

**ARLINGTON
CONSERVATION
COUNCIL**

POST OAK

WORKING TO CONSERVE ARLINGTON'S NATURAL RESOURCES
VOLUME 4, NUMBER 11

**NOVEMBER
2003**

Third Compost Site Gets Big Start

On October 18 about 30 volunteers and staff from Tierra Verde Golf Club made a big start on Arlington's latest compost demonstration site.

In the last few weeks Tami Busby of Tierra Verde has worked hard to clear the site, tap into a buried water line, and spread mulch. We hardly had anything to do—except build bins of pallets and cinder blocks and start three compost piles.

Thanks to Evonne Sandas and Tami Busby of Tierra Verde for wanting a site and working so hard to get things ready; to Lorrie Anderle, City Recycling Coordinator, for her support and her masterful ability to rally the Master Composters; to Stephen Smith for his enthusiasm and organizational expertise; and especially to all the volunteers who came to help.

November Meeting

TOPIC: US Army Corps of Engineers
and Ecosystem Restoration
Opportunities in the Metroplex

SPEAKER: Gene T. Rice, Jr.

WHEN: Wednesday, November 12, 7:00
pm

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

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



The mandatory group shot (minus about 10 who got away). Now if the leaves will just get busy and fall, we can really do some composting in far southwest Arlington.



Jean-Marie and Stephen Smith pause by the new bins as the crowd clears after a good morning's work.

From the President Marian Hiler



The fall is always brimming with activities and events. Already ACC has certainly participated in its fair share, which you can read about throughout this month's newsletter. The highlight for me was the October 5 reception for Julia Burgen for her untiring service to the community. Many organizations, businesses and individuals came together to make this a wonderfully fun occasion. That alone is quite a tribute to Julia. I would like to join her in thanking all you ACC members for pitching in to make it such a great celebration. If you were able to attend, you saw all of the many items in Julia's collection of memorabilia. There were so many things representing scads of activities Julia has participated in, that it prompted my mother, Jean Hiler, to exclaim, "Julia hasn't lived long enough to have done all this!"

In a few days we'll have our regular November meeting. Please note that the December meeting will be at the usual time and place, but we will not have the usual program. Instead, we will have a holiday get together, giving those who come an opportunity to visit with each other a little longer than the other monthly meetings allow. Please bring a snack and the board will provide drinks and plates. We are also going to have what is often called a white elephant gift exchange. If you want to participate, bring an inexpensive (less than \$10), wrapped gift that is appropriate for either a man or a woman. We will draw numbers and choose gifts in numerical order. Each person picks a present, unwraps it and can either keep it or exchange it. The person who chose #1 gets to go again at the end. This game can be a lot of fun, especially when there are one or two gifts that everyone wants.

Congratulations to ACC Board member Ellen Baskerville, who recently

achieved her goal of becoming a North Carolina Certified Environmental Educator as she completed over 200 hours of workshops, outdoor experiences, teaching and community leadership projects. Her leadership project was heading up the sign committee for the Molly Hollar Wildscape at Veterans Park. Ellen's experience in environmental education has been a great boon for the sign committee. She has proven to be a real catalyst in getting the ball rolling to take full advantage of the kiosks and interpretive signs at the Wildscape. The first material under development is for the double kiosk by the parking lot.

In case you're wondering how Ellen got involved in a program in North Carolina, she started it while she was still living there. Fortunately for us, she moved to Texas over a year ago but continued her work on the program. She will be going back this month to be among the newly certified "Environmental Educators" to be honored at the annual graduation ceremony.

A Note From Julia Burgen

Dear ACC Friends,

Bouquets of woodland violets and prairie celestials to you for all you did for the event at the Fielder House in my honor on October 5. Despite the intermittent showers, nearly 200 people came and brought their own sunshine to make a splendid afternoon.

Special thanks go to those who made it happen. Martha Martin, ACC and Historical Society member, coordinated the plans with able assistance from Marian Hiler, as president of ACC, Sue Phillips, as president of East Arlington Renewal, and Geraldine Mills, Executive Director of the Arlington Historical Society and Fielder Museum.

Marian did the great job of meshing the collage of pictures on the invitation. Anita Garmon, ACC, Historical Society, and Arlington Garden Club member, was involved in the planning, mailing, procuring of food and managing the

food service, and provided small table flowers and a corsage. In addition she wrote the lyrics and then sang a song in the program. Those arriving at the front door were greeted with bird song provided by a tape from Sarah Dendy who was also on the planning committee and responsible for gathering memorabilia, providing baskets, and setting up the displays. Officer Jack Gariota in his police yellow raincoat ably served in his traffic duties. Paul Knudsen was everywhere taking pictures.

Others involved in food service and beverages were Stephen and Jean-Marie Smith, Ann Knudsen, Molly Hollar and Barbara Hibbard, plus Floy Watts and Patty Cravener of the Arlington Garden Club and Dorothy Beard of the Organic Garden Club. Historical Society provided cheese and cracker trays. Billie Striedel of East

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POST OAK

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Arlington Parks 101

Candy Halliburton

This past summer, Susan DeWitt, a concerned citizen, approached me regarding the excessive algae growth in the pond at California Lane Park. I understood her concern, because the algae certainly appeared intrusive, though I didn't know how it would affect any creatures of the sea or the integrity of the pond itself. I only thought it made for unattractive aesthetics.

In case you haven't had a chance to visit California Lane Park, the front part of the park, nearest California Lane is a well-kempt recreational and multi-use area. It is all neatly mowed and litter free, with picnic tables sitting out in the middle of delightfully dazzling, shade-free, luminosity.

The back section of the park, which begins at the creek and runs north from there, is a natural area (except adjacent to the creek where there are two more sun-lit picnic tables), supporting the habitats of rabbits, birds and even-the dreaded RAT-not to mention many smaller species. The pond, which was initially stocked with 500 pounds of catfish, acts as an overflow receptacle for the Turtle Creek Apartments and introduces a water source for the wildlife.

The day I checked on the pond, coincidentally, three park employees from the newly consolidated districts (reduced from 6 to 3), were meeting regarding the two pumps, neither of which had been operational. Because this pond does not have a natural flow, it relies on the pumps to introduce oxygen by aerating the water, keeping the fish happy, and in theory,

controlling the algae. Of course the algae is still determined to thrive as a natural outcome of photosynthesis.

As far as eliminating algae from this pond and others like the ones at Carl Knox and Gateway, the city does have a procedure or two. The park employees attach PVC to long rakes, pull out the algae, let it dry along the banks and then bag it and throw it in the dumpsters. I asked Jay Falgout, park district supervisor and my main source for this article, if this particular algae could be recycled instead of hauled away to the landfill. He did confirm that the high nitrogen content could have some use in the garden, but apparently the algae is more pungent than cow manure. MUCH MORE! So if anyone has a suggestion for putrid dried algae application, just let me know and I will pass it on. Otherwise-it is good riddance!

Postscript: On October 27th, I revisited California Lane Park to check on the pond. Both pumps are supposed to be working, but, to my naked eye, the algae seem to be developing a stranglehold on the pond. Could there be such a significant concentration that respiration and decomposition of dead algal cells might lead to a situation of algal bloom? Is there something we can introduce to the pond to remedy this situation? Stay tuned.

Thanks to John Fain, senior park planner, and Jay Falgout for taking time from their schedules to answer my questions.

Editor's note: Candy is a long-time ACC member who now serves on the Arlington Parks and Recreation Board.

A Note From Julia *continued from page 2*

Arlington Renewal brought fruit trays and served as the greeter at the front door. Beth Woodlock had similar duties at the door from the parking lot. And of course, so many people provided sandwiches and desserts.

Others on the planning committee or involved in some way with various jobs or donations included Susan Eaves, Beverly Fogleman, Jan Miller, Jennifer Spaight and Lana Wolff.

Of course the Historical Society provided the location plus funded the mailing. Sue Phillips brought the floral arrangement and served as M.C. for the program.

Current Mayor Dr. Robert Cluck spoke, as did past Mayor Elzie Odom and Councilmember Joe Bruner. Pete Jamieson, Director of Parks, talked of my record of service, especially on Parks issues. The Original Julia Burgen Cheerleaders from the May 1997 campaign—Geraldine Mills, Barbara Kight and Martha Martin—performed in their best Arlington High School style. The program was highlighted by Ace Acorn from the Parks Department and turtle impersonator Ashleigh Barnett,



ACC President Marian Hiler with Julia and Ashleigh (Turtle) Barnett.

who kindly donned the costume from the Creative Arts Theater that I had used. I evidently gained notoriety from my turtle performances at East Arlington Renewal's Springfests.

Other attendees included Del and Kay Taebel, who came from Austin, and Bud and Annie Melton from Dallas. Angie Summers, Click reporter for the Star-Telegram, came. She had done a feature about me on Earth Day in 1991 for the former Arlington Daily News.

Appreciation especially goes to business support from Val and Linda Gibson of Zap Copy Center; Ruth Kinler of Redenta's Garden, and Mark Chapman with the Red Oven.

We have often used this quote from Margaret Mead: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." To that I will have to add: and they can sure put on one heck of a party!

Note: Digital pictures of the reception can be seen at <http://home.earthlink.net/~henryandjudy/home>. They were taken by my daughter and son-in-law who live in Richardson.

Wildscape Update Gita Mani



What's in bloom?

In the last couple of years we went from the sizzle of summer to the chill of winter with days in between that were too hot, too cold or too wet.

This year has brought a fall season to suit Goldilocks—just right. Cool mornings and bright days set the stage for butterflies attracted to the buffet provided by Gregg salvia and mealy blue sage in the beds near the compost area. Fall asters and goldenrod abound. Bushy bluestem, switch grass and little bluestem display showy seed heads.



Another successful plant sale on a beautiful day, thanks to the considerable efforts of propagators, haulers, explainers, and several other kinds of ardent volunteers.



No mercy for unruly vegetation in the planting beds near the compost site, and it's a good thing because this area makes a big first impression from the parking lot.

With the sumacs turning crimson and other deciduous inhabitants following suit in various shades of autumn, the wildscape will slowly drop curtain on another season of blooming and growing. Following leaf drop, plants and trees continue to root and strengthen underground.

Plant Sale and Workday Highlights

The October 4 plant sale put \$2,500 in wildscape coffers. Shirley Craig managed the sale, and Pat Lovejoy, Taylor Stephens-Parker, Stephen Smith, Anne Alderfer, Kay Sekio, Ellen Baskerville

and I were on hand writing up sales slips, answering questions, and moving plants. Julia Burgen donated a few houseplants and an assortment of pots. Gailon Hardin, walking native plant almanac, answered customers' questions, and Jean-Marie Smith braved six hours in the sun as checker-outer.

Despite dry conditions and unyielding clay in

parts of the wildscape, workday volunteers including John O' Malley, Ron Milner, Dale Denton, Carol Wester, Ellen and Taylor put sharpshooters and determination to work and got a few hundred plants in the ground.

On October 24, members of the plant propagation team went to Shirley's home and its bewitchingly wild environs in Aledo to dig

up native plants, which were then taken to Molly's house for potting.

On October 25, the second workday of the month, 12 volunteers from WeCan and their leader, Glenn Troutman, appeared with coffee, donuts and lunch for all. They planted 500 1-gallon plants mostly on the hill opposite the bioswale: inland sea oats in the low spots between the meadow and the pavilion, and horse herb, *Ruellia nudiflora*, and Turk's cap along the entry to the LTV boardwalk. Six other volunteers, including plant movers John Darling, Stephen Smith, and Jennifer Hiler put pickup trucks and biceps to work, as they did at the October 4 workday.

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Arlington Master Composters build yet another pile as Don Graves teaches the monthly backyard composting class.

Wildscape Update *continued from page 4*

On October 28, 50 1-gallon plants were planted in the pavilion area: deciduous senecio north of the boardwalk, wild ageratum and white avens elsewhere. Volunteers weeded a little and watered a lot to compensate for the lack of rainfall in October. Three volunteers removed Bermuda grass from the area adjoining the sidewalk past the vehicular bridge and planted frog fruit, zexmenia, Lindheimer muhly, mealy blue sage, winter honeysuckle, Mexican buckeye, and lantana. The last four to six Tuesday mornings have been very productive, with an average turnout of 3-6 volunteers and approximately 60 gallons planted each day. Regulars include Ann Trenton, Devanie Fergus, and Molly.

A Boy Scout is working on adding doors to the double kiosk and the sign committee is about to complete its task. Expect engaging and informative wildscape signs in the near future.

Thanks!

To Lucy Harrell for her donation of a beautiful wooden rain barrel fitted with a brass spigot. And to Lee Hollar who will put gutters across the top of the pavilion to capture water in the rain barrel. This water will be used in the boulder birdbath feature making the pavilion a great place for bird watching.

Shirley Craig treated all workday and plant sale volunteers to lunch from Subway. She and Anne took a count of how many would be staying through lunchtime and brought sandwiches to go, saving us time and treating us to a picnic lunch. The parks department ensured we had mountains of mulch ready for use following planting. Thank you!

Thanks to Patsy Tucker—our pond chairman/water garden designer—the little pond is healthy again. She endured rosebush thorns for the couple of hours it took to get the pond filled with plants and going again. Patsy will also engineer the birdbath and keep it running. Anne and Randy have agreed to serve on the pond committee as have 2-3 Master Naturalists wanting to learn more about ponds.

Thanks to our dedicated volunteers, many of whom are named in this update because I was remiss in taking notes. Your efforts put 1,200 plants in the Wildscape in September and October alone.

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

METRO 817/265-2902

ROSSETTI AND GOETZ
ATTORNEYS AND COUNSELORS

SHANE GOETZ

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ARLINGTON, TEXAS 76013

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

NATIVE PLANT PROPAGATION AT MOLLY HOLLAR'S

Usually every Friday from 9:00 am – noon; call Molly at 817-860-5580 if you plan to be there.

During and after the holidays, the focus will be seed preparation. We hope to use the city greenhouse again so that immature plants can keep growing through the winter.

THE MOLLY HOLLAR WILDSCAPE AT VETERANS PARK

Monthly Workday

Saturday, December 6

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

The focus will be weeding, watering, mulching and maintaining. Once the trees have dropped their leaves, we'll also work to remove privet. If you'd like to volunteer, please call Molly at 817-860-5580.

Weekly Workdays

Tuesdays, 9:00 am – noon. Call Molly at 817-860-5580 if you plan to attend.

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.

**Is Arlington's litter
making you a little irritable?**



You can do something about it!

Once a month, the city selects an area for special litter cleanup and needs 10 to 15 volunteers to help from 9 to noon on a Saturday. If you hate litter enough to do something about it, contact Roni Crotty at 817-459-6587 or crottyr@ci.arlington.tx.us

**Call Roni for November
Cleanup Site
817-459-6587**

Pot Patrol **Stephen Smith**

ACC member Sylvia Phillips has developed a plan for diverting 1-gallon planting pots from the waste stream. It's aimed at anyone interested, particularly landscape professionals who use them in large numbers. The pots are needed for propagating native plants. Landscapers and others can drop off used 1-gallon pots at pre-arranged sites and save valuable landfill space in the process.

A map, currently with six dropoff sites, will be made available to those wishing to dispose of pots in this useful and environmentally positive way.

Please contact Sylvia (817-903-1003, cell) for a map, or Molly Hollar (817-860-5580) for directions to dropoff points.

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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THE POST OAK

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Don't forget!

At the November meeting

Gene T. Rice, Jr. will present

US Army Corps of Engineers

and Ecosystem Restoration

Opportunities in the Metroplex

Don't miss it!

Be sure to visit us at

arlingtonconservationcouncil.org



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