

ARLINGTON CONSERVATION COUNCIL

POST OAK

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

JULY 2003

**Note:
Special Date and Time
for July Meeting**

July Meeting

TOPIC: The Year So Far—and What's Next

SPEAKER: Marian Hiler, President,
Arlington Conservation
Council

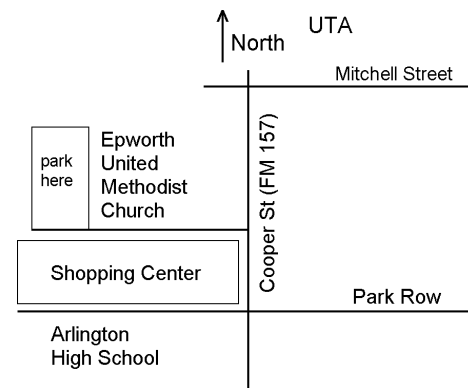
WHEN: Saturday, July 19, 10:00 am -
12:00 pm

WHERE: Epworth United Methodist
Church, 1400 S. Cooper St.

BRING: Good things to eat. We'll
provide drinks and assorted
utensils.

Special Meeting on Saturday, July 19

Our next general meeting will be something new, but not exactly. This will be our first mid-year brunch and social meeting. It will resemble our popular January meeting in most respects: You bring some good food, we provide drinks and utensils, and we all eat your food. President Hiler is putting together a nicely illustrated presentation that covers our activities this year, and she will look ahead at the rest of the year. We'll meet at our traditional brunch location, Epworth United Methodist Church (map below). And with any luck, we will hear some helpful conversation about what we've been doing and what we ought to be doing.



Did you make it to last January's brunch? Well, don't miss this one either. Maybe the best way for Arlington's only dedicated environmental community to function is simply to get together at a social meeting and communicate.

From the President Marian Hiler



It was a combination of reading Kenda Roso's concerned email and watching Linda Yarbrough in action that helped me become a little

more familiar with how the city machinery works. I'm seeing first hand how the squeaky wheel is effective.

Because Kenda sent out a plea earlier this month for ACC to become involved in the effort to save the trees threatened by the proposed widening of Baird Farm Road in North Arlington, Steve Smith and I went to the City Council's afternoon working session to listen to their discussion on that topic. You may take pity on me and think I must have quite a lackluster life when I tell you I found it interesting to watch. It was one part I like to people-watch, one part I had never been to an afternoon working session, and two parts I heard evidence that councilmembers were listening to their citizens. Two councilmembers and Mike Hasler, Director of Public Works,

all mentioned that consideration should be given to the timing of the tree removals in order to avoid nesting season, a telltale sign that Linda had talked to them. Mike said they would be following the department's new policy, which was adopted last May after the north Cooper Street bulldozing fiasco, when many nestlings were lost. However, this will only save the birds this season but not the trees.

I'm seeing that PW employees Crystal Owens, project manager, and David Corley are willing to work with us and to learn. They both met with Linda, Steve and me on June 19 at Baird Farm Road to get an idea of trees that might be saved. We saw how the proposed 44 feet for 4 lanes and striped for 3 with bicycle lanes will certainly require the trees to come down. Even if the bicycle lanes were to be removed from the plan, to narrow the new road to 38 feet, the trees would not be saved.

Neighborhood residents such as Kenda and Patrick Roso are expressing their concerns through petitions and emails, and the City Council and Department of Public Works are listening. At a recent town hall meeting on June 26, the neighborhood residents met with City

Councilmembers Katherine Wilemon and Steve McCollum and members of PW, including Crystal and David. Residents learned about the two options to make the required road repair. A third option was introduced to keep Baird Farm Road at two lanes, and thus keep the trees as well. Citizens will have to work hard to convince the City Council to accept this alternative.

Will this effort save the Baird Farm Road trees and the country road atmosphere the local residents have been enjoying? It's more than likely a long shot, but if the voices are strong enough, the City Council could very well weigh in in their favor and vote for the two-lane plan. Either way, the Council will know what these residents value enough to invest their time and effort to preserve.

The ACC Board is seeking designated contacts among its members for issues involving meetings of the City Council and various city committees and boards. The significant information gathered at these events must be made known to the membership. Any ideas or comments are welcome. If you are interested in helping us keep up with the issues that concern us all, please let me know; we sure can use you.

POST OAK

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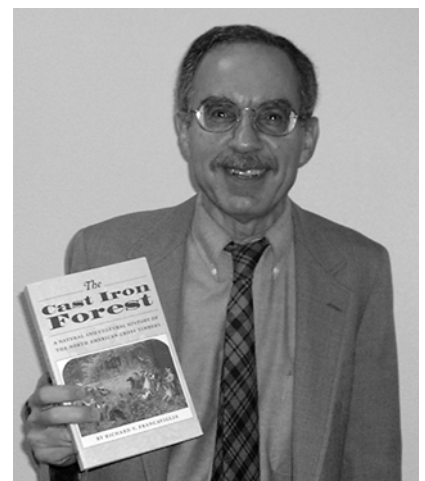
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A Great June Meeting

An unusually large crowd turned out in June to hear Dr Richard V. Francaviglia, Professor of History at UTA. Dr Francaviglia addressed the history of the Cross Timbers with a rare combination of scholarly expertise, humor, and down-to-earth enthusiasm that made for a marvellous talk.

One point stood out: The Cross Timbers were originally prominent on maps and in books, and their recorded significance declined as settlement and development progressed. Happily, he has written a book on the subject, *The Cast Iron Forest: A Natural and Cultural History of the North American Cross Timbers*, which should be available locally. Dr Francaviglia even allowed himself to be photographed in a highly commercial pose because several of us wanted everyone to be aware of his book.



Pot Crisis Looming



A small portion of Molly's backyard nursery.

Molly Hollar needs plastic nursery pots right now. Gita mentions this crisis on the next page, but it deserves even more notice—and your immediate help. Molly's propagation efforts have produced an amazing backyard nursery of the very best kind: all natives all the time. She and her helpers are bumping things up, so they need lots more pots today. Your editor took a bunch of old nasty pots over and learned that Molly welcomes pots loaded with crud, muck, fire ants, black widows, possibly even plutonium.

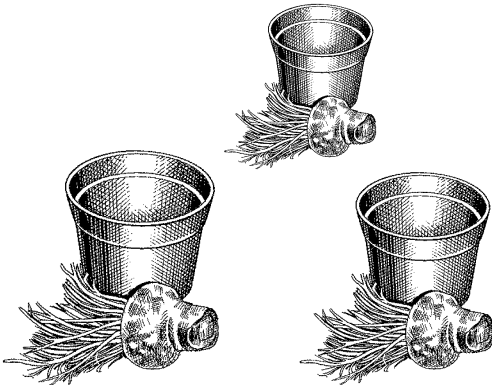
And there's a bonus: Act now and you can look at Molly's new butterfly garden and even admire the larvae of the Giant swallowtail butterfly. They're on the leaves of several Hercules club saplings and they bear a striking resemblance to bird droppings. Call Molly at 817-860-5580 and get your pots over there.



Maybe your pots are mismatched and even a little messy. Molly just doesn't care.



Larva of the Giant swallowtail butterfly. It actually looks better than most bird droppings.



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

Edmund Burke

ACC at the Show

Thanks once again to the Arlington Organic Garden Club for allowing us to participate in their third annual Natural Urban Living Garden Show. It looked like a big success for a real labor of love by AOGC volunteers, and we enjoyed spreading the word to the many people who came by our table. In addition to our message, we handed out recycling and composting literature provided by Lorrie Anderle, Arlington's recycling coordinator. At right, our display, which was staffed by Jo Briggs, Sarah Dendy, Dale Denton, Marian Hiler, Molly Hollar, Sandy Lane, and Jean-Marie and Stephen Smith.



Wildscape Update Gita Mani



What's in bloom?

The meadow is sprinkled with Indian blankets and the stacked purple blossoms of Lemon mint.

Graceful seed heads of Inland sea oats flank the wooden path to the pavilion. When I took a walk, the hot morning air bore the distinctive scent of Purple coneflowers and I watched (heard?) a bee buzz about their chubby centers in its work of collecting their nectar and pollinating them.

Highlights of Wildscape Workday

Three activities took place simultaneously on the June 7 workday.

Weeding

Marian Hiler, Molly Hollar and I, and Master Gardeners Kathy Beller, Gailon Hardin, Kay Seiko, Joy Lease, Mary McCoy and Marynell Hubbard took on Wild carrot, Ragweed and Wild aster in the meadow. I did double duty, taking notes for this article as well. You could say I spent my time weeding and writing. (Editor's note: I've warned you about this sort of thing. Stop before you hurt yourself or some innocent bystander.)



Weeding pays off. As we enter the stresses of summer, the meadow is filled with blooming native plants. Exotics beware!

Water Quality Monitoring Training

From the first official test of the water in the creek, Steve Rothwell of Texas Watch determined—via measurements for pH, dissolved oxygen and conductivity—that the creek is in relatively good condition. Stephen Smith, Roy Milner, Ellen Baskerville, Vicki Dixon and Lauren Dixon participated.

Composting Class

Don Graves conducted this easy backyard composting class for two participants. Classes are held 9-11 am on the first Saturday of every month at the Molly Hollar Wildscape, and on the second Saturday at River Legacy Park. These free and easy hands-on classes demonstrate the benefits of turning yard waste (a misnomer considering its potential in a compost bin) into fertilizer/mulch.

Native Plant Propagation at Molly Hollar's

Filled with row after verdant row of pots of all sizes, Molly's yard is a sight to be seen. Plants being bumped up in preparation for fall plantings and the native plant sale at the wildscape include Eastern red cedar, Soapberry, Bushy bluestem, Little bluestem, Four-nerve daisy, Hummingbird bush, Black-eyed susan, Inland sea oats, Pokeweed, Golden



*Ganga and Raman came to a plant propagation day at Molly's. They worked like a well-oiled machine in high gear, finding joy in bumping up *Salvia coccinea* and Turk's cap from 4" pots to quarts. Keeping them supplied with plants and pots kept me on my toes.*



If only it were as cool as it looks. The plantings along the dry streambed and around the pavilion already look as if they've always been there.

groundsel and others. A shaded lakeside patio with misting fans makes Molly's house the coolest place to propagate plants.

My visiting in-laws, Ganga and Raman, had a memorable time working alongside Molly, Anne Alderfer, Jean Hiler, Marynell and Helle Calhoun.

continued on page 5

Wildscape Update *continued from page 4*

(A note on bumping up: It is more efficient to plant from gallon pots because they are easier to water and the roots are deeper. Also, propagation via layering of a gallon plant yields four new plants, making the process more cost effective.)

All this bumping up has created a huge need for plastic nursery pots of all sizes including quarts, half-gallons, gallons, and tree-size containers. These pots will enjoy a kinder fate than ending up in a landfill. Call Molly at 817-860-5580 if you'd like to join in plant propagation or to arrange container drop-off at her house.

Thanks!

To Shirley Craig for donating one hundred cuttings of Prairie verbenas, Fragrant phlox, Pigeonberry, Aromatic sumac, White honeysuckle, and Elbow bush. John Snowden donated plants left over from the Arlington Organic Garden Club sale to the Wildscape. Not forgetting thousands of dollars worth of grasses. He has also served on the privet eradication brigade; his continued generosity is greatly appreciated. Jan Miller has donated a number of plants, including several Soapberry trees, Beautyberry, and many more. Ann

Trenton is a frequent presence at the Wildscape, ever willing to pitch in and help. Thank you, Ann!

The sight of a Carolina chickadee was my prize for late-morning note taking. Flitting rapidly from branch to branch, this tiny bird has energy to burn. O Chickadee, I thank thee!

The Molly Hollar Wildscape at Veterans Park

Next Saturday workday: July 5

Time: 8 am – 11 am, refreshments will be provided.

The focus will be on weeding, mulching and privet removal.

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.

NOTE: No workday in August.

Weekly Workdays

Tuesdays from 8 am – 11 am until the weather is back to being a little bit cooler. Call Molly at 817-860-5580 if you plan to go.

Looking Ahead

In October, our top workday priority will be planting gallon pots. We'll count on fall rains to ensure that the plants survive and grow with minimal watering. There will be two workdays in October, on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays, one of which will include the fall native plant sale.

Phone Committee Organized **Marian Hiler**

You may have noticed that we have an official Telephone Committee now, who remind us of meetings and other ACC events. Jo Ann Duman, chairperson, along with Jo Briggs, Sheri Quick, Jean-Marie Smith, Nancy Stankosky, and Al Vincent are calling members to bring to our attention coming meetings and other noteworthy news that is time sensitive. If you didn't hear from the Telephone Committee last month, maybe we don't have your phone number. Also, Jo Ann could use a couple more friendly voices. Please let me know if you want to be included in the call list or if you are willing to call a few of your fellow members every month. Call me at 817-277-3998 or email me at mern11@airmail.net.

Drying Beds Again

Remember the possibly nesting Black-necked stilts? The nest disappeared after a hard rain, but there has been at least one more nest spotted, and on June 29 there were two large downy chicks badgering a tired-looking parent. On that same day there was also a Roseate spoonbill up to its elbows in killdeer. When you add in several pairs of Black-bellied whistling ducks, you have enough large, colorful birds at the drying beds to make the trip visually fascinating.



Photo copyright 1998. Brian E. Small.

Thanks

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

METRO 817/265-2902

ROSSETTI AND GOETZ
ATTORNEYS AND COUNSELORS

SHANE GOETZ

715 WEST ABRAM ST.
ARLINGTON, TEXAS 76013

Arlington Conservation Council Membership Application

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

Membership Information

Please circle membership category.

Name _____

Individual \$12.00

Address _____

Student \$6.00

Family \$18.00

Telephone _____ Fax _____

Supporting \$24.00

E-mail _____

Organization/Business \$36.00

How did you hear about us? _____

Make checks payable to Arlington Conservation Council. Mail to ACC, Box 216, Arlington, TX 76004-0216.

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Don't forget!

The special July meeting on
Saturday, July 19, from 10:00
am till noon. It will feature
food, conversation,
a look back at the year so far,
and a look ahead.

Don't miss it! And bring food!



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