

**ARLINGTON
CONSERVATION
COUNCIL**

POST OAK

WORKING TO CONSERVE ARLINGTON'S NATURAL RESOURCES
VOLUME 5, NUMBER 9

**NOVEMBER
2004**

November Meeting
Everyone welcome

TOPIC: Preserving Open Space
on Private Lands

SPEAKER: David H. Behm,
Executive Director,
Connemara Conservancy
Foundation

WHEN: November 10, 7:00 pm

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

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

**Just Park It,
Julia Burgen!** Opinion by John Dycus

It always amazes me when my government at any level does anything I like. Thus the Arlington City Council's headlong rush to logic in naming a 69-acre swath of Johnson Creek the Julia Burgen Park on the Creek brings a rousing cheer from this corner, and others as well. More corners than a rhombus convention.

The park, bound by East Second, South Collins and South Pecan streets and Park Row Drive, is slated to open in late 2005. Without Julia, there would be no park to open. Without her, there would be no creek.

In September 1995 the city was ready to sign an agreement with the Army Corps of Engineers to install a concrete channel as wide as Cooper Street through UTA, from Park Row Drive to Mitchell Street. ACC had had a field trip to the area late in August. Julia met with the Star-Telegram's O.K. Carter and photographer Jill Johnson on a Sunday morning two weeks later for a look at the creek, and O.K., Julia recalls, "wrote the most poignant piece on what would be lost."

Two months of fervent discussions—at council, in the community, in the newspaper—ensued. Sue Phillips and her East Arlington Renewal group and Steve McCollum with his Arlington Neighborhood Council joined Julia and ACC to form the Johnson Creek Awareness Coalition. Everything culminated on October 31 with a council vote on the Corps plan.

I was there that night. A tear welled up, honest, when the tally board lights blinked 5-4 against the channel. Dan Serna, an "undecided" in today's parlance, cast the pivotal vote. So let's hear it again for Dan and for O.K. (who won state awards for environmental reporting from the Sierra Club and the Junior League for a follow-up he wrote after walking the length of the creek, from The Parks mall to Grand Prairie), and let's hear it for all time for Julia.

The Julia Burgen Park on the Creek is part of the Corps of Engineers' flood damage reduction plan funded from federal and local funds totaling nearly \$27 million and was created by the purchase of more than 140 flood-prone homes. The park will include benches, picnic tables, a small pavilion, a small parking lot and a multi-use trail that will eventually connect with trails to UTA, downtown and the entertainment district. Native plants will be introduced at strategic locations to enhance wildlife habitat and stabilize the creek.

How fitting that this portion of Johnson Creek now bears Julia's name. Every time you drive by, thank her again for her dedication to improving our quality of life.

From the President

Marian Hiler



It's so easy to admire Julia. Her seemingly endless list of contributions and accomplishments could provide enough material for a year's worth of

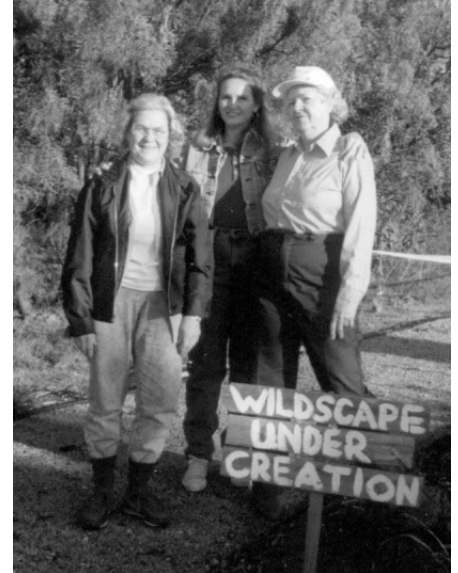
newsletters. And she keeps on providing new things to write about. She knows lots of stuff—from how the different parts of our city government work to how to read a topographic map to what makes up the Crosstimbers habitat. Plus she's just so darn modest and sincere.

Julia has demonstrated time and time again that an individual can make a difference. When she reactivated ACC in 1994 she made it easier for us all to join that small group of thoughtful, commit-

ted citizens who want to change the world. She was a leading activist in the hard work that saved Johnson Creek from the bulldozers by not giving up even when defeat seemed the likely outcome.

She has the uncommon gift to get other people to act when it's not always easy. Certainly for me, her tireless example alone is enough. How can I not put out at least some small effort of my own when Julia has done so much? She probably doesn't even realize how many she inspires in that way.

I'm happy that this issue of the newsletter is dedicated to Julia in celebration of having a park named after her. She definitely deserves that honor. More than any other person, Julia Burgen is identified with efforts to conserve Arlington's natural resources and Johnson Creek in particular.



Julia was also instrumental in the creation of what has become the Molly Hollar Wildscape at Veterans Park. Here she is (at left), about 10 years ago with Gayla Stephenson and Anita Garmon.



ACC Tours Creek in Proposed Stadium Area

On September 9 about a dozen ACC members walked the linear park property along a stretch of Johnson Creek that might be damaged by construction of the proposed football stadium. You won't be surprised to learn that our concerned, knowledgeable leader was Julia Burgen.



THE POST OAK

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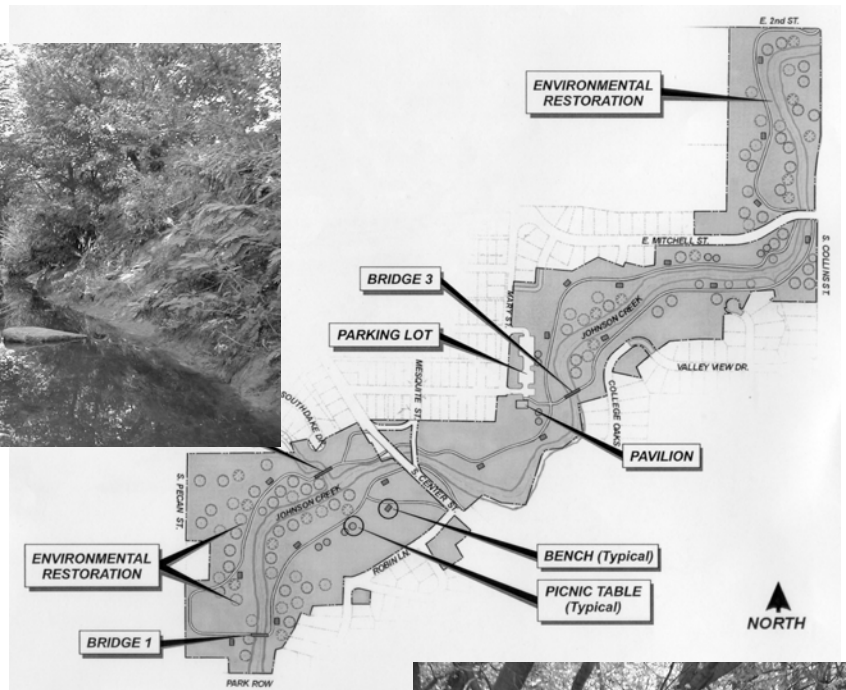
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Julia Burgen, Arlington, and the Park

Editor's note: Marian Hiler has combed the archives and produced the following list of Julia's activities.

- Arrived in Arlington in December 1977
- Earned MS, Interdisciplinary Studies with special emphasis on the natural sciences and education, UTA, 1986
- Wrote Rose-Brown-May Park Interpretive Trail Guide for UTA course work, 1987
- Local Emergency Planning Committee, 1986-1991
- Citizen committees for development of the Comprehensive Plan, 1986; Parks Master Plan 1987 and revisions in 1995; Park Pals, 1986-1996: Volunteer leading trail walks for AISD first graders in Veterans Park
- Southwest Region of National Recreation and Park Association Award, 1989
- Texas Recreation and Parks Society Individual Award, 1989
- Arlington Park Department Awards of Appreciation: April 1987; October 1987, May 1991
- River Legacy Foundation: Living Science Center committee, volunteer leading trail walks 1990 – 1992
- Wrote "Easy Being Green" column for Arlington Citizen-Journal, June 1991 – Oct 1994
- Stormwater Advisory Committee, 1993
- Development Issues Committee Sub-Committee, 1993 – 1994
- Reactivated Arlington Conservation Council, 1994
- ACC President and member of the Board, 1994 - 1997
- Woman of the Year Award from the American Association of University Women, Arlington Branch, 1994
- Adopt-a-School Volunteer, Hill Elementary School
- Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence, Clean Texas Project, Individual Category Finalist (one of six statewide), 1995
- Friends of Johnson Creek, secretary and member of the board, 1995
- Johnson Creek Committee, Nov 1995
- Woman of the Year, Star-Telegram, 1996
- League of Women Voters Texas Individual Award, Excellence in Environmental Awareness, 1996
- Arlington City Council member, 1997 – 2003
- Planning and Zoning Committee, 2004 - present



Wildscape Update John Dycus



Butterflies by the dozens flutter, flutter, nectar and lay eggs on the flowers blooming in the Molly Hollar Wildscape butterfly garden. The hordes of Monarchs

migrating through to Mexico join the Queens, Gulf Fritillaries, Giant Sulphurs, Giant Swallowtails, Skippers and other butterflies to add their movement and brilliant hues to this remarkable display.

Fall, with its cooler days, coaxes plants out of their summer heat shutdown into a glorious explosion of color. Red salvia greggii, mealy blue sage, yellow zexmenia, purple fall aster and purple coneflower tempt the butterflies. Hummingbirds hover over the coral honey-suckle, red salvia coccinea and red Turk's cap as they "fuel up" for their migration to warmer winter areas. Pollinating bees and iridescent dragonflies add to the spectacular activity. Lizards chase each other on the rail fences.

Last Saturday morning a UTA photography class surrounded the butterfly garden and captured a fascinating scene with their cameras. More



Veterans Park Master Composters (left to right) Cyndi Ives, Stephen Ives, Don Graves, and Greg Gordon work fast, but Molly uses up the fruits of their labors even faster.

than a dozen Boy Scouts dug-in the stone borders and water bars crossing the decomposed granite trail. Half a dozen composters watered and turned the decomposing leaves into the magic material that our volunteers spread around the native plants to encourage this riot of color. More Boy Scouts the weekend of November 6 and 7 will work on privet removal, and youth from Tarrant County Juvenile Services will spread mulch on the trails.

Texas Parks and Wildlife urban biologist John Davis brought more than



Members of the latest Master Naturalist class begin their tour of the wildscape with a discussion of native plants.

20 new master naturalists for their annual urban field trip, which includes Tierra Verde Golf Course, the Living Science Center and the wildscape. They reconnect with nature in this little bit of wilderness within the city as they explore volunteer opportunities.

On November 9, about 90 students from the neighboring Montessori School are scheduled for "A Walk on the Wild Side." Begun several years ago, this latest outreach is organized and directed by Jean-Marie and Steve Smith. It consists of a morning of wildscape tours, environmental games and journaling at the pavilion. The children, divided into small groups, rotate through these activities to connect with nature and hopefully begin to value environmental causes.



Boy Scouts from Troop 286 improve a trail as they assist Joel Nystrom with his Eagle Service Project.

Molly matters: "All of this would not have happened if Julia Burgen had not suggested the possibility of a wildscape as a project of the Arlington Conservation Council 10 years ago. She led the search for a site in the beginning, and through all these years she has strongly supported it. From her low-profile activity of personally keeping the original entry weed-free and neat, to using her very considerable influence as a means of promoting the wildscape, her support turned the possibility of a wildscape into a reality."



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Tuesday mornings, 9–noon at the Molly Hollar Wildscape in Veterans Park

Wednesday mornings, 9–noon at the greenhouse in Randol Mill Park

Friday mornings, 9–noon at the greenhouse

First Saturday morning of the month (second Saturday on a holiday weekend), 8–noon at the wildscape.

Bring gloves, trowels, shovels, etc. Water and snacks are provided. Contact Molly —mahollar@earthlink.net, home (817) 860-5580, cell (817) 319-6924—if you can help.

New York Avenue Blackland Prairie: Next Workday November 20



On October 23 a handful of volunteers (Debra Tate, Mary Roberts Turner, Donna Piercy, Jan Miller, John Darling) and a couple of Parks guys (Paul Woods and Jason Flood) removed a truckload of woody species and giant ragweed.



We need you on Saturday, November 20. Bring hand tools and gloves; long sleeves and pants are helpful. Water will be provided. Thanks to Arlington Parks & Recreation Department for providing a work crew to assist us with power tools. To ensure that we'll make it worthwhile for the city crew, please RSVP to Jan Miller (817/483-0579) by Wednesday, November 17.



Community Garden News

The steering committee for Community Gardens of Arlington met on November 1 and continued its preparations in hopes of opening the garden in Bob Cooke Park in time for next spring's growing season. This was the first meeting at Hugh Smith Recreation Center, which adjoins Bob Cooke Park. The next meeting will also be held at Hugh Smith at 7:00 pm on December 6, and everyone interested in this aspect of sustainable living is welcome to participate.

Our October Speaker

Cheri Reynolds of Abitibi Consolidated gave us many new insights into curbside recycling as seen from the viewpoint of the people who sort and sell the stuff we jam into those green bins. Maybe the biggest point: Paper of all kinds is consistently the most valuable category of recyclables, and it's worthless if it gets contaminated by food.



ACC Dues Increase Announced

Recently the ACC board did its unhappy duty when members agreed that we must raise our dues for 2005. The new rates will be \$12, students; \$24, singles and families; \$36, supporting members; and \$100, sponsors. The good news: If you join or renew before December 1, you can do so at the old rates.

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.

Field Trip Nets Computers

Somehow the recent trip to Johnson Creek ended with the discovery of a business school's dumpster stuffed with computer junk. Bob Briggs led the way as we indulged in dumpster diving for the sake of keeping this electronic debris out of our landfill. Your editor was recruited to carry the stuff to the dump for recycling (not burial), and he encountered a pleasant



surprise there: attractive and very eclectic bits of planting in several unexpected places. Assistant Crew Chief Denise Malander is responsible for the

oases, all created from plants, potting soil, and containers pulled out of the incoming trash. Denise loves rescuing the plants and her coworkers seem to agree.



THE LAW OFFICE OF SHANE GOETZ

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Wildscape books for sale

Butterfly Gardening for the South/Ajilvsgi - \$27 (\$38 retail)

Native Texas Plants/Wasowski - \$25 (\$35 retail)

Texas Wildscapes: Gardening for Wildlife - \$18 (\$24.95 retail)

Great gifts! The books will be available at ACC meetings, or call Jan at 817/483-0579 or Molly at 817/860-5580.

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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Arlington Conservation Council

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Don't forget!

David H. Behm

*Preserving Open Space
on Private Lands*

November 10

7:00 pm

First United Methodist Church

Be sure to visit us at

arlingtonconservationcouncil.org



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