

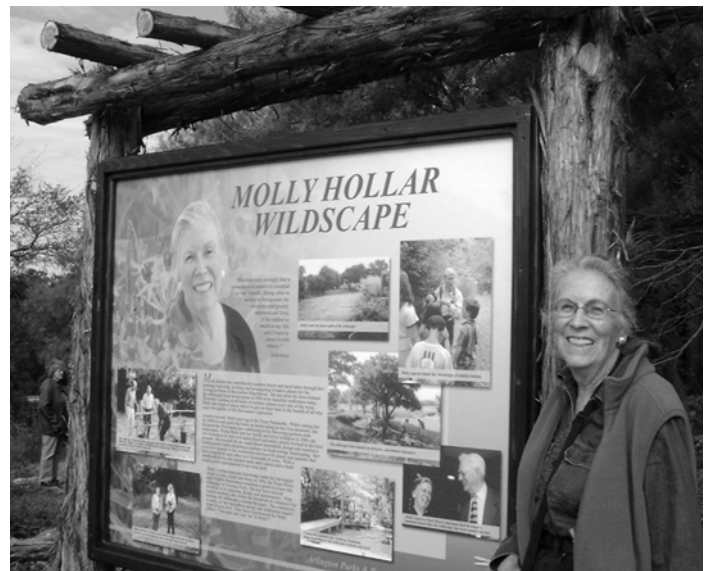
**ARLINGTON
CONSERVATION
COUNCIL**

WORKING TO CONSERVE ARLINGTON'S NATURAL RESOURCES
VOLUME 6, NUMBER 9

POST OAK

**NOVEMBER/
DECEMBER
2005**

Molly Hollar Wildscape Dedicated



Molly Hollar and her brand new sign. Molly's years of hard work at the wildscape have now been officially recognized.

November Meeting

- TOPIC:** Dogwood Canyon: Preservation
by Purchasing the Last 30%
- SPEAKER:** Annie Brown, Audubon Dallas
- WHEN:** Wednesday, November 9,
7:00 pm
- WHERE:** First United Methodist Church,
313 N Center at Division
(enter through north door)

**Bring Something
for the Raffle!**

On October 29 the wildscape at Veterans Park got a new name, and Molly Hollar got the recognition she has always given to others. Thanks to a campaign by ACC and happy decisions by the Parks Board and City Council, it's now the Molly Hollar Wildscape at Veterans Park.

About 100 people stood in the parking lot as Parks Board member Glenn Troutman skillfully managed the dedication and unveiling of a beautiful new sign—thanks to designer Anna Poland and Park Supervisor Jay Falgout and his amazing crew. There were kind (and accurate) words from Parks Director Pete Jamieson, City Council member Kathryn Wilemon, daughter Nancy King, native plant expert Rosa Finsley, Texas Parks & Wildlife's John Davis, and our own former president Julia Burgen (see page 4).

After 11 years of hard work, Molly was almost at a loss for words; she forgot to tell us to go home, tear up the grass, and create wildscapes. And you could see that she was a little concerned by all those people standing around when she should be having a wildscape workday. Molly, there will be many more, thanks to you.

From the President

Wayne Halliburton

A recent (October 17, 2005) article on *nationalgeographic.com* summarized a study on global warming and its long-term effects in the United States. The researchers' computer models predicted that summer in the next century would be hotter everywhere in the U.S. In Phoenix, for example, the two hottest weeks of the year would extend for two months. Winter would also be affected. In the northeast, the coldest two weeks as we currently know them would cease to exist. During the 20th century, it went on to say, the U.S. experienced more heat events, more heavy precipitation, and fewer cold events. To quote from the article, "Although there are several types of greenhouse gases in the Earth's atmosphere, an abundance of carbon dioxide is thought to be the prime cause of the greenhouse effect that prevents heat from escaping the Earth."

Many scientists think the effects of human activity—such as automobile emissions—have increased the carbon dioxide levels which are causing global warming."

Another article found at *nationalgeographic.com* (October 3, 2005) notes that the amount of sea ice in the Arctic shrank "dramatically this summer, and is now smaller than it has

been in a century of record keeping." It goes on, "the difference in ice cover from 2002 to 2005 is roughly the size of Colorado."

The U.S. House of Representatives recently passed a bill sponsored by Joe Barton (R, Texas) to boost oil refinery capacity while allowing the oil industry to avoid environmental regulations regarding clean air standards. Also in the metroplex air mix are the five proposed coal burning power plants.



Conspicuously absent, however, has been any legislation dealing with increasing fuel efficiency standards in automobiles. Also absent have been proposals for more wind farms. I'm sure that I am not alone in wondering if our elected officials breathe the same air as their unfortunate constituents.

Certainly we like our conveniences. With no public transportation system in Arlington, it is practically impossible to be active in the community without a car. But the cars we choose, and the amount of time we spend in them, are under our control. I have talked with several people who feel that higher gas prices might be the impetus needed to change public perception about more fuel-efficient cars and public transportation. Opportunities such as proposition 1 on the November ballot can help spur public transportation. Consumer preferences will eventually point the automobile manufactures in the right direction. Legislatively, it seems, our

best option locally and nationally is to keep making our voices heard (the red letter days, for example), and to continue voting our values.

Editor's note: For more information on local air quality, see the article by Scott Streater in the Star-Telegram for October 31, 2005: "Region had bad ozone 44 days." Streater reports that Arlington had more than three times as many bad air days as it had the year before.

POSSUM AT TWILIGHT

It stood there
Outlined black
Against the pale
Concrete bike path.

Barely visible
A rat-like tail
Stuck out behind
Reassuring me
This was not a skunk.

I stopped,
Froze on the spot,
Laughed part from joy
At the sighting,
Part from relief
That I would need
No tomato bath.

A silent communion?
Well, I had kind thoughts.

What passed between
The possum's ears,
(If anything)
Probably wouldn't
Bear repeating
In a family publication.

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Planning Begins for New Park Elizabeth Peterson

The first steps in development of Dixon Holman Park, a neighborhood park located in North Arlington, have recently begun. The 7.3-acre, heavily wooded area houses an array of wildlife including raccoons, possums, bobcats, and rabbits. There is also a large bird population composed of hawks, falcons, migratory birds, and several other species of songbirds. Although this beautiful piece of land is an asset to Arlington and many in the neighborhood as it is, city officials and some community members are set on developing the area.

A 1997 bond election allocated \$270,000 for the project that Park Planner Joe Pack of the Arlington Parks & Recreation Department will head. His preliminary concept involves minimal disturbance of the existing vegetation and an attempt to preserve the woods. Soft impact trails around the perimeter of the park and possible hard trails in the interior are also included. Plans for a butterfly garden, informative signage, xeriscaping, a pavilion, and a natural garden area are also some of the ideas that he has mentioned for the park.

A park planning meeting was held on October 26 for neighbors and other Arlington citizens to get information and discuss concept development, funding, and the construction process. Some neighbors expressed a desire for a playground, an informal open irrigated play area, a basketball court and a wildflower area. The issue of parking appeared to be the main concern for many attending the meeting, while others worried about the increased crime the park could bring to the community. Sadly, the proposal to leave the park untouched as a nature reserve was not met with much enthusiasm.

Neighbors seemed to lose sight of the fact all the park amenities suggested are located across the street at the local elementary school or 1.2 miles down the street at River Legacy East and Elzie Odom Recreation Center. There was no attention given to the wildlife that will be lost once construction begins.

Park officials plan to have another meeting in the spring of 2006 to share the design before its final unveiling. The estimated time for completion is 2 years. Mr. Pack has expressed an interest in hearing from citizens regarding their ideas and concerns about Dixon Holman Park. Any support for no development or for his original plan of minimal development is highly encouraged. He can be reached via email or by phone: packj@ci.arlington.tx.us or 817-459-5489.



There's a small gem of undeveloped park land in NE Arlington. As development planning begins, compromises appear inevitable. Do you have an opinion?



Thanks to Our October Speaker

Our speaker last month was Jack Tidwell,

Director of Environment and Development at North Central Texas Council of Governments. His topic was Integrated Storm Water Management: Development That Protects Streams and Greenways. Jack spoke with infectious enthusiasm that brought home the importance of development that respects natural features—and the enlightened approach advocated by our council of governments. As a bonus, many of his remarks mirrored the views of conservation planner Randall Arendt, who spoke at UTA in September.

Green Features To Be Included in New County Subcourthouse

Marti VanRavenswaay, longtime ACC member and Tarrant County Commissioner, reports that the subcourthouse architects have provided her with the following information:

The new Tarrant County Southeast Subcourthouse is being designed with green building in mind by utilizing a variety of sustainable development principles.

The exterior items include management of the stormwater, reduction of heat islands, use of indigenous plant materials, and reduced site disturbance. The interior is addressed by an enhanced building envelope, use of energy efficient systems (walls, roof, and glass systems) to optimize energy performance, consideration given to “green seal” interior materials, items which assist the county’s paper recycling process, and enhanced daylighting features.

Marti adds that there will be separate collection bins on site during construction for all types of recyclables, and the plan calls for a special corridor on each floor of the building for the various types of recyclables the County collects. In her words, “our Facilities Department has [been informed of] the LEED criteria, and we will do everything on the list that is feasible, as this building is being designed to have a useful life of no less than 50 years.

The Wildscape Remembered

Julia Burgen



Julia Burgen

Nostalgia alternated with feelings of fulfillment and delight as I participated in the Molly Hollar Wildscape dedication last Saturday.

It was that same spot where Molly, Jan Miller, Martha May Martin, Kim Brewer, Debbie Simek, Gayla Stephenson, and I sat on the curb one evening in early June 1994. We were mulling over a decision to apply for a Texas Parks and Wildlife grant to develop an urban wildscape on a site just west of the Xeriscape Garden. It was down to decision time as the deadline to apply was approaching. The evening was warm and humid; there was a slight breeze and twilight was deepening.

Everyone there was a member of one or both groups—the Arlington Conservation Council or the Arlington Organic Garden Club. These were fairly new organizations that had just been through six months of intensive effort to get the city's first ordinance for tree protection/mitigation on commercial properties. Our little group had a big decision to make about plunging our members into another project.

We made the leap, and 11 years of history proves that it was the right thing to do. Kim Brewer got the application off in time. Molly did a draft design and asked Rosa Finsley, professional landscape designer, to fine-tune it and review proposed plantings. The commitment was for a demonstration native plant project using organic principles.

That September, TP&W gave us the first grant in its new urban program—\$3,000 in seed money for the wildscape project. We matched that in donations of money, goods, and labor. Work began that same month: Boulders were hauled for the small pond; holes were dug for plants; a path with crushed granite surface and other mulched paths

appeared. All through the fall and winter months volunteers toiled. Finally, on April 23, 1995, a ceremony was held to inaugurate the wildscape.

Over the years the project has grown from ½ acre to over 3 acres. There have been Phases I and II, \$54,000 more in grants from major entities, such as Northrop Grumman, US Fish & Wildlife Service, Environmental Protection Agency, North Central Texas Council of Governments, and—conservatively—20,000 volunteer hours.

Some volunteers have gone on to other things, some have moved, some are still with the project, and lots of new people have joined the workforce. Master Gardener, Master Composter, and Master Naturalist programs and the North Texas Chapter of the Native Plant Society of Texas all have members working at the Wildscape. Workdays expanded to the City of Arlington's greenhouse at Randol Mill Park, where carefully tended seeds and cuttings produced healthy plants, some of which go into the Wildscape while others are sold at two native plant sales each year. Proceeds from the plant sales go back into improving the wildscape.

Spin-offs from the project have been numerous. One of the first happened in 1995-1996, when ACC member Martha May Martin, a teacher at Hill Elementary, got an AISD Foundation grant to develop a native plant courtyard garden at her school. Molly designed it and by Earth Day, 1996, the garden was planted. Martha managed it until she retired; then ACC member Sarah Dendy cared for the garden until she moved away a few years ago. Now Monica Daily and I maintain the Hill garden and we are planning a 10-year celebration next spring.

Jean-Marie and Stephen Smith and others have organized several Walks on the Wildside to guide students through the Wildscape. The Smiths have also spearheaded a Community Gardens

project at St. Matthew Catholic Church on New York Avenue.

The Fielder Museum has been the recipient of the Wildscape's gardening impetus. Anita Garmon spent hundreds of hours at the Wildscape and now helps with the Rose Garden at the Fielder. Nancy Hagwood and Esther Chambliss, members of the Arlington Organic Garden Club, are key figures in the Children's Garden at the Fielder.

Jan Miller has taken on the City of Arlington Blackland Prairie Park. Jan organizes workdays when park staff and volunteers help to control invasive vegetation. One of these days that park will have appropriate walking paths, signs, and it will be available for education just as the Molly Hollar Wildscape is now.

ACC member Carrie Donovan, who teaches at Wimbish Elementary, has established an educational garden there.

The City has a SmartYard contest each year to recognize residents who garden by the principles embodied in the Molly Hollar Wildscape. Volunteers at the project are among the recipients of SmartYard awards each year. The wildscape itself received the Mayor's Urban Design Award in 1999.

Through it all there has been the guiding hand and mind of Molly Hollar. With Molly's leadership and lots of volunteers, the Wildscape is a perfect example of the "pebble and pond principle." The things we do are like pebbles tossed into a pond. The ripple effect extends outward into the community and beyond and forward in time to those who come after us.

Note: Julia Burgen is a former ACC president, city council member, environmental gadfly, and tireless worker for parks and open spaces.

Wildscape Dedication Scenes



Above left, Glenn Troutman addresses the crowd. Above center, Granddaughter Molly with the guest of honor. Above right, Molly, Nancy King, Rosa Finsley, and John Davis.

First Look at Southwest Nature Preserve (Members Only)

The first workday at Southwest Nature Preserve has been scheduled for **Saturday, November 19** by Arlington Parks & Recreation Department (APARD). This will be a rare opportunity to see a gem of the Eastern Cross Timbers before it opens to the public. The site was rescued from impending intensive residential development thanks to voters' approval of bonds, APARD's and neighborhood groups' dedicated efforts and the Trust for Public Lands' arrangements for purchase and providing interim financing. There are currently no funds for development, and plans are to maintain Southwest Nature Preserve as a natural area. The site is home to a variety of plant and animal life (including wild turkey), four small lakes and a scenic overlook of Village Creek and Fort Worth skyline. APARD has been working hard to remove hazards accumulated over the years, such as derelict boats, cars and a mountain of tires, and now they've asked for our help. For more information, ACC members should contact Candy Halliburton at 817-274-1787.

Directions: Exit I-20 at Green Oaks Blvd., take access road west to Little Rd. Turn left on Little Road and go about 1 mile to Treepoint Rd. Turn right onto Treepoint and park at the dead end.

Next Prairie Party: November 12 at New York Avenue Blackland Prairie Park



A hardy bunch of ACC & Cross Timbers Master Naturalist volunteers made the **October 8** workday a great success. Big thanks to Anne Alderfer, Wayne Broyles, Julia Burgen, John Darling, Roy Miliner, Ann Trenton, Dan von Bose, Laura Whitelaw and especially to Karl Freeman, manning the chainsaw for Arlington Parks & Recreation. We strategically removed trees on the south side of the prairie, planning to leave enough shade for summer visitors as well as lookouts for hawks. We also attacked annual ragweed invading along the streetside in an attempt to reduce its seed crop. The prairie soil showed signs of drought, with deep fissures, some 2 feet deep or more. Plant growth is not nearly as lush as last year, but it was very encouraging to see regrowth of forbs in areas recently cleared of trees. We also found tenacious Maximillian sunflower, gayfeather, agalinis, goldenrod, pitcher sage and Indiangrass in bloom, along with some grateful Monarch butterflies.

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

Join us on Saturday, November 12 for the next workday.

We'll continue the assault on small trees, so bring loppers, hand saws, gloves and sturdy soled shoes or boots. Water will be provided.

Directions: Exit I-20 at Collins, take the I-20 access road east to New York. Turn right onto New York, the park is on the left about 0.5 mile. Take the next U-turn and park along the south edge of the park on 'Old New York Avenue.' Contact Jan Miller at 817/483-0579 for more information.

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

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THE POST OAK

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Don't forget!

Wednesday, October 12

Annie Brown,
Audubon Dallas
Dogwood Canyon:
Preservation by Purchasing
the Last 30%

Be sure to visit us at
arlingtonconservationcouncil.org



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