

**ARLINGTON
CONSERVATION
COUNCIL**

POST OAK

WORKING TO CONSERVE ARLINGTON'S NATURAL RESOURCES
VOLUME 4, NUMBER 3

MAY 2003

Native Plant Sale
Saturday, May 10 9:00 am - 4:00 pm
Molly Hollar Wildscape
Come out early to buy great plants
and help out!

May Meeting

TOPIC: Vehicle Technologies: Today,
Tomorrow, and Beyond

SPEAKER: Nan Miller, Senior Transportation Planner, North Central Council of Governments

WHEN: Wednesday, May 14, 7:00 pm

WHERE: First United Methodist Church,
313 N. Center at Division.
(Enter through north door.)

NOTE: Nan is coordinator of the Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities program and assists fleet operators in changing to alternatively fueled vehicles.

**Remember to bring
something for the raffle!**

When It Comes to Trash, We're Number 1

The bad news was that Founders Park had loads of trash along its beautiful wooded stretch of Johnson Creek. The good news: All that trash brought ACC a tie for first place in the over-18 category of Arlington's 3rd annual Litter Challenge on March 29.

Among the volunteers was Cynthia Maroney, a nearby resident who often walks her dog in Founders Park. She hated seeing the mess of trash that so often winds up in a creek. She proposed the park as a worthy candidate to Roni Crotty, Arlington Environmental Specialist, who in turn passed the suggestion on to John Darling. We agreed that Founders Park was a good match for ACC since it's such a valuable natural setting for migrating songbirds. Indeed, as Sarah Dendy slogged through the flowing creek, she was identifying birds and noting the signs of recent beaver activity.

The next day, Cynthia expressed her thanks: "I was thrilled that so many people showed up to clean Founders Park. I didn't think we could do half the park, and by the end, almost the entire park was clean. Please tell your group how much I appreciate the work."

Thanks to Bob Briggs, his grandchildren, Alex and Ashley Briggs, Julia Burgen, Sarah Dendy, Dale Denton, Candy Halliburton, Jennifer Hiler, Marian Hiler, Molly Hollar, Ann Knudsen, Cynthia and Darton Maroney, Ray Miliner, Steve Rothwell, Jean-Marie and Stephen Smith, Ann Trenton, and Nancy Ulrich for pitching in.

Special thanks go to Jean-Marie for rallying the volunteers, to Molly for refreshments, and Steve and Jennifer for providing their trucks to haul all 67 bags of litter to the drop-off site.



From the President by Marian Hiler



I can't help it. It's my mother's fault. I just hate seeing things wasted. What shaped her conservation bent was a childhood during the Great

Depression, rationing during World War II, and raising six children without ever learning to drive. She definitely practiced the 3 Rs—Reduce, Reuse, Recycle—as we grew up. She had to reduce her extravagant purchases because there was little room left in the house due to all those empty margarine tubs and bread bags she saved for reuse. The recycling she did was in her compost piles.

Yes, the acorns didn't fall far from the tree. Instead of margarine tubs, my collection of Whole Foods plastic deli containers is growing. And of course, I have my own compost pile. One of my favorite reusable items ever is the canvas

shopping bag. It's so handy to use and makes quite the fashion statement, too. It was a very happy day for me when Arlington started its curbside recycling program. All this and more help keep my garbage output to about one bag a month without even sneaking any into the neighbors' trash bags. My brother is testing the strength of the "for worse" part of his marriage vows by keeping a major stash of styrofoam in his garage, waiting for the day some organization will accept it for recycling.

Because of my early imprinting, I cringe when I observe folks passing up easy opportunities to avoid being wasteful in their everyday life: easy choices they could make if they gave it a moment's thought. One of my pet peeves is the person grabbing a fistful of paper napkins at a fast food eatery, using only a couple, and then tossing the untouched with the used in the garbage. Or, throwing office paper in the trashcan even though the recycle bin is right next to it. We could all make quite a long list I'm afraid.

Then there are my heroes who go the distance, often literally, to conserve. Julia Burgen has a reusable nylon bag to bring her clothes home from the cleaners. I think John Darling has brought back his empty Coke bottles from every continent except Antarctica, rather than throw them in the trash before he leaves. And of course, my mama, who still saves the wrapping paper from her Christmas presents to reuse the following Christmas.

"Setting an example is not the main means of influencing others; it is the only means." Albert Einstein

Do you like history? If so, how about being the ACC historian? We have not been keeping our scrapbooks up and it's time we started again. Recently, I have been looking through the 1995 and 1996 scrapbooks Julia Burgen has. It's wonderful to be able to look back to see what ACC has been involved in. Please let me know if this sounds like a job for you. Also, if you have any ACC-related newspaper clippings, flyers, photos and the like, I would love to make copies of them for the scrapbooks.

Nobody made a greater mistake than he who did nothing because he could do only a little.
Edmund Burke

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P.O. Box 216, Arlington, TX 76004-0216
Direct all newsletter correspondence to:
John Darling, Editor
1316 S. Pecan St.
Arlington, Texas 76010
817-274-1077 1darling@airmail.net

Contributors

Marian Hiler, Gita Mani, Stephen Smith

Proofreader and Mailing Specialist

Grace Darling

Arlington 2025

by John Darling

On April 25 and 26 several ACC members and a number of people from other local environmental organizations participated in a very big planning meeting. The goal was to include an unprecedented level of citizen input in the next city plan. I quickly determined that I live too far out on the environmental fringe to believe that my priorities will receive any consideration, especially in light of the prediction that Arlington's population will more or less double by 2030.

How can we think about sustainability, much less improvement, with this hanging over us? Apparently the

answer is easy: almost nobody will mention it—certainly not the folks who only want economic development as if it occurs in an environmental vacuum. Meanwhile the visionaries aren't even set up to recycle at the meeting. You can probably guess who picked up cans.



Trees Are Terrific...From Acorn To Oak

by Marian Hiler

You could have knocked him over with an oak leaf. James Hiler, fifth grader at Key Elementary School, learned at his school's award assembly that his poster had not only won first place in state but had come in second nationally in the 2003 National Arbor Day Foundation's poster contest.

Proud aunt that I am, I was there to see Pete Smith, contest coordinator for Texas Forest Service, make the announcement and present James with prizes that included a \$1000 savings bond, \$75 cash, a beautifully framed print of his winning poster, and lots of educational prizes. His teacher, Pam Miller, also received educational materials and \$100; and his class will take a special field trip to the Fort Worth Botanic Gardens. Because James was the winner for the Texas Plains region, a 15-gallon burr oak was planted on his school grounds as part of the Arbor Day ceremony that day.

But wait, that's not all, Pete Smith's secretary had baked a beautiful cake with a reproduction of the poster on it and enough copies of his poster were made available so he could sign one for each of his classmates.

Over 7000 fifth graders from 181 schools in Texas participated in the state contest. This year's theme, "Trees are terrific...from acorn to oak", celebrates the naming of the oak tree as the national tree. Courtney Blevins, Regional Urban Forester, Fort Worth Office, told me that there were a lot of artistic entries but what made James's poster stand out was



James Hiler with his award-winning poster.

that it followed the theme so well and was accurate. I think they were impressed that he spelled chinquapin correctly.

After a couple of days, James was able to breath again, and he can still fit his head through the front door.

Earth Day at UTA

Thanks to Becky Valentich and Craig Powell of UTA Environmental Health and Safety, ACC participated again at the Earth Day observance. Threatening weather forced us indoors, but there were lots of exhibitors and interested people. And the start of something potentially exciting: Becky provided soy-based plates and utensils for the baked potato bar that we collected and plan to compost as UTA begins its composting program. There will be updates on the progress of the plates, utensils, and the site too.



Stephen Smith demonstrates the appropriate level of environmental friendliness at the ACC display. Ellen Baskerville also lent her expertise to our UTA effort.



We collected a bulging bin bag of possibly wonderful compost material. Right now it looks like a mess of plastic and greasy potato leftovers, but time will tell.

Wildscape Update by Gita Mani



What's in bloom?

Warmer days and spring showers have encouraged a striking display of color at the Molly Hollar Wildscape at Veterans Park. Double kiosks are veiled with

coral honeysuckle, as is the pond in the 'room'. At the top of the hill, yellow

bridge. John O'Malley and Warren Tingley anchored the ties in place during the April workday. The ties mark the trails, protect plants from foot traffic and stop erosion.

Ann Trenton and Molly Hollar can be found at the wildscape every Wednesday afternoon, doing whatever is needed, be it weeding or picking up non-biodegradable litter.

Hummingbirds were spotted feeding at the coral honeysuckle. Catbirds were also seen in the park. Jan Miller and Molly saw the resident screech owl flying around one Saturday. Screech owls usually take up permanent residence and we're glad he's still around. On a recent walk, I was treated to the sight of his round head poking out the box, his gaze steady and sharp.

Thanks!

Many thanks go to Parks and Recreation

personnel for rising to meet the demands of the spring season. Thanks also to the many dedicated wildscape volunteers. And to Barbara Fleischman for wood violets and Turk's cap dug up from her yard for the May 10 plant sale.

Volunteer Opportunities

Molly Hollar Wildscape at Veterans Park

Next Saturday workday: May 10 (includes work at plant sale).

Time: 9:00 am – noon, refreshments will be provided.

The focus will be on weeding and trying the new privet puller. Let's hope for rain beforehand to make weeding easier.

Directions: Veterans Park is at the corner of Arkansas Lane and Spanish

Trail. Parking for the Wildscape is at the second entrance, off Spanish Trail south of Arkansas Lane.

Native Plant Sale

Saturday May 10.

Time: 9 am – 4 pm. Come early; these plants will surely go fast.

Location: MH Wildscape parking lot. See directions above.

A large selection of native plants will be available and volunteers will alternate between Wildscape workday and plant sale depending on demand.



It was basically bucolic at the April workday and a beautiful day for putting compost all over the place.

coreopsis is about to burst into bloom, with mealy blue sage and wine-cups providing contrast. Texas dandelion and ox-eye daisies bloom to the right of the walkway leading to the pavilion, with the occasional gaillardia peeking through. Elsewhere in the Wildscape you'll find Texas gold columbine, evening primrose, lyre-leaf sage, prairie phlox, prairie parsley, prairie vervain, calylophus and spiderwort.

Highlights of Wildscape Goings-On

At the last workday on April 12, volunteers weeded the entryway and paths by the double kiosk and up at the top near the compost area.

One day during their spring break, kids from the Tarrant County Juvenile Services with supervision from Mike Warren put in used railroad ties along trails all the way from the hill to the big



Your editor (above, perspiring) tried the melodramatic approach to privet removal, but it took Ashleigh Barnett and Jennifer Hiler (below) to defeat the wretched plant.

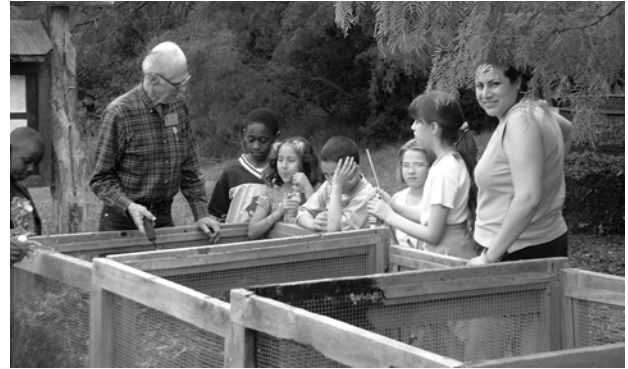


Walk on the Wild Side by Gita Mani

For the third year in a row, about 70 third-graders from Wimbish Elementary School took a Walk on the Wild Side on May 2. Lots of ACC folks helped out, but Marian Hiler, Jean-Marie Smith, and Sarah Dendy deserve special notice for their efforts. The kids had a picnic, threw seed balls at designated places, played environmental games, explored the park, and learned how to keep a journal.



Arrival and pandemonium seem to go together as Wimbish third-graders prepare to face nature.



Master Composter Don Graves introduces students to the wonders of the compost bin.

Texas Watch and ACC by Stephen Smith

Saturday March 22 was the first Texas Watch training session for ACC members who were inspired by Steve Rothwell's presentation at our February meeting. The pavilion at the Molly Hollar Wildscape in Veterans Park served as the open-air classroom for trainees Sarah Dendy, Jo Ann Duman, Shari Singleton, Joanne Stewart, Jean-Marie and Stephen Smith. Steve Rothwell, as promised, made himself available and gave every indication that he knew exactly what he was talking about. In the first two of the three training phases we learned the proce-



dures for becoming stream water quality monitors in the statewide program. At our Veterans Park stream we sampled, recorded basic observations, and measured temperature, pH, conductivity, and dissolved oxygen.

On May 3 most of us returned for Phase Three and several more ACC members and friends began training. Roy Miliner, Cynthia Maroney, Dale Denton, and John Darling were the new arrivals. Once again Steve casually demonstrated how easy the process can be, especially with years of experience backing him up. The new guys will complete the third phase soon, as the first

batch meets with Steve at their chosen sites to finish their training. It looks like there might be enough interest for yet another round of training for other ACC people. If you'd like to get involved, contact Stephen Smith at 817-275-7469 or buggy188@juno.com.

The data we collect will become part of a statewide database and will assist in continuing assessments of our streamwater quality. And the Texas Watch volunteers also serve as informed observers who can alert city officials to any streamwater problems they notice. It's remarkable to think that if even half of us continue and become regular contributors, we will more than double the number of monitored sites in Arlington.

Thanks

To Shane Goetz for supporting our efforts. If you'd like to help and publicize your business, call any board member for details.

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Memberships are good for one year, renewable each January. Your dues go directly to our public education efforts.

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Please circle membership category.

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How did you hear about us? _____

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Don't forget!

At the May meeting Nan Miller
of NTCOG will present *Vehicle
Technologies: Today, Tomorrow,
and Beyond.*

Don't miss it!



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