

**ARLINGTON
CONSERVATION
COUNCIL**

POST OAK

WORKING TO CONSERVE ARLINGTON'S NATURAL RESOURCES

VOLUME 6, NUMBER 7

**OCTOBER
2005**

October Meeting

- TOPIC:** Integrated Storm Water Management:
Development that Protects Streams and Greenways
- SPEAKER:** Jack Tidwell
Director of Environment and Development, North Central Texas Council of Governments
- WHEN:** Wednesday, October 12,
7:00 pm
- WHERE:** First United Methodist Church,
313 N Center at Division
(enter through north door)
- NOTE:** Gathering begins at 6:30 pm.
Meeting starts promptly at 7:00 pm.

**Bring Something
for the Raffle!**



You are cordially invited
to attend the dedication of the
Molly Hollar Wildscape
at Veterans Park
3600 West Arkansas Lane
Arlington, Texas
10:00 am
Saturday, October 29, 2005

Light refreshments and guided tours
following the ceremony.

Attendees are encouraged to bring
binoculars and cameras.

From the President

Wayne Halliburton

Hurricanes Katrina and Rita have shown us some of the best of the Arlington community. We came together to assist the evacuees in a number of ways. Whether you helped clean the Eastern Star Home, worked at the Elzie Odom Center, "adopted" a family, donated goods and services, gave money, time, or wrote e-mails to help keep everyone informed, you deserve a big THANK YOU. ACC members were and continue to be participants in the relief efforts, and I am proud of your continued work and to be a part of this organization.

On the environmental side, the hurricanes brought to the forefront issues with which many of you are already familiar. Overbuilding, gas drilling, and poorly designed levees placed on drying, compacted, former swamps have diminished wetlands, barrier islands, and coastal forests. The results of these developments are disastrous. Without these natural buffers, tidal surges flowed farther inland unabated along the Gulf Coast, and the devastation was catastrophic.

Since the 1930s Louisiana has lost an estimated 1900 square miles of marsh and swamp and stands to lose another 700 square miles by 2050 if drastic measures are not taken. Much of the marshland south of New Orleans

has disappeared, bringing the Gulf closer to the city and increasing the risk from storm surges.

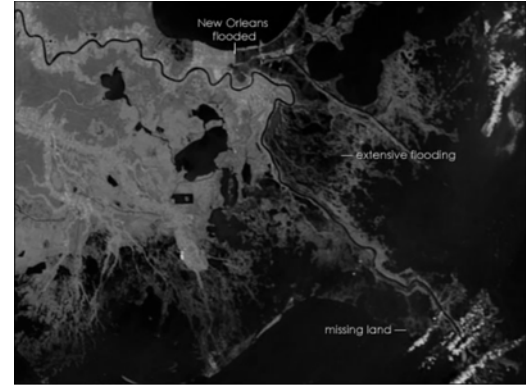
Many blame the intensity of recent hurricanes on global warming (the September issue of *Science* magazine included a study showing a 57% increase in storms with >131 mph winds and a 0.5°C increase in tropical ocean surface temperature over the last 35 years), while a few climatologists insist that we are merely in a warm gulf cycle that might last for 20 years). Either way, we have not seen the end of these powerful storms.

There is one program in place to stem the tide. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has a National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Program. Starting in 1990 this grant program has given over \$152 million in matching grants to help states acquire, restore, manage, and enhance coastal wetlands. Twenty-five states bordering the Atlantic, Pacific, Gulf of Mexico, and the Great Lakes are eligible for these grants. Louisiana, with its unique problems and dire needs, has a separate grant structure and the state portion is now just 15% of the total cost of the project.

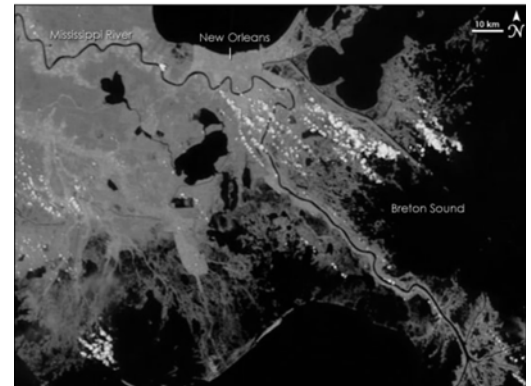
Galveston has benefited from this matching grant program, receiving a grant to help restore 147 acres of North Deer Island, habitat of the endangered brown pelican, and 16 other species of coastal birds. Galveston also received a

matching grant to build a breakwater structure in West Galveston Bay, shielding 50 acres of intertidal marsh.

While these efforts are too little, too late for Louisiana, and the rest of the Gulf Coast region this time around, perhaps the magnitude of devastation will give policy makers the incentive to reverse the trend and restore the wetlands.



September 4, 2005



August 9, 2005

Images of the Mississippi River delta from NASA's Earth Observatory Web page. The upper image was taken six days after Hurricane Katrina struck; the dark areas indicate flooded land.

THE POST OAK

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Thanks to Our September Speaker

Ron Wright, Arlington City Council member and Mayor Pro Tem, discussed the latest plans for the Cowboys stadium project. Mr Wright addressed our questions about possible impacts on Johnson Creek and the valuable habitat that appears to be endangered by aspects of the project.



Randall Arendt Speaks at UTA GraceDarling

Developers can be our friends. Green developers are doubly good (“twice green”) because their designs add value to our communities environmentally and economically. So says Randall Arendt, noted urban designer and regional planner, advocate of “conservation planning,” and author of *Rural by Design*, *Conservation Design for Subdivisions: A Practical Guide to Creating Open Space Networks*, and several other guides to smart land use. In a lively public lecture at UTA’s School of Architecture on September 20, Arendt listed a number of tips to achieve successful, cost-effective, and ecologically sound suburban design. For example:

Municipal keys:

- lot size should never be used as a mechanism for density control
- a 1-acre lot is not rural, it’s just big; larger lot sizes are not the answer
- small lots and houses cleverly placed with respect to attractive open spaces yield higher prices per unit than “mansionizing”
- zoning should restrict lot size to one-third to two-thirds of the entire site
- percentage of open space will vary with district but should aim for about 40%
- open spaces should be interconnected in a network
- a design that follows the land contour saves money and effort
- in the Cross-Timbers metropolitan area of north central Texas, housing should be clustered in open areas to preserve forest remnants



*Layouts such as this one in North Carolina, in which the development has been designed around the most significant natural and cultural features, can easily be created by following the logical four-step design process described and illustrated in *Conservation Design for Subdivisions*. (From www.greenerprospects.com)*

Necessities of a conservation design:

- good site inventory – plan for tile drains to create moisture pockets
- good site analysis – developers are not currently required to give us enough information about the site, and they should be
- on-site visit – officials and adjoining neighbors should walk the site for a 3-dimensional perspective while still at the concept stage, before any engineering is done, to note topography and identify sensible conservation areas
- detailed sketch plan – showing access, plats, drainage, utilities, easements, and open spaces should be reviewed by officials before they vote on the project
- landscape architect and engineer working together – from the beginning

Though most of Arendt’s examples were of new subdivisions, many of his ideas and solutions are applicable to redevelopment and pertinent to Arlington. It is not too late for us: We can still recover if we stop supersizing our buildings at the expense of green space.

You can read more about Randall Arendt and his concepts on the following Web sites: greenerprospects.com; cpw.org (Center for Watershed Protection); landchoices.org; natlands.org (Natural Lands Trust).

Don’t Touch That Dial

Cable television information from *Facts and Issues* host, Bonnie Bowman: The program will air on Cable 16 at 7:30 pm every night and after football whenever that is shown.

October 10-23: Transportation. Guests will be Councilwoman Kathryn Wilemon and Tarrant County Commissioner Marti Van Ravenswaay.

October 24-November 6: Constitutional Amendments. Guest will be Senator Kim Brimer.

November 7-November 20: Meet Our City Officials. Guests will be Arlington Public Works Director Bob Lowry and City Manager Jim Holgersson.

Wildscape Update John Dycus



Our all-volunteer army

In spite of being in survival mode, super volunteers made progress in the wildscape during the hottest, driest September weather imaginable. They spent many hours doing "hose-end watering," because



At the last workday volunteers planted new beds to complete the improvements at the compost site.

even though native plants require little moisture once they're established, they have to be well watered just like other plants for the first 2-3 summers until their roots take hold.

One of the most dedicated volunteers cleared her calendar to free time for the wildscape. She'd start about 7:30 am and often continue through the heat of the day (one was 103 degrees). After one very full day she took work home so she could clarify the greenhouse inventory. During these weeks, she treated and removed many garbage bags full of Bermuda grass and other weeds, pushed countless wheelbarrows of compost and mulch uphill for the new beds, and planted loads of plants.

One special volunteer has been there since the lean years, rarely missing a Tuesday or Saturday workday. On other days great

piles of weeds are evidence that she has been there working alone. She's also a talented writer and one of the earliest wildscape update authors. Yet another outstanding volunteer maintains the wildscape pond. She has removed truckloads of privet, often working alone, and can do anything that needs to be done.

One of everyone's favorite volunteers is about 84 and sets a mean pace, earning her the title of "Queen of the Greenhouse." Then there is Glenn Troutman, president of WeCAN and Parks Board member, who does all the heavy soil mixing and lifting, and John Bridges, who singlehandedly installed a quality sprinkler system outside the greenhouse to keep the plants thriving through these blistering summers. Supporting the volunteers are parks personnel, especially Martin Sanchez, Jay Falgout, Heather Dowell and

Lucy King.

The greenhouse volunteers have had a productive year in spite of the weather and complications when the water main supplying the greenhouse broke. Five days before the fall plant sale the plants were looking great, but the low water pressure brought on stress.



Good crowds and fine weather contributed to another successful plant sale.



John Snowden, wildscape benefactor and grass man extraordinaire, helps get the selection right.

The sale didn't crash, though, and proved to be as successful as last year.

Much of this success can be traced to plant sale co-chairs and organizational wizards Pat Lovejoy and Taylor Stephens-Parker. They were ably assisted by a plant sale team that included Devanie Fergus, Anne and Randy Alderfer, Jan Miller, Hester Schwarzer, Ann Trenton, Weldon Hatch, Charlie Shiner, Gailon Hardin, Sharon Clark, Martha Segal, John Bridges, Kay Sekio, Mary McCoy, Michelle Ansdotter, Dagmar Higgins, Donna Morris, Sandy Killoran, Berry Bock, Jean Hiler, John Snowden, Peri Carr, Betsy Kalina, Stan Parker, Carol Wester, Jo Popplereiter, Pat Higgins, Connie Anderson, and Kathy Stevens.

Hester, another greenhouse regular, also brought a canopy this year to shade the checkout table. Again in charge of books and handouts at the sale was Jan Miller, a wildscape



Former ACC President John O'Malley shopped with his landscape consultant.

Update *continued from page 4*

committee charter member who has adopted the wildscape prairie and the New York Avenue prairie, led privet brigades and supported the wildscape for all 12 of its years. And Gailon Hardin has created lots of publicity for the wildscape, shared her plant propagation expertise, transported loads of plants, recruited volunteers and acted as treasurer for several years.

Bluestem Nursery owner John Snowden again provided the grasses for the sale and donated the unsold ones to be planted in the wildscape. John regularly assists in the plant sales and has also removed huge quantities of privet. Bonnie Bowman and Jan Miller have written grants. Marian Hiler, whose employer is Northrop-Grumman, is the volunteer who nominated the wildscape for their "Good Turn Day" event during which their employees constructed the pavilion, bridges, kiosks, benches, and all the hardscape in the wildscape. Marian has also served as wildscape co-chair, and has spent many hours working in and for the wildscape.

Thanks to these and countless other dedicated volunteers over these 12 years, the wildscape has grown almost eight-fold from its original half-acre. Because loads of plants propagated by the greenhouse volunteers are ready to be planted and cool October is the best of all planting times, by the end of the month the wildscape will be planted out and ready to make the coming spring the loveliest ever.

BRIT Lectures

Receptions at 6:30 pm. Lectures begin at 7:00 pm in Leonhardt Auditorium, Deborah Beggs Moncrief Center, Fort Worth Botanic Garden

Thursday, 13 October: "King Cotton: the Revolutionary Fiber" Frank Wilson, Dallas Historical Society

The story of cotton reveals a plant that has left a dramatic mark on human history, creating wealth and misery, instigating wars, and devastating ecosystems. This lecture will trace the influence of cotton, the "fabric of our lives", as it put America on the map and formed the basis of the economy and culture across the fertile soils of Texas and the South.

Thursday, 3 November: "The Evil Influence of the Lazy Root: Social History Through the Potato's Eye" Larry Zuckerman, author

This lecture will explain how a humble vegetable overcame widespread prejudice to become a sustaining force in everyday European life by 1850. Evidence from Ireland, France, and England will show why most Europeans feared and shunned the potato for centuries, only to embrace it in an astounding reversal. Within a brief time, the tuber became famine insurance, a bank loan, a budget stretcher, and fast food, supporting whole populations during social upheaval. But not everyone thought this was a good thing, and critics deplored the rise of a "degenerate" plant, which they held responsible for poverty, disease, and immoral behavior.

And Speaking of October 13...

That's also the night of the Native Plant Society's annual progressive plant swap, same place (right down the hall) and time as BRIT's King Cotton. And it's the Arlington Master Composter meeting, too. If you like composting, you'll enjoy this one. Jay

Mertz, owner of Rabbit Hill Farm and expert composter and vermicomposter, will speak on "Fine-tuning your compost pile."

The meeting starts at 7:00 pm and is held on the second floor of the Municipal Office Tower, 201 E. Abram. Park on the north side and enter through the north door.

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

Community Garden Workday

Community Gardens of Arlington will have a workday on Saturday, October 15 at 4:00 pm. We will be filling raised beds with dirt and mulch at St. Matthews Catholic Church, 2021 New York Ave. Bring shovels and wheelbarrows. For more information contact Stephen Smith at 817-275-7469.

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

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ Fax _____

E-mail _____

How did you hear about us? _____

Make checks payable to Arlington Conservation Council. Mail to ACC, Box 216, Arlington, TX 76004-0216.

Please circle membership category.

Individual/Family \$24.00

Student \$12.00

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THE POST OAK

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Don't forget!

Wednesday, October 12

Jack Tidwell, NCTCOG

Integrated Storm Water Management:
Development that Protects Streams
and Greenways

Be sure to visit us at
arlingtonconservationcouncil.org



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