers and graphic designers to both trick the eye and bring out the very best of your corals and rock work. Once the theory is laid out then Paul will explore the practical aspects from rock choice through building structures. The talk will feature pictures of many tanks—from nanos to monsters.

(checkout [Paul's Bio](#) on page 3)

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Want to help make DFWMAS a better club? Considering serving on the Board of Directors some time in the future? Got a little free time? Special skills you would like to offer?

Checkout the list on [page 6](#) and volunteer.



The President's Pen

Having a Successful fragswap:

Advice for both buyers and sellers

Drew Richardson



Around the office, my co-workers refer to me as the “Unsolicited Advice Guy”, so I’ve decided to lend a little advice to the DFWMAS community, and make some suggestions for both buyers and sellers to help make any fragswap a great success. I’ve been keeping reef tanks for 15 years now, and I’ve seen my fair share of fish stores, club meetings, online communities, Macna’s, and fragswaps. Over the years I’ve compiled numerous notes on what to look for when shopping, as well as how to best show-off those special corals you’ve been collecting and now want to share with the rest of the community. I realize we just had the fragswap, so most people aren’t thinking about it right now; but now, really is the best time to start planning and deciding what kinds of things you’ll want to get at the next swap or possibly bring back to trade. In order to keep things from getting confusing, I’m going to break attendees down into three main groups. **Sellers:** not because their only intent is to sell, but people who bring corals to trade or sell—usually, the guys and gals that set-up a tank, bring baggies filled with frags, or just a bucket full of fresh frags. **Buyers:** Just like it sounds—the people that come to the swap with the intention of either purchasing an item or bring a couple small items with the idea of trading in order to get something they don’t currently have in their tanks. I’m not going to touch on this group since it’s pretty self-explanatory. **Browsers:** people that come just for the atmosphere, and may not be looking for any corals for their tanks, or they may not have anything specific they are looking for.

SELLERS: Most fragswaps have 10-15 people who go through the process of cutting multiple frags, gluing them to frag plugs and packing them in order to bring them to the swap. Here are some of the best things a seller can do in order to make sure they have a successful fragswap.

- Cut your corals and glue them to plugs or disc a few weeks before the swap. This is important for a couple of reason. It gives the corals time to heal and time to begin encrusting onto the frag plugs—the longer they have to heal, the better and it gives the frags time to recover from the stress of fragging. No one wants to buy a coral that was cut that morning because sometimes when the buyer gets it home, it may bleach out and die. So, plan which corals you want to take to the next swap in advance and frag them now so they are ready. Make a small frag “rack” or a little extra room next to the colony or maybe in the sand. After your frags are cut be sure to keep them clean. You don’t want nuisance algae growing on them, so grab a toothbrush and don’t be afraid to scrub a little algae off the edges of the plug if it’s needed. When you take the frags to the swap, you want to present them just as you would want to buy them: healthy, healed, and clean looking.
- Getting corals to the swap can often be a tedious process. The best way is to bag all the corals separately, but this often is very time consuming and may not make the process worthwhile. This is what I suggest instead: purchase a Rubbermaid container from Target—about 24”x12”x6”. Make sure the lid is a tight fit. The next thing you’ll want to do is build a rack out of egg crate, PVC, and zip ties. Although not mandatory, it will help keep all your corals organized. The rack should sit off the bottom of the tub—high enough to make sure the frag plugs won’t hit the bottom. You can line the corals up, secure them with rubber bands and fill the tub with only enough water to cover your tallest frag. Even if you choose not to use the rack, the tub will still come in handy because you can move all your corals at once, and don’t have to worry about packing, unpacking and repacking. [\(continued on page 8\)](#)

DFWMAS Officers

Drew Richardson
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Jeffrey Dheere
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About our September Speaker

Paul Whitby, Ph.D.

Paul Whitby is originally from the UK, but now resides in Oklahoma USA. While in the UK, he received his Doctorate in the microbiology of fish diseases, specifically diseases of fish with high economic importance and has published several articles in this field as well as medical microbiology. Currently he is an Associate Professor at the University of Oklahoma where he specializes in the microbiology of pediatric infectious diseases.

Paul is the current President of the Central Oklahoma Marine Aquarium Society (COMAS) and has had several articles published in Reef Keeping online magazine and is also a staff writer for ReefBuilders. He has published several reviews and articles on COMAS, the development of a captive

propagation program to conserve coral species, as well as numerous reviews. In October 2007 his SPS dominated display tank was selected as Reef Keeping Magazine's Tank of the Month. Paul has presented several marine aquarium related seminars at local clubs and conferences including Oklahoma's CRASE and Arkansas' Reef Fest conferences, IMAC west and others.

He has been keeping saltwater aquariums for over 20 years and has owned a variety of tanks ranging from under 30 to in excess of 600 gallons. His current system, including filtration, is over 1,000 gallons.



Next Wave 2011

SPEAKERS:

J. Charles Delbeek, Senior Aquatic Biologist - California Academy of Sciences' Steinhart Aquarium

James Fatherree, Author - Giant Clams in the Sea and the Aquarium

Gerald Heslinga, Founder/Owner of Indo-Pacific Sea Farms

Matt Pedersen. Currently resides in Duluth, MN, and has been a marine aquarist for 23 years, and an aquarist for 28 years. Matt's current area of interest is marine fish breeding.

We have an outstanding library of books, dvds, and magazines — members should take advantage of this MEMBER BENEFIT. Please let me know if you would like to reserve a specific book.

SOME of the great books in our library:

A Guide to Corals for the Mini-Reef Aquarium, by Dr Herbert R. Axelrod

Aquarium Fish, by Marc Ladonne

Aquarium Owners Guide, by Gina Sandford

Book of Coral Propagation, by Anthony Calfo

Corals, A Quick Reference Guide - Julian Sprung

Giant Clams in the Sea and the Aquarium - James Fatherree

Invertebrates, A Quick Reference - Julian Sprung

A Fishkeeper's Guide to Marine Fishes, by D. Mills

Marine Invertebrates, by U. Erich Friese

Miniature Reef Aquarium in your Home, by Dr. C. W. Emmens

Reef Invertebrates, by Anthony Calfo & Robert Fenner

The Captive Marine Aquarium, by Wayne Shang

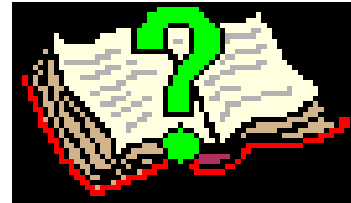
The Reef Aquarium Vol 1 - Delbeek & Sprung

The Reef Aquarium Vol 2 - Delbeek & Sprung

Your First Marine Aquarium by John Tullock

Jeffrey Dheere

DFWMAS Librarian



Rules For Borrowing Items

1. One item per club member per month. Maximum of 2 per household at any one time.
2. There is no deposit required for checking out of items (subject to change).
3. You must provide your username, full name, address, phone #s and email address before you can borrow a book.
4. Items must be returned in the condition they were borrowed (or fines could be imposed).
5. You must be a full member in good standing to borrow books.
6. Contact the librarian (DheereCrossing) to reserve an item—it will be available at the next meeting or arrangements can be made for checking out books between meetings.
7. You must return items before additional items can be checked out. In addition, items must be returned to the librarian by the original person who borrowed them unless otherwise agreed upon (please do not pass books around).

And you thought you knew...

Lindsey Angelone

Lindsey is currently serving on the DFWMAS Board of Directors

How long have you been in the hobby? **About 6 years.**

Where do you live? **Frisco, TX**

Where are you from? **I was born in El Paso and then moved to the DFW area for College.**

What are your last 5 occupations? **Customer Care Agent (LAME), Cake making guru (Dolce Vita), Tattoo Artist, Interior Design/Window Treatment blah blah blah business owner (Captive Design), Assistant Manager for Baker's Thomasville.**

Favorite movies: **Amadeus, Step Brothers, Inception (You should watch this, it will make your head explode)**

Favorite Actor: **Leonardo DiCaprio for films, Michael C. Hall for TV**

Favorite Actress: **Cate Blanchette**

Favorite Musical Group: **That's tough...I could easily listen to Marilyn Manson, Interpol or old school dirty 3OH!3 (before colabs with people like Keisha *GAG*).**

Favorite Author: **Richard Dawkins or Khalil Gibran, of course Shel Silverstein**

Favorite Dessert and Treats: **Frozen yogurt, I'm not really big on sweets.**

Favorite Restaurant: **Fogo de Chao or Mi Piaci**

Pet Peeve: **People who interrupt, it makes me want to punch you in the face.**

Do you have pets? **I enjoy my boyfriend's birds, they are pretty much my pets.**

Dream Vacation: **I have never really slowed down long enough to dream about vacationing...but recently we have talked about going somewhere tropical. Of course Bora Bora would be awesome!**

Hobbies: **I love Brazilian Jiu Jitsu, Crossfit, cooking, drawing on occasion, painting if I could ever find something I am willing to commit to, and WINE!**

Family: **I have two boys, Seth is 10.5 and Cole is 6, a wonderfully supportive boyfriend (you know him better as Matt, LOL) and his daughter Caitlin. Plus birds and fish and the occasional ants that come in when it rains.**

Who would you like to have as a guest for dinner? **Plato, Charles Darwin, John C. Riley or Will Ferrell...or both.**



RO/DI TDS Creep - is it worthy of concern?

Marc Levenson

Reverse osmosis de-ionizing (RO/DI) systems are an affordable piece of equipment for hobbyists everywhere, allowing them to amass and store pure water for their aquariums' needs. A RO/DI system can produce both drinking water and water for our reef tanks, eliminating the need to haul jugs from the local store for daily top-off and for those larger water changes.

If you have an RO or RO/DI system plumbed directly to your tank's sump, you have created a dangerous risk to all of your hard work - it only has to fail once to end years of hard work in a matter of hours. I've written more on this topic in [this article](#), which I strongly encourage you to read, digest, and to reconsider your current method. It may not be as convenient to have to occasionally fill up a reservoir, but it provides a measure of protection that can't be emphasized enough. Additionally, a system that is topped off automatically with a float valve or float switch suffers from a problem called TDS creep.

TDS stands for Total Dissolved Solids. The lower the TDS, the better. Most hobbyists endeavor to ensure that their RO/DI systems are producing 0 TDS after the final stage, using two DI cartridges rather than one specifically to assure that every last bit of solids has been removed with the cation & anion resin beads that make up the DI stage.

The RO membrane is the workhorse of the entire system, pulling out 92% to 98% of the dissolved solids before the water ever enters the DI stage. The membrane is tightly rolled and semi-permeable, and works best at 40 PSI or greater. Many mistakenly feel that if TDS is rising, they need to replace the pre-filters (sediment and carbon filters), but this is simply not true. They need to be replaced on a regular schedule - most choose to do so every six months. When the pre-filters clog up with particulates, the pressure drops off and the membrane is less efficient, and when the carbon filters are spent, chlorine can begin to eat away at the membrane. The simplest solution is to determine the period it will take to collect 600-gallons of pure water, and change the filters according to that timeline. Using a label maker, print and affix a sticker on the RO system stating when the filters were changed last as a constant reminder that can't be overlooked.

So what is TDS creep? When water sits in the membrane housing for a duration, TDS rises as it wicks out of the membrane. The initial 60 to 90 seconds when the system turns on will send this burst of TDS into the DI resin, or into the sump if it was plumbed directly (without a DI stage to pass through first). Each time the RO system turns on, this occurs. When one is plumbed directly to the tank, the constant on / off process day-in and day-out reduces the membrane's lifespan and efficiency.

Does TDS even matter if I'm getting 0 out of the DI stage? My reply would be "How would you like to save some money?" Membranes work best when they run for longer periods of time instead of short bursts. Some LFS (local fish stores) opt to never turn off their water purification systems to maintain the lowest TDS possible from the constancy of water passing through the membrane(s) at a consistent PSI, choosing instead to doing massive water changes in the selling systems to use up any excess water that

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NEWSLETTER

DEADLINES

*The
Last
SATURDAY
of
the
MONTH!*

*(Please be prompt with your submission
or they may have to wait until the
following Newsletter.)*

**Fort Worth Botanic Garden
3220 Botanic Garden Blvd.
Ft. Worth, TX 76107**

When: Saturday February 26th, 2011

Next Wave 2011

Help Wanted!

As you probably know, it takes a lot of people to keep a club this size running efficiently. Oftentimes in the past, these duties have fallen almost exclusively on Board of Director officers. The Board is exploring options in having members become more involved. Finding the "best" people for each position is critical. If you are interested in helping run this club (and hopefully, someday, serve on the BOD) then send a **PM to Jim** on the forum. We need your help.

- Do you have computer skill related to webpages, forums, etc? If so, you may be able to help our WebMaster keep everything up and running. Or, if you enjoy spending time on the forums, maybe you could help our Moderators (primarily, enforcing the posting rules).
- Are you skilled at talking to folks (and/or selling)? Maybe you could assist our Sponsor Chair.
- Do you like to write articles (even if they need to be edited sometimes)? Or are you willing to take pictures? Do you enjoy using Microsoft Publisher? If so, your Newsletter editor needs your help.

- Next Wave 2011 is just around the corner. Maybe you could volunteer to help direct people, monitor the sign-in book, pickup speakers at the airport or hotel and get them to Next Wave on time. Often speakers like to tour fish shops or the Dallas World Aquarium -- maybe you could help drive them around?
- We generally conduct two frag swaps per year. Maybe you could help with setup, clean up or monitoring the entrance?
- We need a setup and clean up crew for our monthly meetings. In addition, we need a group of members at the meetings to "be a friend" to first time visitors -- sit with them, talk with them, and generally make them feel welcome.
- We are thinking about ways to restructure and revitalize the Coral Coop. Maybe you could volunteer to help monitor that program.
- I am sure there are more opportunities that will arise. HOW CAN YOU HELP YOUR CLUB??? We need to begin a list of those willing to help. Although it may not happen immediately, we'd like to match people with their interests.

(continued from page 2)

- If you think you may want to participate in future swap, it may be a very good idea to secure a frag tank to show off the beautiful corals. Getting a tank doesn't sound like an important thing, but it truly makes an amazing difference. You don't need to have a custom glass tank built with starfire, but it's not a bad idea to have a decent 20 long with a good light to help showoff all the items that you've taken so much time to grow, frag, and bring to the swap. If you are having a tank built, I'd recommend using acrylic because it's lightweight and easy to transport. Also, don't use this tank as your "grow-out tank," and should be taken out only a couple times a year. This will reduce the scratches and will keep it looking like new for every frag swap—even if you have to spend some bucks to get one. Others are oftentimes looking for these tanks and you can easily find a buyer on the forums if you decide you no longer want it. Light your tank like you would at home. While you don't have to use the same 400 20k watt halides, you also don't want to use a florescent 5k lamp that was made for freshwater plants. Spend a few extra dollars and get some nice t-5 lamps or a small 150 watt halide. I can't tell you how many times I've walked around a fragswap and seen real nice corals just sitting in bags with only the florescent lights from the room showing them off. It doesn't do all the hard work you've put into the corals and the corals themselves justice. Remember you want to entice people to take your coral home more than the next guy, so present them in a better "light" and you're sure to win more reefers over.
- Some things no seller should be without, especially a power cord and plug strip. You'll also need lots of towels to help keep everything clean, and to help keep your hands dry while meeting other members. Don't be afraid to ask your price, and stick to it. If you want 20.00 for a coral and a member only wants to give you 5.00, let them make the first move, you don't need to drop your price if you feel that's what the coral is truly worth. Bring your own bags, either zip locks or fish bags with rubber bands. If you don't know how to tie a fish bag properly, then ask one of the experienced reefers to show you, use zip locks, or get another container like a small styroform or medical cup. A pad of paper with pricing—display your prices clearly for all to see. You'll make all your buyers mad if you quote a price to one guy, and then give a different price to someone else for that same coral. If you have all your corals priced the night before, it will help you sell them and will make others feel better about purchasing them from you.
- Be prepared to talk about your corals, and take pride in them. If you bought it 5 years ago, and it nearly died on you twice because you moved it too high in the tank, buyers would appreciate having that little bit of extra knowledge. They want to know what they are buying and how to take care of it. Keep in mind, all buyers have different setups, so take the time with each person to discuss care of the coral.
- Bring small bills to make change. Go by the bank either the night before or on your way to the swap and get 100.00 in 1's and 5's. No buyer is going to show up with 5 dollar bills, and if they do, they'll be out of them by the time they get to you. Buyers bring 20's and often need change. The top tricks I know are to have my own clean tank set-up with good lighting, and to have plenty of small bills.

BUYERS: Make fragswaps a successful event for buyers and make sure they have a great time picking out all their future corals. The number one thing I would tell a buyer is don't bring more money than you want to spend. If your budget is 100.00, then only bring 100.00 in cash. Leave the check book in the car, and if you really have to have that one last coral, then you can go out to the car and get the check book. Having a set budget not only makes you feel better about your purchases, but it also insures you have a place in your tanks for everything you buy.

- Know the kinds of things you're looking for. If you want low-light softies, then stay away from the SPS corals. If you have a good idea of the kinds of things you're looking for, *(continued on the next page)*

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then you're a lot less likely to waste a bunch of money on corals you don't need or probably can't care for properly.

- Don't be afraid to bring corals from home and try to trade for something you don't have currently. You can always ask, and the worst response you can receive is "no." I've always tried to accommodate traders, even when I had no idea what I would do with the corals I was getting back in trade. But it truly is fun to swap something you deem as "extra" for something you don't have or something someone else deems as one of their "extras."
- Don't be afraid to make the seller an offer. If they say "no" to one price for a certain coral ask about the other one you were interested in. If you want to buy a few, ask the seller if they will make you a package deal. Most sellers are inclined to make package deals, because they brought the corals with the intention of getting rid of them, so it never hurts to ask.
- You should quarantine your purchases. Don't just buy them, take them home and drop them in the tank. Take the time to dip them when you get home in the proper solution, and if you have a quarantine tank, leave them in it for a few weeks just to make sure they are happy. Please remember that quarantining a frag is much different than a fish, so they cannot go into the same quarantine system as the one you use for fish. Also, look around for familiar sellers. Often the sellers have been in the hobby for a number of years, and understands the corals' needs.. Some sellers will have spent a fortune trying to track down the latest and greatest coral a year ago, and you can often score a frag of that coral for a fraction of what they paid for it.
- Ask questions about your purchase before you ever pull out the money. Find out where the seller got the coral, has it ever had any diseases, where do they keep it in their tanks, what kind of flow and parameters do they maintain, and discuss with them how you plan to maintain the coral. Get as much info as possible, and you'll have much better luck keeping those little frags alive.

Hopefully, this information helps everyone that wants to attend a fragswap be a little more successful in their pursuits. Whether you're a buyer, seller, or just someone who attends to browse, fragswaps are often a great way to help expand your collection and learn from people that have been successful with corals.

I'm sure I'll have more follow-up information about fragswaps in the future, but as always if you have any questions, feel free to contact me at: presidentdfwmas@gmail.com.

Sincerely, Drew Richardson, President DFWMAS

CRASE

(one day conference)

Oklahoma City — September 18, 2010 — \$15 per person

Doors open at 9:30 am

Three great speakers: Christine Williams, Richard Ross and Jake Adams.

RAFFLE & lots of vendors

Visit www.thecrase.com for more information

DFWMAS Frag Swap

Members Only Event



August 14, 2010



Coral Fragging Demo: Using an Electric Saw with Diamond-tipped Blade



**Photos taken
by Marc Levenson**

(continued from page 6)

would otherwise overflow their storage tanks. As hobbyists, we tend to save anywhere we can, including water usage. We care about every drop of water, what filters cost, and how we can avoid being wasteful.

What's the solution? By installing a tee fitting in the spot between the RO membrane and the DI stage, a short section of tubing with a ball valve is all that is needed to start saving DI resin. The systems I sell from Melev's Reef come this way so the owner can collect drinking water for the family to enjoy in addition to making water for their aquariums. This same feature can be used to prolong the usable lifespan of the DI resin, and it literally only takes a minute of your time. When it is time to start making RO/DI water, open up this valve and let it run for 60 seconds or longer to extract the TDS-laden water, then close the valve again. Open the valve after the DI and the water will now be entering the DI stage at the lowest TDS level which avoids wasting the resin. It's that simple.

Real life example: When I need to start collecting more water to refill the top off reservoirs in my fishroom, I open the valve before the DI section and collect that water in some clean empty Gatorade bottles. When those are filled, I put them in the fridge, ready for when I'm thirsty. That TDS won't hurt me; it came out of the tap water in the first place, and it only happened in the first 60 seconds anyway. Now that my drinking water is collected, I close the valve and begin filling up the 5-gallon Ozarka jugs. With my current [5 stage system with booster pump](#) the TDS coming out of the membrane is 1 before the DI stage. Instead of sending 100 TDS into the resin for even a minute, I physically divert it out of the system. The DI polishes off that last TDS easily; with 1 TDS going into the resin, I've been able to use the same DI cartridge since August 2009. Even though I make about 225g of RO/DI water per month for my tank, I'm expecting this cartridge to last a full 12 months because I didn't waste any of the resin with TDS creep. With my previous system (100gpd at 60 PSI and a TDS of 6), the DI resin lasted for five months. True, the booster pump helps make the membrane more efficient and thus the lowered TDS output after the membrane; I would still burn off the first minute or two of water to help make the DI resin last longer.

Instead of running a RO/DI system daily for 30 minutes, it would be better to run it once or twice a week for several hours in a row. (To avoid stagnation issues, once a week is best.) The membrane works better during these longer production runs, and it will last longer. As I said, this will help save you money as you don't have to replace it as often. For those of you using the RO system to top off your tank directly, the system turns on and off multiple times per day - which is the worst thing you could do.

Here's some video proof of what TDS creep looks like during the first minute. I have an inline dual TDS meter, and the reading you are watching is the RO water's TDS coming out of the membrane over the first minute. Surely you have a minute to spare, which will spare the resin, and help keep some spare change in your pocket.

(The video Marc refers to can be found at <http://www.reefaddicts.com/content.php/182-RO-DI-TDS-Creep-is-it-worthy-of-concern>.

This article was reprinted (with permission) from [Reef Addicts](#) . Join Reef Addicts for many helpful articles, Pod-casts, product reviews, aquarium help, and many more. Give it a try!

DFWMAS Membership

There are a few things you should know before signing up to join the club - which is a different than registering on the forum. You will see that some users have a "Member" logo with a clownfish; others do not. Those users with that logo under their name have paid to become DFWMAS Members.

Membership

has its privileges!

In the forums you can see special areas that are just for Members - special sales and giveaways are the best part. We also have a special Members Only Directory where you can list your business. We have special tours and meetings just for Members (e.g. the Summer Social party) You get a discount for Next Wave, our annual conference with nationally-known speakers. And of course, the best reason of all, you support a wonderful club full of helpful, generous people.

Mission Statement

- Strives to initiate public interest in the marine aquarium hobby.
- Educates hobbyists regarding the importance of the marine ecosystem.
- Increases knowledge in the husbandry of the marine aquarium system.
- Promotes captive propagation



First and Last Name _____

Street Address _____

City, State and Zip _____

Home Phone _____

Cell Phone _____

Email _____

Forum Screen Name (if applicable) _____

Annual Membership Options - choose one:

New \$20 **Renewal \$20**

Attach a check and bring to a meeting

or mail to:

Membership Chairman

P.O. Box 1403

Bedford, TX 76095-1403

You can also apply for membership on our website: <http://www.dfwmas.org>

Paid \$_____ for DFWMAS Membership

Circle one: **New** **Renewal**

<http://www.dfwmas.org>