

**BLANCO COUNTY FRIENDS OF THE NIGHT SKY**  
**VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES!**  
**April 2025**

The Blanco County Friends of the Night Sky needs volunteers for specific, limited tasks that need doing. These volunteers will enable the organization to extend its reach and improve its effectiveness in educating the community at large about night sky preservation and light pollution abatement.

Some of these volunteer positions are actually “understudy” positions to work with current BCFNS members to assist with on-going activities and be able to step in and do the task in the absence of the principal.

Having a full stable of active and enthusiastic volunteers is essential for the long-term viability of the organization and its ability to protect the night sky.

Remember: Of all the forms of pollution mankind has foisted on this world, light pollution is the easiest and cheapest to fix. And we can do it in our own lifetimes! All it takes is people who are willing to help.

Note: Volunteers undertaking any of these opportunities **will be provided training and assistance.**

To volunteer,  
just shoot an email to [info@blancocountynightsky.org](mailto:info@blancocountynightsky.org)

*“We’re not passengers on Planet Earth. We’re crew.”*  
-- Former NASA Astronaut Rusty Schweickart

## **LIST OF VOLUNTER POSITIONS**

(as of April 24, 2025)

1. Volunteer Coordinator
2. Sky Quality Meter (SQM) Cluster Program Assistant
3. Night Sky Friendly Business Recognition Program Coordinator and Assistant Coordinator (for Johnson City)
4. LGL Database Assistant
5. Webmaster Assistant
6. Assistant Social Media News Gatherer
7. Newsletter Assistant
8. "NextDoor" Social Media Administrator
9. Facebook Group Social Media Assistant
10. Facebook Page Social Media Assistant
11. Instagram Social Media Assistant
12. Information Booth Assistant
13. Night Sky Art Contest Assistant
14. Night Sky Junior Ranger Coordinator
15. Night Sky Friendly Community Program Coordinator
16. Night Sky Friendly Contractor Program Coordinator
17. Night Sky Song Contest Coordinator
18. Night Sky Song AI Animator
19. BCFNS Historian
20. Legislative Liaison Representative
21. Membership Sign Assistant
22. Night Sky Friendly Outdoor Fixture Guru
23. Outdoor Lighting Ordinance Advisor (One for Blanco and one for Johnson City)
24. Media Assistant
25. Membership Coordinator

## 1. Volunteer Coordinator

### **Duties:**

- Maintain a list of all current BCFNS volunteer positions
- Contact current members to solicit their active participation as a volunteer for specific positions.
- Contact new members to welcome them to the organization and provide information about BCFNS volunteer opportunities; as required, refer new members' questions to others in the organization who can answer them more completely.
- Keep the BCFNS Webmaster apprised of the status of volunteer positions in order to keep the website up-to-date.
- Using the Little Green Light (LGL) database or other database program, maintain a list of all current BCFNS active volunteers and make periodic contact to elicit their feedback and encourage their continued participation.

**Estimated Time Required:** 1-2 hours to learn from the BCFNS Database Administrator how to access and modify the LGL database. Then 4-8 hours per month depending on membership growth

## 2. Sky Quality Meter (SQM) Cluster Program Assistant

### **Duties:**

- Assist the BCFNS SQM Program Manager to collect data every other month from the BCFNS SQM Cluster of 15-20 continuous-read SQM units installed at strategic locations throughout Blanco County.
- Rationale is that if we can't measure the darkness of the night sky, we can't tell whether or not we're making progress on light pollution abatement.
- Having a formal Night Sky Darkness Measuring Program is one requirement of DarkSky International for municipalities to qualify as an International Dark Sky Communities (IDSC). These readings are a required part of the IDSC Annual Report for all IDSC communities.

**Estimated Time Required:** 2 hours for training (4-6 hours every other month to collect the readings and coordinate with the BCFNS SQM Manager)

### **3. Night Sky Friendly Business Recognition Program Coordinator and Assistant Coordinator (for Johnson City)**

#### **Duties:**

- Work with the Johnson City Chamber of Commerce and/or City Government to establish this program, modeled on the successful on-going program in Blanco.
- Best if two volunteers work together on this.
- Follow-up periodically to evaluate the success of the program and solicit suggestions for improvement.

**Estimated Time Required:** 2-4 hours to get trained; a few hours to get the program up and running; then 2-4 hours a month to contact businesses qualifying for recognition; prepare the recognitions, coordinate a time with the businesses in which the recognition is presented; take or arrange for a photo of the recognition for the newspaper and BCFNS Newsletter. Notes: 1) an experienced BCFNS member will advise on which particular businesses qualify for recognition; 2) will require more time initially as many businesses need recognition but will taper off after that with, hopefully, one or two new businesses being recognized each month.

## 4. LGL Database Assistant

### **Duties:**

- Assist the current BCFNS Database Administrator with the Little Green Light (LGL) database program
- Understudy the current Database Administrator to develop the skills to manage the database in the absence of the Database Administrator
- Will be trained by the current Database Administrator in how to use the LGL database
- Note: Proficiency in Little Green Light is a marketable skill

**Estimated Time Required:** 8-10 hours to learn LGL; then 1-2 hours a week to work it under the supervision of the BCFNS Database Manager

## 5. Webmaster Assistant

### **Duties:**

- Assist the current BCFNS Webmaster to maintain the BCFNS website
- Understudy the current Webmaster to develop the skills to run the website in the absence of the Webmaster
- Assist the current BCFNS Webmaster in updating the website as new information needs to be added or existing information edited
- Survey other night sky advocacy websites worldwide and suggest to the current Webmaster improvements to the BCFNS website

**Estimated Time Required:** 2-4 hours to be oriented to the website design and procedures for its update; then 1-2 hours a week to assist with updating the website; the 2-4 hours a month to survey other night sky advocacy websites, make recommendations for improvement of the BCFNS website.

## **6. Assistant Night Sky Social Media News Gatherer**

### **Duties:**

- In coordination with the existing BCFNS News Gatherer, consult the automated Google (or other) news feed for night sky/light pollution news from around the world.
- Evaluate the news for possible interest to readers of the BCFNS Facebook page, Instagram feed, and other social media; choose at least two items per week for distribution on BCFNS social media.
- Format the items selected so they can be easily used on BCFNS social media.
- Write a short introduction to the item telling the reader what it is about and/or why it is important
- Forward the formatted items to the BCFNS Facebook Administrator, Instagram Administrator, and other Social Media Administrators.

**Estimated Time Required:** 4-6 hours a month

## **7. Newsletter Assistant**

### **Duties:**

- Help the BCFNS Vice-President produce the monthly newsletter
- Write short squibs about recent BCFNS events, programs, and plans
- Assist in gathering photos and/or other visuals to make the newsletter engaging
- Assist in ascertaining the effectiveness of the newsletter in reaching the intended audience with the desired message

**Estimated Time Required:** 2-6 hours month



## **8. “NextDoor” Social Media Administrator**

### **Duties:**

- Set up a BCFNS presence on the NextDoor app
- Monitor the NextDoor page and notify the BCFNS Board of needed actions or potential educational opportunities
- Note: We have never done this but the Comal County Friends of the Night Sky have used NextDoor extensively with great success

**Estimated Time Required:** 2-4 hours to set it up; 2-4 hours a month to manage it

## **9. Facebook Group Social Media Assistant**

### **Duties:**

- Assist the BCFNS Facebook Group Administrator to maintain a dynamic BCFNS presence on Facebook

**Estimated Time Required:** 2 hours to be oriented; and 2-4 hours/month

## **10. Facebook Page Social Media Assistant**

### **Duties:**

- Assist the BCFNS Facebook Page Administrator to maintain a dynamic BCFNS presence on Facebook

**Estimated Time Required:** 2 hours to be oriented; and 2-4 hours/month

## **11. Instagram Social Media Assistant**

### **Duties:**

- Assist the BCFNS Instagram Manager to maintain a dynamic BCFNS presence on Instagram

**Estimated Time Required:** 2 hours to be oriented; and 2-4 hours/month

## **12. Information Booth Assistant**

### **Duties:**

- Help man BCFNS Information Booths at community events such as Market Days, Twin Sisters “Raise the Roof” Event, Founders Day, etc.
- Help erect the tent, unfold the tables, and create an attention getting display
- Visit with passers-by, engage them in night sky preservation conversations, and provide both written and verbal information

**Estimated Time Required:** 2-4 hours per event; 4-6 events per year

### **13. Night Sky Art Contest Assistant**

#### **Duties:**

- Help the BCFNS Night Sky Art Contest Manager execute the yearly contest in both the Blanco and Johnson City Independent School Districts
- Coordinate with ISD art teachers on contest requirements, deadlines, and logistical issues
- Assist in securing a venue in which to judge submitted art
- Assist in arranging for and conducting award events; take photos of the awardees and secure identifying information necessary for media publication

**Estimated Time Required:** 10-20 hours per year, concentrated in the Spring

### **14. Night Sky Junior Ranger Coordinator**

#### **Duties:**

- Work with Blanco and Johnson City schools and the local Home School Community to set up a night sky appreciation program aimed at Middle School and below
- Coordinate with local amateur astronomers to arrange periodic, age-appropriate Star Parties and/or Stellarium presentations
- Coordinate with the LBJ National Historical Park and the Science Mill in Johnson City to leverage our collective efforts

**Estimated Time Required:** 10-20 hours to set it all up; 2-4 hours a month to manage it

## 15. Night Sky Friendly Community Program Coordinator

### Duties:

- Start this program from scratch to recognize existing local communities/developments (e.g. Rocking J, Cielo Springs, etc.) that have (or could have) good night sky friendly outdoor lighting
- In conjunction with the BCFNS Board, develop standards for community recognition to include a required percentage of homes in the community/development with good lighting, i.e., if x% of homes in the community have good outdoor lighting, the community can be recognized
- Conduct after dark assessments of lighting in communities that express an interest in this
- Help design some sort of community recognition sign, sticker, or the like
- Assist community residents in developing a community education program to develop community-wide consensus on having night sky friendly outdoor lighting
- Work closely with the Blanco County Conservation Initiative (BCCI) Night Sky Friendly Neighborhood Program Facilitator (who works with developers) and the Hill Country Alliance
- Training will be provided on how to do the lighting assessments

**Estimated Time Required:** 4 hours to get trained on how to do assessments; 10-20 hours to get the program set it and publicized; 2-4 hours a month to manage it depending on interest generated; Note: If this program takes off, other volunteers will be needed to shepherd it as it spreads from community to community

## 16. Night Sky Friendly Contractor Program Coordinator

### Duties:

- Set up this program from scratch, working with the Hill Country Alliance and the Chambers of Commerce in Blanco and Johnson City.
- Program is to educate contractors on the benefits of night sky friendly outdoor lighting and get their cooperation in educating their clients, noting that the clients' desires will always take precedence, but we want them to make an educated decision that will protect the night sky
- Follow-up periodically to evaluate the success of the program and solicit suggestions for improvement.
- Attend periodic Contractor's Breakfast hosted by the Blanco Chamber of Commerce (and perhaps the JC Chamber as well)
- Visit with individual contractors to explain the program and its benefits
- Provide individual contractors flat-bottomed LED bulbs and/or motion detection bulbs as a demonstration of good lighting (provided free by the BCFNS).

**Estimated Time Required:** 10-20 hours to get the program up and running; then 2-4 hours a month to maintain contact with the contractors

## 17. **Night Sky Song Contest Coordinator**

### **Duties:**

- Coordinate the on-again/off-again BCFNS Night Sky Song contest to include promoting the contest to local songwriters and performers; conduct a “Sing Off” to select the best songs to possibly record on an appropriate medium; if approved by the Board, coordinate with Los Senderos Studio to schedule recording sessions for the contest winners
- Coordinate with other song writing events such as the Dripping Springs Songwriters Festival in October to elicit new songwriters from the larger Hill Country area
- Note: This has been a major project for the BCFNS in the past and many members have participated in making it a success.
- This volunteer position is to coordinate these volunteer efforts.

**Estimated Time Required:** 10-20 hours a year to promote and coordinate the event; 3-4 hours a year to coordinate studio time; maybe 20 hours a year to search for other songwriters

## 18. **Night Sky Song AI Animator**

### **Duties:**

- Using Artificial Intelligence (AI) or other tools, animate night sky-related songs into short video clips that can be incorporated into BCFNS education efforts aimed at both children and adults
- For an example, see the animation of the Ken Frederick night sky song on the Video tab of the BCFNS website

**Estimated Time Required:** Unknown

## 19. BCFNS Historian

### **Duties:**

- Gather and maintain in an MS Word document a history of BCFNS activities, programs, and presentations.
- Coordinate with BCFNS principals after each event to ascertain the date and location of the event, its purpose, number of attendees, and other relevant information.
- Gather and maintain documentation of “Lessons Learned” to enable the improvement of events and activities over time.
- Maintain a separate history file with photos and newspaper articles about or relevant to the BCFNS. To facilitate this task, instruct other BCFNS members how to use Drop Box or other file sharing programs to submit items for the history file.
- Maintain in an MS Word document a simplified calendar of activities completed.
- Make the history files available in MS Word document (for easy cut-and-paste) each November for incorporation into the Annual Report required by DarkSky International.

**Estimated Time Required:** 1-2 hours to be trained; 2-4 hours/month thereafter.

## 20. Legislative Liaison Representative

### **Duties:**

- In coordination with the Hill Country Alliance, DarkSky-Texas, and local county-level night sky advocacy groups, develop legislative proposals to protect the night sky state-wide.
- Develop and maintain liaison with Blanco County's State Representative and State Senator and, as required, the representatives of other districts.
- Develop and maintain liaison with relevant groups such as Keep Texas Beautiful, Scenic Texas, Master Naturalists, the Texas Hotel and Lodging Association, etc. as well as conservation groups such as the Blanco County Conservation Initiative (BCCI).
- Provide the BCFNS Database Administrator relevant contact information for inclusion in the LGL database

**Estimated Time Required:** 10-20+ hours to become familiar with the issues; additional time TBD



## 21. Membership Sign Assistant

### **Duties:**

- Upon request of new BCFNS members, assist the member in mounting the Membership Sign (the best advertising the Night Sky can have)
- Mounting could involve digging a hole, and mounting the sign on a small post; hanging the sign on a fence or gate; hanging it on a tree; etc.
- The BCFNS will provide reimbursement for any costs incurred such as posts, screws, wire etc.

**Estimated Time Required:** 2 hours to be oriented and shown examples. 1-2 hours/month depending on requests received and the sign locations

## 22. Night Sky Friendly Outdoor Lighting Fixture Guru

### **Duties:**

- Work with businesses, organizations, and individual homeowners to find and facilitate purchase of night sky friendly lighting fixtures to retrofit aberrant outdoor lighting or to install in new construction.
- Retrofit work usually will be done in conjunction with another BCFNS volunteer who will do an evaluation of outdoor lighting to determine if a particular existing fixture needs replacing.
- Will work with contractors and developers to identify night sky friendly outdoor fixtures suitable for their clients.
- Will coordinate efforts with the Blanco County Conservation Initiative (BCCI) Night Sky Friendly Neighborhood Program Coordinator, the BCFNS Night Sky Friendly Community Program Coordinator, and the Night Sky Friendly Business Recognition Program Coordinator
- Will have no role in the actual purchase of fixtures; will provide advice only
- Note: Most of the work will be done on the internet finding fixtures appropriate to requirements.

**Estimated Time Required:** 10-20 hours to become familiar with the issue and the fixtures available; then 0-4 hours a month as requests for fixture recommendations come in.

## 23. Outdoor Lighting Ordinance Advisor (2 required)

### Duties:

- Develop expertise in the requirements of the Blanco and Johnson City Outdoor Lighting Ordinances
- Coordinate with Blanco County municipal city administrators and code enforcement officers to provide advice of outdoor lighting ordinance violations and needed ordinance revisions
- Develop an expertise in DarkSky International outdoor lighting requirements and how to assess such lighting for night sky compatibility.
- Learn how to use the Opple Light meter and the Sky Quality meter (SQM-L) to obtain quantitative data upon which to base evaluations and advice.
- Make recommendations for actions to mitigate the adverse effects of evaluated outdoor lighting before any complaint is filed with the municipality.
- Assist individuals in filing of complaints for violations of Outdoor Lighting Ordinances. Note: Only individuals physically residing in a municipality can file a complaint about an ordinance violation in that municipality, but this volunteer can advise such individuals and help assemble the requisite paperwork for them.
- Provide advice and assistance as requested to the Historic Preservation Commissions in Blanco and Johnson City.
- If requested, assist the city governments of Johnson City and Round Mountain in applying for International Dark Sky Community (IDSC) status from DarkSky International.

**Estimated Time Required:** 8-16 hours of training to include nighttime training and self-study; 4-8 hours/month thereafter; IDSC application assistance may require additional hours, TBD

## **24. Media Assistant**

### **Duties:**

- Help the BCFNS President write, edit, and submit to various media outlets news about BCFNS activities and news about night sky preservation in Blanco County and beyond
- Provide or coordinate photographic documentation of all BCFNS events; gather relevant data to accompany each photograph such as names of individuals present and other event data necessary to write photo cutlines and/or stories for the media
- Assist the BCFSN Media Blitz Project Manager in designing and executing the annual Night Sky Media Blitz involving designing, producing, and mailing postcards to every postal recipient in Blanco County, followed by paid ads in both Blanco County newspapers

**Estimated Time Required:** 2-4 hours per month to assist the President; 10-20 hours per year for the Media Blitz

## **25. Membership Coordinator**

### **Duties:**

- Work with the BCFNS Database Manager and Treasurer to maintain visibility of the BCFNS membership
- Contact members who have not renewed their memberships to ascertain the reasons for non-renewal (usually they didn't realize their membership had lapsed)
- Provide information on BCFNS membership options, stressing automatic renewal
- Provide membership statistics and issues to the BCFNS Board prior to the monthly Board meeting
- Make recommendations to the Board on how to best maintain/increase BCFNS membership in all categories

**Estimated Time Required:** 4-8 hours per month