

ARLINGTON CONSERVATION COUNCIL

POST OAK

WORKING TO CONSERVE ARLINGTON'S NATURAL RESOURCES

VOLUME 6, NUMBER 3

APRIL 2005

NOTE:
April Meeting at
West Police
Service Center

Special April Meeting

Topic: Green Construction Possibilities

Keynote Speaker: Robert Cluck, MD, Mayor,
City of Arlington

Other Speakers: Roy Miliner, Architect:
LEED Building Design & Certification*
Roger Tadlock, MKM Sales:
Green Building Products

When: Wednesday, April 13, 7:00 pm

Where: West Police Service Center,
2060 W Green Oaks

Note: Make a special effort to attend this one.
Learn how we can have a voice in the
future of Arlington's buildings.
**LEED is Leadership in Energy and Environmental
Design*

Parks Bond Election

Although ACC's rebirth was spurred by the creation of Arlington's first landscape ordinance, over time our activities have been most closely tied to the city's parks. Our roots are in the park system, so it's hard to picture a more effective way to fulfill our mission than to support the betterment of our park system, especially when that includes saving prime natural areas from development.

Our chance to help shape the next phase in park expansion and improvement is almost here. On May 7 voters will decide whether to approve or deny \$13.6 million in general obligation bonds to acquire, develop, renovate, and improve our parks. Some opposition is already forming, so we think we must do our part to help. What can we do? We're going to try something a little out of character and wander among park-goers on two Saturdays right before the election. And we really need help. This won't be hard, just different from our usual efforts.

Join us on April 23 at Harold Patterson Sports Complex as we advertise the parks bond election and hand out information about the proposed improvements. Contact Candy Halliburton (see back page) if you can spare an hour or two.

Come out on April 30 to River Legacy Parks where we will repeat the process. Contact John Darling (see back page) to help.

Wear a button or put out a yard sign, especially if you live on a busy street. Contact Candy Halliburton or John Darling for button and sign information.

Be sure to vote and encourage everyone you know to vote. Early voting will be held on:

April 20-22, Wednesday-Friday, 8:00 am-5:00 pm

April 25-30, Monday-Saturday, 8:00 am-5:00 pm

May 2-3, Monday-Tuesday, 8:00 am-5:00 pm

Early voting will be at these locations:

Bob Duncan Community Center

2800 South Center Street

South Service Center

1100 SW Green Oaks Boulevard

Kookan Education Center

423 North Center Street

Sherrod Elementary School

2626 Lincoln Drive

Turning Point High School

5618 West Arkansas Lane

Vote Yes for Parks on May 7

From the President

Candy Halliburton

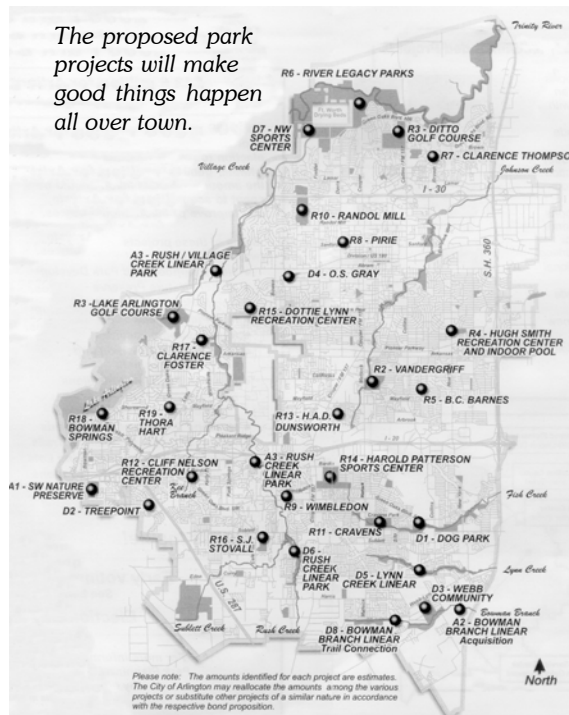


Vote Yes for Parks! This is the slogan for the Parks Bond Committee campaign. Though much of our population may not take

The bond package offers Arlington residents the opportunity for renovations and development of existing parks and the means to acquire suitable land for future parks and preserves. We will clearly see the improvements to our parks, golf courses, sports complexes and recreation centers. We will be able to walk in the new parks, and in the

advantage of them, parks really are for everyone. They are for young and old alike and everyone in between. We have parks with playgrounds, basketball courts, soccer and baseball fields. We have parks where you can fly a kite. We have an award-winning Audubon International-certified golf course. We have parks for cyclists and tennis enthusiasts, and parks where you can frolic through sprays of water or plant perennials with pals. We have parks for picnicking, partying and dilly-dallying. But we need to invest and reinvest in our parks, or they will not remain attractive, endure and become an attraction to our community.

The proposed park projects will make good things happen all over town.



linear parks we can cycle, skate or rollerblade. But these material enhancements are not what keep me grounded; rather, it is the intangibles that give me hope.

Whenever I feel that the environmental values that I hold most dear are being trampled on, I look for some ray of hope. I watch for a sign that the efforts of conservationists are not futile. The signs are always there, though often hard to see. I recognize that the intangibles are what sustain me—the feelings of pride in our parks; the enthusiasm and passion of people who are committed to and work hard for a cause; and the hope that citizens care enough about the quality of life in their city to vote for something that improves the quality of their lives. Sure, action makes things happen, but pride, passion, hope—even anger and skepticism—serve to propel and direct that action.

What I am asking from all members and from anyone else reading this (if you are among the latter, I would love to have you join ACC) is that on May 7 you please vote YES for the parks bond. And spread the hope by wearing your “Vote Yes For Parks” buttons, and passing along the word to friends and neighbors.

THE POST OAK

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Beware of the Red Dot: Check Your Mailing Label Now! All Memberships Expired January 31st

We don't want to lose you, but if there's a red dot on your mailing label, this will be your last issue of the *Post Oak*. Please don't put off renewing. 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.

New York Avenue Blackland Prairie: Next Workday April 23



On Saturday, April 23, from 9 am until noon, we'll return to our only native prairie site for another round of environmental restoration, and we need all the help we can get. Parks people will again be on-site with chainsaws to remove woody plants. Please bring gloves, loppers, etc. Long pants and sleeves and sturdy shoes or boots are always helpful. Water will be provided. Please call Jan Miller at 817/988-9341 for more information.

Directions: Exit I-20 at Collins. Take the service road east. Turn right onto New York Avenue. The prairie site will be on the east side of the road, marked by an Arlington Parks and Recreation Department (APRD) sign. Go past the park and make the next U-turn. Park in the L-shaped old roadway.

Arlington Parks and Recreation Department continues to wield those trusty chainsaws against the woody invaders at this site, and this prairie is staging a comeback! In just over a year the change is evident. Last month a small but able band of volunteers assisted APRD as we started clearing the north boundary of the park. Many thanks to Carl and Danny of APRD, Molly Hollar, Mike Anh and Barbara Fleischman and son!

At about 10 acres, this park is small in comparison with the original scope of blackland prairies, but it's important: Less than 5000 acres of virgin blackland prairie still exists. That's 0.05% of the original acreage that stretched from near the Red River south along I35E to San Antonio. At its widest point it spanned Grayson, Fannin and Lamar counties. The deep, richly organic and fertile soils of the blackland prairie attracted early farmers, but plowing virgin blackland caused it to lose its gilgais, shallow depressions also called hog wallows. They're an important characteristic of blackland, providing opportunities for moisture-loving plants in the moist depressions as well as those preferring better drainage on the top. Gilgais are a product of the deep and characteristic clay soils and do not re-form after plowing. Ironically, the practice of farmers to reserve haymeadows and keep them unplowed saved some blackland prairie remnants, possibly our New York Avenue site. As early settlements spread into today's urban growth, only scattered remnants now remain, many still subject to development. The most noteworthy blackland prairie site is the Nature Conservancy's Clymer Meadow of 700+ acres in Hunt and Collin counties. These sites dazzle us with their incredible diversity of wildflowers and grasses, showing us a glimpse of life on the prairie as it used to be. Many thanks to APRD and the citizens of Arlington for recognizing and preserving this rare site!

For more prairie events in April, including PrairieFest (9:00 am – 3:00 pm) at White Rock Lake, see www.destinature.org. For more information on local prairies, see www.nature.org (The Nature Conservancy, Clymer Meadow) and www.npat.org (Native Prairies Association of Texas).

A Residential Tree Ordinance?

Grace Darling

This week Arlington is closer to having a residential tree ordinance. The Municipal Policy Committee (Wilemon, Chair; McCollum, Patrick, Wright) has been looking into it and will report to the City Council during work session on April 5. Assuming a favorable report, the

committee will recommend that the city adopt a tree-protection ordinance that will tighten the regulations on tree cutting by homeowners and make it more difficult to remove existing canopy regardless of intended use. Details of the proposed ordinance are not available at press time but we hope to report them in next month's *Post Oak*. I certainly hope the committee will not exempt city and AISD construction, which have been among the worst culprits in the past. As for UTA, if anyone can think of a way to bring it into compliance, please let us hear from you.



Welcome New and Old Members

Here are the latest new and renewing members:
James Frisinger, Jodi Lee Ryan, William Gilmore
Thanks—we can't do a thing without you.

Another Litter Challenge Victory

On April 2 about a dozen ACC members were joined by several nearby residents and other interested parties as we gathered trash of all sorts from the OS Gray park site. We ended up with 89 bags and that was more than enough to win 1st place in our division. We'll receive a check sometime in May at a city council meeting. Bravo!



Wildscape Update John Dycus



Molly Hollar calls spring at the wildscape “splendiferous.” The powerful fragrance of the Mexican plums delights a visitor even before the cloud-like blooms come into

view. Redbuds are showing off, along with lovely drifts of golden groundsel, a native, shade-loving groundcover destined to help reduce areas of water-

groundcovers and consequently reduce watering and maintenance (no mowing needed!) by up to 75 percent. Most of these native groundcovers will be for sale April 30, 1:00-4:00 pm, in Veterans Park at the annual spring plant sale.

Volunteers have been working every Wednesday and Friday morning readying indigenous native plants to beautify the wildscape and for the sale. The Arlington Parks & Recreation Department

accelerates the process by letting these volunteers use its greenhouse and by cooperating in many other ways. The city’s current project benefiting the wildscape is an erosion control area of nearly an acre on the north side of the sidewalk beyond and east of the vehicular bridge.

Erosion from this worn, bare area has smothered hundreds of plants as a result of excessive uphill water washing down

everything in its path onto the wildscape area at the bottom. The volunteers recently began planting native grasses to anchor the soil, as recommended by



Site of the latest expansion of native plants into Veterans Park. The bandshell is up the hill to the left, and the Wildscape is downhill to the right.

guzzling, non-evergreen St. Augustine lawn. Recommended watering for St. Augustine lawns is an inch every five days, as opposed to the 3-6 times *per year* (4 inches) supplemental water needed to keep the golden groundsel and other native, evergreen groundcovers looking lovely.

Sally Wasowski favors a native mixture of drifts of golden groundsel, *Ruellia nudiflora* with Missouri violets, cedar sedge, white avens, trout lily and wild garlic in the Eastern Cross Timbers for an evergreen, blooming groundcover mix in the shade. An example of this mix can be seen in the wildscape pavilion area by the kiosk and north of the boardwalk. Those fortunate enough to have woodland shade trees on their property can reduce or even eliminate lawn area with these native evergreen



Unbeatable help meets unstoppable force: Parks & Rec mainstay Martin Sanchez sets out grasses as fast as Molly Hollar can produce them.

landscape architect Rosa Finsley and by John Snowden, a local expert and grower of native grasses at Bluestem Nursery. John has been an invaluable benefactor by donating all the native grasses in the wildscape. He has also served as a wildscape volunteer, consulting and helping greatly in privet removal.

The recently updated Molly Hollar Wildlife mission statement—to *educate the community to conserve resources, attract wildlife, and connect with nature through using native plants*—will determine the content of the main wildscape kiosk. A committee headed by Ellen Baskerville is developing the sign.

In accordance with the mission statement, the wildscape is being restored as an example of the Eastern Cross Timbers before it was overplowed and overgrazed. The wildscape will provide a bit of “wilderness” within the city where people can connect with nature as they stroll the trails and relax in the pavilion. They can meditate on benches overlooking the creek and the small bird pond. They can experience the sights of birds and butterflies, the smells (fragrances) and sounds (birdsong, flowing water) of nature. They also can see examples of how to conserve water, eliminate toxic chemicals, reduce labor and attract wildlife while restoring a natural setting.



The indefatigable Julia Burgen joined other volunteers in planting a zillion grasses on the offending slope.

PLANT SALE

LOCAL ORGANICALLY GROWN TEXAS NATIVE PLANTS*

Saturday, April 30, 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm

The Molly Hollar Wildscape at Veterans Park in Arlington

Location: North of I-20 at Arkansas Lane and Spanish Trail. Take Green Oaks Blvd, turn east on Arkansas Lane, go south on Spanish Trail to second parking lot entrance.

PERENNIALS

Black-eyed susan
Blackfoot daisy
Butterfly weed
Columbine, yellow
Fall aster
Four nerve daisy
Mealy blue sage
Mexican butterfly weed
Purple coneflower
Rock rose
Salvia coccinea
Texas betony
Wild ageratum
Zexmenia

GROUNDCOVERS/VINES

Cedar sage
Golden groundsel
Horseherb
Katy's ruellia
Snapdragon vine
Winecup

SHRUBS

Esperanza
Flame acanthus
Lantana camara
Salvia greggii
Turks cap

GRASSES

Lindheimer's muhly
Little bluestem
Mexican feather grass
Indian grass
Other grasses provided by
Bluestem Nursery

TREES

Carolina buckthorn
Mexican buckeye

Plants subject to change

BOOKS & INFORMATION TABLE

Butterfly Gardening for the South (Ajilvsgi)
Howard Garrett's Organic Gardening (Garrett)
Native Texas Plants (Wasowski & Wasowski)
Texas Wildscapes (Damude/Bender)

For more information call Pat Lovejoy, 817-447-7924
or Taylor Stephens-Parker, 817-784-6003.

***Plants propagated by Wildscape Volunteers
Sale benefits the Molly Hollar Wildscape
at Veterans Park**



PRICES:

4" - \$2
Quart - \$3
Gallon - \$6

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

Keep Saving Recyclables

The 4th of July parade will be here before we know it (really!), so start saving your plastic and aluminum recyclables for our float. If storage is a problem, bring them to the meeting and somebody will figure it out. Thanks.



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/Family \$24.00

Address _____

Student \$12.00

Telephone _____ Fax _____

Supporting \$36.00

E-mail _____

Sponsor \$100.00

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

Arlington Conservation Council
PO Box 216
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Don't forget!

Special April Meeting

Mayor Robert Cluck, MD
and other speakers

Green Construction Possibilities

Be sure to visit us at

arlingtonconservationcouncil.org



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