

**ARLINGTON
CONSERVATION
COUNCIL**

POST OAK

WORKING TO CONSERVE ARLINGTON'S NATURAL RESOURCES
VOLUME 5, NUMBER 1

**JANUARY-
FEBRUARY
2004**

**Special January
Meeting
Annual Potluck Brunch
and Planning Session**

Topic:

**Your environmental priorities for our city
and how the Arlington Conservation
Council can help you meet them.**

Speakers:

Everyone with something to say.

Materials & Methods:

**Bring your ideas and a brunch item;
we'll provide the drinks.**

When:

Saturday, January 24, 10:00 am- 2:00 pm.

Where:

**Epworth United Methodist Church,
1400 S. Cooper Street**

Looking Back at 2003

Last year's introduction to this list still applies, so here it is again: ACC can be hard to define. Is it a twisted sort of garden club? A mini-Sierra Club bounded by our city limits? A collection of people who can't abide litter and wasted recyclables? Or is it something more, a group defined by the diverse interests and concerns of its members? Someone listened to several of us recently and described us as a group devoted to quality of life. Maybe that'll do until we hear something better.

The list below omits one major activity: the constant work going on at the Molly Hollar Wildscape at Veterans Park. Every month, every week, something good is happening there to restore and enhance that precious bit of Arlington's natural heritage.

January: The annual planning meeting attracted a good-sized crowd whose many opinions contributed to shaping our plans and activities.

February: City Council announced the naming of the Molly Hollar Wildscape at Veterans Park.

March: ACC veteran Anita Garmon named Star-Telegram Stars Woman of the Year.

May: Arlington's 3rd annual Litter Challenge. We cleaned up in Founders Park and tied for first place in our category.

Spring Native Plant Sale. Volunteers talked to lots of eager buyers and made a chunk of money for the Wildscape.

Earth Day at UTA. Threatening weather pushed us indoors, but we talked to students, networked with other exhibitors, and collected soy-based plates and utensils to compost as UTA begins its composting program.

Walk on the Wild Side. For the third year in a row, about 80 third-graders from Wimbish Elementary School picnicked, threw seed balls at designated places, played environmental games, explored the park, and learned how to keep a journal.

Texas Watch. Several ACC members underwent training in water quality sampling by Steve Rothwell. Jean-Marie and Stephen Smith have been testing the Veterans Park stream ever since.

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From the President

Marian Hiler



Sarah Dendy

Our Sarah is winging her way to Durham, North Carolina. She and her husband John are moving there so they can watch their grandchild-

dren grow up. And if you were able to attend the farewell reception for the Dendys on January 11 at Epworth United Methodist Church, you heard how she wasn't just our Sarah. She has been doing just about everything, except sleeping, for a number of organizations. Representatives from each paid tribute to her, describing what an integral part she has been to their group. Sarah has been tutoring children, performing vision screening, serving her church community, and delivering groceries to Arlington Charities' clients.

Molly Hollar told how she can't walk through the Wildscape without thinking of her, eyeing the Turk's cap Sarah planted and the kiosk she supplied with information to help visitors learn about birds. Sarah has taken countless numbers of children through the trails, teaching them about nature. Butterfly-winged Anita Garmon and Martha Martin flitted up to the lectern and put

on a skit to illustrate how much Sarah contributed to the success of the Hill Elementary Courtyard project ACC adopted in 1995. As the Cornell University Project FeederWatch coordinator, Sarah helped third-graders identify and count birds in their courtyard.

I related how Sarah embodies ACC's mission—"working to conserve Arlington's natural resources". She has served on ACC's Board of Directors for the last 4 years. She participated in some way in virtually every type of project or event we have had—from staffing tables at events to tell people about ACC to mucking around in Johnson Creek removing gobs of litter, all the while pointing out the nearby birds. She did an outstanding job organizing our Walk on the Wildside program that took 80 third-graders through the Wildscape in two hours last May. She has been a great parks advocate, serving on the Parks Board for six years, and has been a member of the city's Parks Master Planning Committee.

Sarah has all those qualities an organization hopes for in a volunteer. She's enthusiastic, knowledgeable, dependable, and doesn't seem to know what the word "no" means. We have all benefited greatly from her presence. We wish you the best, Sarah. You have

certainly given us yours.

Special thanks go to Julia Burgen who was the masterful emcee and organized all the more than willing sponsors and contributors to this reception. She pulled it all together in typical Julia fashion.

Central Arlington Initiative

Recently, Julia Burgen, John Darling, Roy Miliner, Steve Smith, and I met with Randall White of the Corporate Citizen Group (CGC) to offer ACC's input on the Central Arlington Initiative.

This initiative is a city-wide collaboration to revitalize central Arlington. Its goals are to expand the city's tax base and create safe, vibrant, and attractive downtown districts. It's sponsored by the City of Arlington, Tarrant County, the University of Texas at Arlington, and the Arlington Chamber of

Commerce.

Some of the things we said we'd like to see were a downtown transportation center that would take advantage of the adjacent rail system; green pockets, redevelopment with sustainable overtones, preservation of the remaining historical features, better integration of UTA with its surroundings, and expansion and enhancement of Johnson Creek and Meadowbrook Parks.

Please note that your views are also welcome: contribute them online at www.corporatecitizengroup.com/CentralArlington.htm.



Sarah in typical mode: happily handing out information at the last Natural Urban Living Garden Show.

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All Memberships Expired January 31st

We don't want to lose you, but this will be your last issue of the Post Oak if you haven't renewed your membership. Please don't put it off. If you want a better Arlington, renew today—and consider giving a gift membership to anyone you know who values the quality of life in our city. We're only limited by the number of concerned people who realize that we can work together to make real changes. The bigger we are, the better the changes will be.

Looking Back *continued from page 1*

June: Third annual Natural Urban Living Garden Show, sponsored by the Arlington Organic Garden Club. We spread the word about ACC and presented a talk on Wildscaping.

July: Fourth of July Parade Recycling. We rushed to place bins everywhere, then sweated as we separated recyclables from nasty stuff. Totals: last year, 1 big bag; this year, 6 big bags.

Our First Midyear Review. President Hiler presented goals and accomplishments, and 33 members socialized and planned for the rest of the year.

September: The New, Improved Trash Bash. The city used several sites for the first time and ACC was chosen to sponsor Founders Park, where a bunch of Cub Scouts picked up lots of trash, and so did we.

October: New Compost Site at Tierra Verde Golf Club. We worked to help get Arlington's third compost site started at our environmentally friendly golf course.

ACC member Ellen Baskerville received the Applause Award from the UTA Libraries. She was recognized for getting a recycling program established within the library.

Fall Native Plant Sale. Another success for all those who had been propagating and potting for months, and more funds for the Wildscape.

Recycling at Exploration Expo 2003. We staffed our display, set out recycling bins at Unity Church, and were rewarded with lots of cans and bottles.

Recycling at Dog Park Kickoff. Bins again, this time among the mutts and purebreds, and still more cans and bottles. UTA let us deposit our loads in their huge container because our collections just won't work at curbside pickup.

November: UTA's Texas Recycles Day. Once again we staffed our display table, handed out information, and talked to interested students and others, thanks to the Environmental Health and Safety folks. And we demonstrated the compost that contained last Earth Day's compostable food trays and eating utensils.

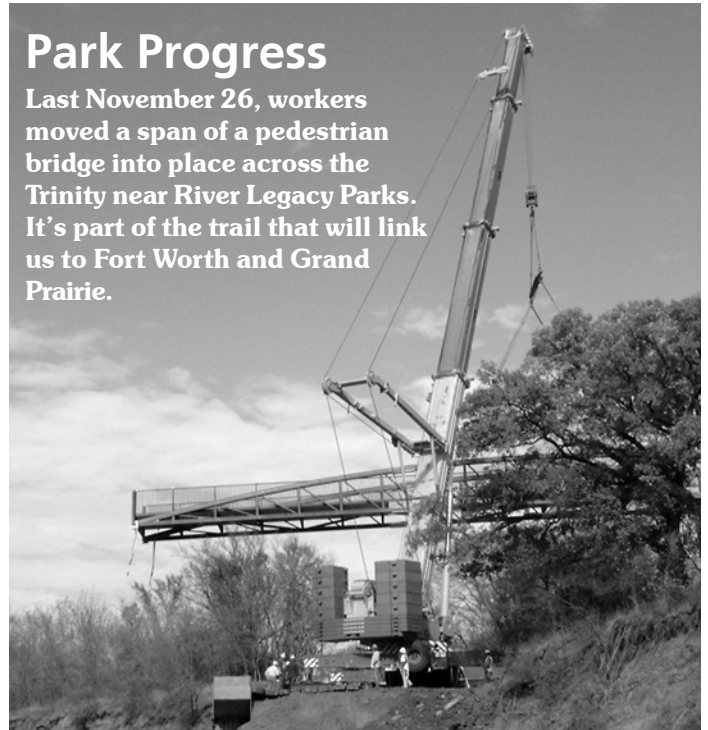


New & Improved

Despite the removal of many young willows several months ago, the beaver dam is back in Johnson Creek—and considerably bigger than before.

Park Progress

Last November 26, workers moved a span of a pedestrian bridge into place across the Trinity near River Legacy Parks. It's part of the trail that will link us to Fort Worth and Grand Prairie.



2003 Speakers

We're grateful to all the committed speakers who gave up their time to make our meetings so valuable last year:

Texas Watch: Monitoring for a sustainable tomorrow, one drop at a time. Steve Rothwell, Dallas Water Utilities

Butterflies in Your Garden. Joann Karges

Backyard Habitat: Landscaping to Attract Wildlife.

Leeann Rosenthal

Vehicle Technologies: Today, Tomorrow, and Beyond.

Nan Miller, Senior Transportation Planner, North Central Council of Governments; and Steve Elms, Tarrant County College

The Cast Iron Forest: A Natural and Cultural History of the North American Cross Timbers. Richard V. Francaviglia, Professor of History and Director of the Center for Greater Southwestern Studies and the History of Cartography at the University of Texas at Arlington

The Year So Far—and What's Next. Marian Hiler, President, Arlington Conservation Council

Basic Tree Biology and Construction Effects on Trees. Courtney Blevins, Regional Urban Forester, Fort Worth Office, Texas Forest Service

Community-Based Conservation Advocacy Strategies. Linda J. Pelon, Executive Director, Dallas Historic Tree Coalition

Our Next Bond Election. Joe Bruner, Arlington City Council member

US Army Corps of Engineers and Ecosystem Restoration Opportunities in the Metroplex. Gene T. Rice, Jr., US Army Corps of Engineers

Wildscape Update Gita Mani



What's in bloom?

The wildscape has pulled around itself a winter blanket, a dormant but promising patchwork of bare branches, fallen leaves and

evergreen. Groundcover north of the pavilion boardwalk is lush as is the pavilion area with the Canada wild rye. Pretty purple-pink fruit stud the coral-berry—it's a wonder the mockingbirds haven't eaten it all up. Twenty tender possumhaws will provide plenty of winter color from berries in five to ten years.

Workday Highlights

The December 6 workday was moved from the Molly Hollar Wildscape to the Randol Mill Park greenhouse because it was too cold to work outside. Dawn Hancock, Kay Sekio, Molly Hollar, and Gailon Hardin finished moving plants from Molly's place to the greenhouse where they rearranged and inventoried them. They made several cuttings for the mist bench and bumped plants up into larger pots.

Devanie Fergus, Taylor Stephens-Parker, Jean Hiler, Pat Lovejoy, Gailon, and Molly participated in plant propagation at the greenhouse on December 12.

Tuesday workdays have been spent watering the wildscape.

News and Notes

Volunteers have worked steadily on the portion of the wildscape across from the overlook. The plan is to illustrate a *verge*, an edge habitat that birds tend to prefer. The foliage ranges from a shade tree to understory to wildflowers and groundcovers. Three roughleaf dogwoods that Shirley Craig donated are in place and doing well. A half dozen or more understory trees will be planted, as will shrubby things, lantana, and other wildflowers. Stone has been used to edge the walkway, and three more yards of decomposed granite added to

improve it. Rosa Finsley redid the stonework by the creek, and she and her crew added big boulders where the path from the original meadow merges with that from the overlook. This has been a difficult drainage spot; one more pipe across from the path will help curtail washouts in the area.

Volunteers worked on the trail from the overlook area to the pavilion and added bluebonnets to the meadow. Their next areas of focus are the butterfly garden in the compost area, the bioswale, and the hillside across from the bioswale.

The area beyond the vehicular bridge that was planted recently is coming along nicely and will look pretty good by spring. The stretch of sidewalk from the vehicular bridge to the bird kiosk is about finished. From that point on, the area from the LTV boardwalk to the creek entry by the bird kiosk will be the only one that needs more work. Volunteers have been working on it for several years, so it's only a matter of embellishing and adding finishing touches.

Plant Propagation

More than 3,000 plants snug in the shelter of the greenhouse are getting ready for the spring plant sale. The propagation team has been making plenty of seed balls—of evening primrose, purpletop grass, plains coreopsis, lanceleaf coreopsis, lyreleaf sage, black-eyed susan, Indian blanket, inland sea oats, and others.

Thanks!

To Parks and Recreation of the City of Arlington for use of the greenhouse for plant propagation. Heather Dowell is a delight to work with and her cooperation is much appreciated.

To the volunteers for their gifts of time and growing zeal through the busy holiday season.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

THE MOLLY HOLLAR WILDSCAPE AT VETERANS PARK

Monthly Workday Saturday, February 7

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

The focus of the workday: some cutting back. Work will move to the greenhouse if it's too cold or windy at the wildscape. 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.

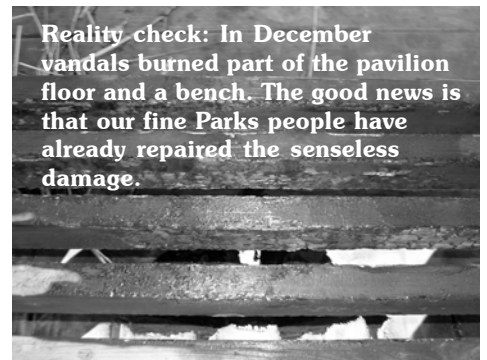
PLANT PROPAGATION AT

RANDOL MILL PARK GREENHOUSE

Fridays, 9 am – noon. Call Molly at 817-860-5580 if you'd like to participate. The team will continue making cuttings and starting seed.

Directions: 1901 West Randol Mill Road, 0.4 miles west of Fielder on the north side of Randol Mill Road. Enter the park and stay on the road around and past the swimming pool. You can't miss the greenhouse. Call Molly's cell phone at 817-319-6924 if you need further directions.

Reality check: In December vandals burned part of the pavilion floor and a bench. The good news is that our fine Parks people have already repaired the senseless damage.



Another Look at 2003



The ducks are back at the drying beds. Village Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant officials have pumped water into several ponds just in time to support a good wintering population of ducks.



Another big post oak died, this time on Mary Street near the Main Post Office.



We got a look at the latest in high-efficiency, self-propelled railcars when one was on display in Fort Worth.



Representatives of CVS Pharmacy met with ACC members to discuss their plans to minimize tree loss at the proposed building site at Hwy 303 and Fielder Road.

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
LOCAL 817/274-2905

THE LAW OFFICE OF SHANE GOETZ

715 WEST ABRAM ST. ARLINGTON, TEXAS 76013



A sewer line crosses Johnson Creek near Mitchell and Pecan streets. Its route was changed to avoid nearby woods.

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.

ACC is a non-profit, tax-deductible 501(c)(3) organization.

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THE POST OAK

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