

ARLINGTON CONSERVATION COUNCIL

POSTOAK

WORKING TO CONSERVE ARLINGTON'S NATURAL RESOURCES
VOLUME 12, NUMBER 10

NOVEMBER - DECEMBER 2011

Note:
Special meeting place
& time.
See below.

www.arlingtonconservationcouncil.org

November Meeting

Capitol Update:

**Environment Texas Briefing on State and
Federal Actions Impacting the Trinity
River, Fracking, the Drought, and More**

**Luke Metzger, Director
Environment Texas**

**Wednesday, November 9, 6:30 pm
Arlington Central Library
Community Room (downstairs)
101 East Abram Street**

The last legislative session was not kind to the environment. So how bad was it? And how about a little hope for the masses? Get the details, plus a silver lining or two, and learn what's ahead.

Metzger's talk is the 2011 Julia Burgen Lecture, named for the longtime ACC supporter and former Arlington City Council member.

No raffle this month

Bits & Pieces

In it for the long haul

Someone spotted an American golden plover at the drying beds recently. Just another drab bird, you say? This species makes one of the longest migrations of any shorebird, up to 25,000 miles, from the tundra to South America. If that's not enough, look up a photo in breeding plumage; it's pretty hot stuff.



Today's Inspirational Moment



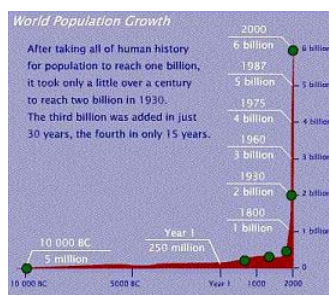
Water and air, the two essential fluids on which all life depends, have become global garbage cans.
Jacques Cousteau

He just won't stop

Native plant nemesis Neil Sperry (*Star-Telegram*, Oct 29) debunked plant myths again. Here's a favorite myth: "Native plants are best." As proof, he offers villainous hackberries and poison ivy while continuing to ignore environmental basics like wildlife value. Neil wants us to insist on adapted beauties like Asian jasmine. Aargh.



Environmentalists' nightmare



Last week saw the birth of the world's 7 billionth person; in 10 years we'll have 8 billion. We're in a staggering period of growth: When your editor was born in 1944, there were only 2,388,458,394 other people alive, according to a BBC Web site. Can nature survive?

From the President Jo Ann Duman

Happy autumn, everyone. The cooler fall weather is helping somewhat with the air pollution we all have to breathe. The amount of emissions remains the same, but the brown scum in the air is less noticeable as the summer daytime high temperatures that “cook” the chemicals into smog are reduced.

Our city council revoked a natural gas drilling permit for the first time this month (*Star-Telegram*, October 14) for water usage infractions. There’s still no enforcement locally for toxic emissions. Chesapeake Energy has 30 days to request permission to continue drilling by complying with city requirements. The city has two inspectors to check on all the well sites. If you see problems like no emergency sign with phone numbers, trash, unpaved driving routes (ruts in the dirt), you can call them at 817-459-6661 or 6593. For any chemical smells or air that sickens you with headaches or nosebleeds, call the regional TCEQ office at 817-588-5800 to report.

While it sometimes seems there’s no concern for public health among any of our state or local officials, some environmentally friendly laws did get through the legislature this year. Come and hear Luke Metzger, Director of Environment Texas, tell us about how those laws happened and what use you, your church, schools and others can make of them to afford cleaner, greener energy, provide food for the hungry and other good things. Luke will also tell us about efforts to support and improve parks, a favorite topic for ACC members. We want a large crowd to hear from Luke so we are meeting in the community auditorium of the Central Library for our November 9 program. Come meet the speaker at 6:30 pm. The program starts at the usual time, 7 pm. Invite your friends. And as John Dycus reminded me to say in our publicity announcements, the program is free.



THE POST OAK

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conserve Arlington's
natural resources.

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New York Avenue Blackland Prairie Park Photos by Wesley Miller



Wildscape Update John Dycus



Valiant wildscape tree warriors apparently worked a miracle and saved almost all of the trees this summer. Watering teams came every morning to fill the gator bags and

water other recently installed native plants.

I have this vision of Danny Kocurek dragging hoses around in the moonlight like Bill Murray in “Caddyshack.”

Native plants must get water the first couple of summers for their roots to grow deep enough to withstand drought conditions. In contrast, most non-natives don't have deep roots and must be continually watered. Some area cities are

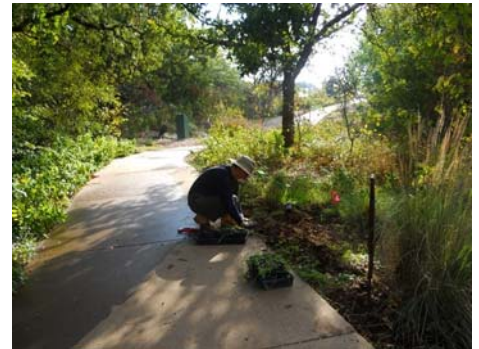
limiting outdoor sprinkling to twice a month, so this may be the time to replace water-thirsty plants that didn't survive the summer with the native plants that can take it.

Elsewhere in the 'scape, work on the new beds between the boulders and the sidewalk had to cease when the heat forced postponement until cooler weather. Well, that weather is here, and volunteers are finishing planting.

Arlington Parks and Recreation oversaw installation of the boulders to stop the soil from eroding onto the sidewalk but would not allow digging (for planting) because it's too close to gas lines. Like telling Molly Hollar no would actually, you know, stop her.

She and a loyal band of hollarytes simply mounded soil up in front of the boulders — no digging required, no complaints from APR — and now they're merrily planting Texas native blooming perennials, shrubs, evergreen plants and even small trees in these beds on the west side of the sidewalk starting at the parking lot.

What a treat this will be for visitors. Much wildscape traffic involves the sidewalks, so guests will experience a variety of sustainable native plants that they can consider using to replace those non-native, water-thirsty miscreant flora, all crackly and brown, that used to adorn their All-American Front Yard.



Clockwise from above left, Dick Pafford, Bill Hall, Jane Oosterhuis; Dick Pafford, Norma Martinez; Norma Martinez, Jane Oosterhuis, Molly Hollar; Danny Kocurek; natives responding to recent rains, especially the red *Salvia greggii*.

Computer Roundup Saturday, November 12

Celebrate Texas Recycles Day at Arlington's Computer Roundup!

Proof of Arlington residency required.
This event is for Arlington residents only. Businesses should contact the City of Arlington for information on how to recycle electronics. We will not be accepting large household appliances such as washers, dryers, refrigerators. Call 817-317-2000 for disposal of these items.



Sponsored by:

- City of Arlington Public Works Dept.
- The University of Texas at Arlington
- Republic Waste
- Goodwill Industries of Fort Worth
- Greenstar Recycling

WANTED:

**Computers Monitors Keyboards
Printers TVs Radios VCRs
Video Cameras Cell Phones**

8 am – 12 noon

Saturday, November 12

UTA South Forty Parking Lot

One block south of Cooper and Mitchell.
Enter from Cooper Street on Doug Russell Road

New This Year: Free document shredding by Greenstar Recycling!

Documents will not be shredded on site, but taken in a double-walled secure truck to Greenstar's facility in Fort Worth where they will be shredded and recycled. Greenstar's facility is AAA NAID (National Association for Information Destruction) certified. For details, call 817-626-4949.
www.GreenstarRecycling.com

Did you know?

The Arlington landfill accepts old computers and computer-related equipment for recycling year-round. That's right, and it's free! All you have to do is drop them off at the landfill where they'll be stored and then taken to a recycler.

For more information, please call the landfill at 817-354-2300.



Johnson Creek Meeting: Everyone Welcome

HEART OF ARLINGTON NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION



www.HANA-TX.org

PO Box 2386
Arlington TX 76004-2386

Neighborhood Meeting
Tuesday, November 15, 6:30 pm
Fireside Room,
Grace Lutheran Church

PROGRAM:

6:30 – 7

Business meeting, year-end review,
HANA officer elections

7 – 7:20

Johnson Creek: Brief history and status
on the Corps of Engineers
work on JC – Amy Archembeaux, ACE
Ft Worth

7:20 – 8

Johnson Creek: Stream restoration
challenges and opportunities – James
Thomas, Project Mgr, and Kerri Snyder,
Environmental Specialist, DHR Engi-
neering, Irving

8 – 8:20

Johnson Creek: Runoff, dumping, and
water quality – J William Brown, PE,
Stormwater Exec Mgr, City of Arlington

8:20 – 8:40

Johnson Creek: A timetable for plan-
ning and improvements – Pete
Jamieson, Director, Parks & Recreation
Dept, City of Arlington

8:40 – 9 Q&A

An Environmentally Friendly Library?

We don't know yet what the future holds for our Central Library, but there will be big changes and we can hope for (and encourage) the best in environmental building/renovation techniques. That would be doubly appropriate because the choices under consideration are driven in part by the building's unhappy legacy of asbestos.

Two years of effort have brought us to three options. They are on display on the first floor lobby and can be accessed online at www.arlingtonlibrary.org/central-visioning. They are: addition of a third floor and parking structure (Option 1) or razing of the building and construction of a new, 99,000 sqft building plus parking structure at the same location (Option 2). Option 3 would place the library at another location in the city. The projected costs and timetable for each option are included.

There will be more opportunities to be heard; with any luck we can help make the leap from asbestos to LEED certification.

Central Library



Green someday?

Thanks to Our Last Speaker

Our meeting last month was tree-hugger heaven: Matt Churches, Arlington city forester, presented the remarkable results of the UFORE study he oversaw. Months of grueling work have yielded a detailed picture of our urban forest, and Matt made it clear and fascinating. We're indebted to him for the talk — and for his efforts on behalf of our trees.



Breast Cancer News

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, data from the Texas Cancer Registry in 2009 showed that six counties in the western Fort Worth-Dallas area had the highest incidence of invasive breast cancer in the state. These counties — Tarrant, Denton, Wise, Parker, Hood and Johnson — all in the Barnett Shale, are where emissions from the exploitation of shale gas are perhaps coincidentally responsible for the highest NOx emissions reported for that year.

It may be worth noting that these counties are also heavily affected by emissions from the Midlothian cement kilns. We have to wonder whether a toxic stew of pollutants will someday be linked to a range of human health issues. At the very least, this is disturbing, especially for girls and young women.

continued in column 3

The Gift John Blair

When I looked out on the deck,
As I do whenever possible
Since viewing birds and blooms
Is my grounding
As I bustle through my day,
This morning an anomaly appeared,
A still gray form beside the chimney
Half-hidden by a chair.
It took a blink to realize
It was a dead rat,
Caught by who knew what disaster,
Whether hawk or cat
Or poison bait or just the ill effects
Of eating too much mildewed birdseed.
I knew I had to move it,
Not just for sanitation
But as well from a surprising urge
To show respect toward a creature
I consider hostilely.
By the time I got outdoors
The carrion flies, familiar crew,
Had settled in, were feeding
And depositing their eggs,
Part since time began of Nature's plan.
The odor was horrific to my nose,
Heir of a hundred million years
Of noses that had known
This was the smell of death, decay,
Disease, a warning to the living.
But I faced it, scooped it on a shovel
With the longest handle possible
And made procession to the compost pile
Where I'd already dug a grave, a tiny pit
Replete with microscopic life
That was waiting for my gift –
The rat's gift really – of a body
To be reabsorbed into the soil.
And what could be more holy?
What more sacred than a gift
Of life for life, flesh for future flesh?
I laid it gently in the earth,
Covered it with loam and leaves,
Thought a silent thought of blessing
To this, my furry brother/sister,
Then went back to all the flowers,
The singing finches.

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SW Nature Preserve

On Saturday, October 22, a small group of ACC people and friends met to gather trash at the preserve. Parks & Rec's Terry Johnson let us in, gave us bags, and later Parks staff hauled the trash away.



Gailon Hardin and her son, Don Gordon



Roy Miliner, Lynn Healy, and Grace Darling



Breast Cancer News

continued from column 1

Source of NOX by Texas County:
<http://m.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/point-source-ei/psei.html#barnett2>

Texas Cancer Registry:
http://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/resources/publications/aag/pdf/2011/Cancer_2011_success_stories_508.pdf

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 _____

E-mail _____

First-year member \$10.00

Individual \$15.00

Family \$25.00

Supporting \$40.00

Sponsor \$100.00

Lifetime individual \$250.00

Other \$ _____

New member ☐

Renewing member ☐

How did you hear about us? _____

Make checks payable to Arlington Conservation Council. Mail to ACC, Box 216, Arlington, TX 76004-0216. Contributions and dues are not tax-deductible. **Please add \$5.00 if you want a paper copy of the newsletter mailed to you.**

Note: If you cannot pay, please let any board member know.

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THE POST OAK

Arlington Conservation Council
PO Box 216
Arlington, TX 76004-0216

Don't Forget!

Wednesday, November 9
6:30 pm

Luke Metzger
Capitol Update
Arlington Central Library

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