

**ARLINGTON
CONSERVATION
COUNCIL**

POST OAK

WORKING TO CONSERVE ARLINGTON'S NATURAL RESOURCES

VOLUME 6, NUMBER 5

**JULY-AUGUST
2005**

**NOTE Special Meeting
Time and Place**

Special July Meeting

- Topic:** Potluck in the Park
- Speakers:** ACC folks and members of other local environmental groups who'd like to talk about what's happened so far this year and what's coming up.
- When:** Saturday, July 16,
5:00 pm - 9:00 pm
- Where:** Veterans Park, Main pavilion.
Enter at first parking lot off Spanish Trail.
- NOTE:** Bring some food and we'll bring beverages and utensils. There's electricity, so think about bringing a fan. You'll be able to tour the Wildscape and see the big changes in the compost area. And eat.

Tree Ordinance Update Grace Darling

We hold these truths to be self-evident . . .

Trees are good. We need more of them. And we sure need to hold on to the ones we've got. Though most reasonable people would agree with these statements, this is no time to feel complacent. Julia Burgen, environmental conscience of the city, cites the following paragraphs from Article XIV, Landscape Standards, Zoning Ordinance for the City of Arlington:

A. Purpose: The Comprehensive Plan establishes a long-range vision of Arlington which recognizes that the aesthetics, amenities and infrastructure of a city are more than just luxuries for its residents; they are valuable ingredients to maintain and create cultural and economic value for the members of the community. The purposes of this ordinance are to preserve the existing natural environment whenever possible and to provide landscape amenities, setback and screening . . .

B. Objectives: The goal of maintaining the aesthetic image of Arlington is intended to contribute to a strong sense of neighborhood and community . . .

1. To safeguard and enhance property values and protect public and private investment.
2. To promote quality development.
3. To significantly impact the City's future quality of life.
4. To provide buffering and screening between different intensities of land use.
5. To promote orderly growth and aesthetic quality in our city.
6. To preserve and enhance our natural environment and aid in stabilizing the environment's ecological balance.
7. To encourage the preservation of trees which promote clean air, provide shade, beautify the environment, reduce the amount of soil runoff and minimize erosion.
8. To prohibit the indiscriminate removal of trees.

So, we have it covered, you say? Ah, if only. This ordinance currently applies only to commercial development, and the home building industry has had a free pass. We must act quickly to close this giant loophole and ensure the regulations cover residential construction too. (Personally I'd prefer to see a strict tree-protection ordinance encompassing ALL buildings, old as well as new, government- and non-profit-owned—but I'm accused of being a dreamer.)

Over the next couple of weeks, the Municipal Policy Review Committee will be holding roundtable discussions with "interested parties" on a proposed residential tree ordinance for Arlington. Details must be worked out by August 9, when the first public hearing of the ordinance is expected.

Hope to see you there.

From the President Candy Halliburton



In late spring of 2003, Gallup conducted an environmentally focused poll and discovered that the average American found the concern of

global warming "a bit of a yawn." Now maybe it's just me, but I consider watching soccer and golf on TV, washing my windows, and waiting for over an hour to renew my driver's license a bit of a yawn—NOT global warming. Given a list of concerns, the average person ranked the environment 9th behind health care, crime, drugs, domestic terror, the economy, immigration, unemployment and homelessness. Today, the war in Iraq would probably drop the environment to 10th place.

The results of a survey recently commissioned by the Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies

showed that 56% of the people polled opposed drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, 90% wanted more solar power facilities, 86% favored more funding for renewable energy and 62% of the respondents said they were more interested in purchasing enviro-friendly products than in voting pro-environment. Now there's the rub!

Though I may question the result that 62% of the population is using its purchasing power to buy hybrid cars and clothes sewn from hemp or flax, or choosing wind power over coal generated energy, I think there is something worthy of debate in this response.

Looking over the list of priorities posed by Gallup, I am hard pressed to refute the significance of the topics for concern that beat out the environment. We are all well aware of the considerable costs of health insurance and have heard the stories of the vast numbers of medically uninsured. Crime and unemployment typically show up on worry

lists. If concern for our environment never moves up the list, are we and all other living things on earth doomed to an imminent demise?

There are countless conservation groups like ACC around the country that are planning, working and struggling to improve air and water quality; to protect and conserve our natural resources; to sustain, reduce, and recycle; but ultimately we need pro-environment legislation to make a difference. The Yale study confirmed that support for fuel-efficient vehicles is not just a one-party issue, with 96% of the Democrats and Independents polled in support and 86% of the Republicans supporting the notion. But because the politicians representing us were voted in by citizenry occupied with concerns other than those related to the environment, we have to work that much harder to convince them that the environment is of fundamental importance to the majority of Americans, even if it comes in 9th.

Clean Air? Marianne Herrmann

The preliminary hearing for the renewal of TXI's old permit, which would allow the company to emit more ozone-producing pollution, was held on June 7. Approximately 100 people attended. Many outraged citizens of the area, whose families are affected by the plant, tried to get party status for the actual hearing to be held in April 2006, but only 41 parties were successful. The criterion used: they had to live within a 2-mile radius of the plant, obviously a very arbitrary and one could say ridiculous standard. More negotiations between Blue Skies, Downwinders and TXI are under way.

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Green Fridays at Local Color

For several months, Bonnie Bowman has been leading timely and well informed discussions on local environmental matters at Local Color Gallery, 208 W. Main St. Meetings are on the last Friday of the month at noon. Recent guests have included John Davis, Texas Parks & Wildlife Urban Biologist, and Courtney Blevins of the Texas Forest Service.

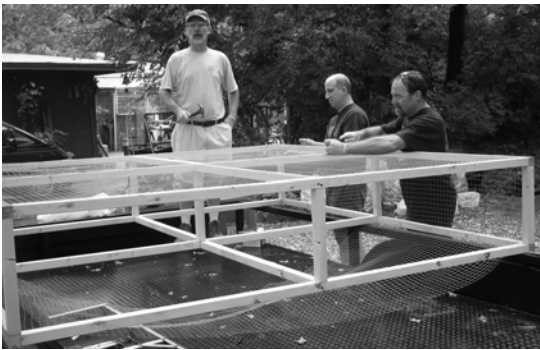
For information on future meetings, contact Bonnie at chelseaxmolli@comcast.net.

Watch Your Watering

From June 1 through September 30, no watering is permitted from 10:00 am–6:00 pm except for hand watering and soaker hoses. It's a good thing we like native plants.

4th of July Parade: Recycling Reigns

For the second year ACC entered a float in Arlington's 4th of July parade, and we collected recyclable cans and bottles for the fourth year. Stephen Smith and Marian Hiler headed up the float, which featured red, white, and blue recycling symbols painstakingly constructed by Marian and Ann Knudsen from aluminum cans. They were mounted on a large frame filled with plastic drink bottles, and the whole thing was carried on a trailer lent by Anne Alderfer. Collecting recyclables was less glamorous: Very early on the 4th we placed 24 bins donated by Arlington Disposal along the route just as the barricades were going up. Later we sorted out the trash and took all the cans and bottles to the UTA recycling dumpster.



Wildscape Update John Dycus



Thanks go to the Veterans Park Master Composters and John Darling, the very king of decay, for working on the compost site improvements made possible by the COG

grant. Elsewhere in this issue, you can read about the wonderful wildscape



A while ago parks staff moved the old compost kiosk to its new spot on the corner.

additions it will provide. But like the shepherd for whom all his sheep are precious, let's also show a little love for the sturdy new wheelbarrow donated by park visitor Nora Green. Nora has become a frequent and energetic volunteer at both the wildscape and the greenhouse.

The wheelbarrow, tools and hoses no longer need to be loaded and unloaded from various vehicles, since they now



Taylor Stephens-Parker, Anne Alderfer, and Mary Turner persecuted weeds at the last workday.



Tarrant County Master Gardeners recently toured the Wildscape.

stay on site in the storage vault provided by the grant. What wonderful timing. Ready for the dog days of summer — no more loading and unloading! And in the triple-kiosk area, decomposed granite has replaced the wood-chip mulch to further decrease maintenance.

Arlington Parks & Rec has continued planting inland sea oats in the erosion area, where large amounts of coralberry will be added later.



Devanie Fergus and Pat Lovejoy experienced different degrees of happiness while injuring weeds at the last workday.



Jean Hiler, Pat Lovejoy, and Charlie Shiner hard at work at Randol Mill greenhouse.

In the fall, the parks department will add a cedar rail fence. A wood-chip trail, boulders and wildflowers will complete the picture.

During the summer, the wildscape volunteers concentrate on watering and weeding in the shade, with frequent rest breaks in the pavilion. At the greenhouse, the propagation volunteers work outdoors under a huge tree in a breezy

spot. A misting fan supplements the breezes, so our cool volunteers can indeed stay cool. Behind the greenhouse, where the growing plants enjoy the outdoors, shade cloth now covers the overhead frames to keep the plants cool as well. Thousands of plants here will go into the fall plant sale and be planted in the wildscape.

The summer schedule:

Workdays at the wildscape — first and third Saturdays, 8-11 a.m., except for holidays (4th of July & and Labor Day) when we will work 2nd & 4th Saturdays and every Tuesday morning, 8 until about 11:00.

Workdays at the greenhouse — Wednesday and Friday mornings, 9-11:30.

Water and snacks will be provided at all workdays.



The Native Plant Society recently presented a native plant landscaping course whose big finale was a walking workshop at the Wildscape conducted by Rosa Finsley.

COG Grant Allows Compost Site Improvements John Darling

Several months ago, Lorrie Anderle, Arlington's Recycling Coordinator and head of the Master Composter program, received a \$48,000 grant from the North Central Texas Council of Governments. The grant was intended to improve our three compost demonstration sites, and that's just what has happened at River Legacy, Tierra Verde, and Veterans Park. They've all received benches made of recycled materials and vandal-resistant signs. At Veterans Park we've also gotten native plants, rocks, a storage vault, composting tools, cedar for displays and an entrance structure, a pavestone retaining wall, and materials to build several new compost bins.

Although it all began with Lorrie's skill at grant writing, she insists that the improvements have been a team effort. I watched a lot of it happen at the Wildscape and I'm still amazed at how much hard work the Parks & Rec guys have done. And twice, when I've asked about some heavy construction process, different Parks guys have shuffled their feet and said, "We just cut the grass. This is kind of a nice break." Molly's volunteers have also pitched in at crucial times, moving a zillion leaf bags so benches could be installed. And the Master Composters showed up for a special compost site workday, hefted pavestones and built the retaining wall. We're not done yet; there's still some planting to do and bins to build, but all the heavy work is over, thanks to the efforts of so many dedicated people.



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



Arlington Conservation Council Membership Application

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

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How did you hear about us? _____

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Don't forget!

Saturday, July 16

Potluck in the Park

5:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Main pavilion, Veterans Park

Don't miss it!

And bring some food!

Be sure to visit us at

arlingtonconservationcouncil.org



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