

MARCH 2003

March Meeting

TOPIC: Butterflies in Your Garden

SPEAKER: Joann Karges

WHEN: Wednesday, March 12, 7:00 pm

WHERE: First United Methodist Church,
313 N. Center at Division.
(Enter through north door.)

NOTE: Joann Karges is founder and President of the Tarrant County Butterfly Society, has given talks and workshops on butterflies since 1973, and has studied them all over the world. This will be a real treat!

**Remember to bring
something for the raffle!**

Two Very Important People Make the News

Longtime ACC stalwart Anita Garmon has been named STARS (Star-Telegram Awards Recognizing Service) Woman of the Year. There was a fine article on Anita's many, varied, and selfless activities in the March 2 edition of the Star-Telegram; if you missed it, check the archive at star-telegram.com or we'll have a copy at the March meeting.

When we only see our members at meetings or pulling up weeds at the

Wildscape, it's all too easy to overlook the rest of their lives. Anita must be the prime example of a truly multi-dimensional person: for years she has championed native plants, served as a bilingual volunteer in the public schools, participated in several gardening clubs, Arlington Historical Society, and Arlington Art Museum. And she's an accomplished singer!



On February 11, Arlington City Council created the Molly Hollar Wildscape at Veterans Park. This was the culmination of weeks of secret efforts by ACC members, Parks Department personnel, and a number of people who took the time to write letters in support of this overdue idea. Bob Korman (at left,



with Molly) announced the name at Molly's birthday party, and Molly gave a calm speech ("It's not me, it's all the other wonderful people"). Later, when she learned it was real, she finally became properly shocked.

From the President by Marian Hiler



As is the nature of most organizations, they tend to ebb and flow. I am excited to see that the tide has been turning in a positive direction for

Arlington Conservation Council. I have confidence that ACC will accomplish many things this year. The membership participation at the annual January planning meeting was strong. Members joined in breakout groups to discuss their visions of where we should be involved and suggestions for what we can do.

One of the dominant themes discussed was the need to increase ACC's visibility in the community. Proposed ways to do this were to:

- participate in more Arlington community and River Legacy events
- outreach to churches, younger groups Tarrant County College, and UTA
- establish a speakers bureau.

Also, a suggestion was made to use the Internet for communication among ACC members by both having a Web site and registering a discussion group on Yahoo Group. (ACC now has a framework Web site, *arlingtonconservation-council.org*, that will be fleshed out as time goes on.) It was suggested that our involvement with local government action could be enhanced by designating contacts for issues involving city council, committees, and boards. An idea to attract new members is to bring in a well known speaker with broad appeal as part of a membership drive. Another idea is to take on a major, city-wide project focusing on one issue or theme such as erosion control that will appeal to many who will rally around. There was support for a mid-year assessment of ACC's progress in accomplishing these and other efforts.

Your Board is greatly encouraged to receive this valuable input on how ACC can be more effective in meeting its mission. We will strive to identify the steps and actions needed to make these

things happen. As plans to accomplish these various goals solidify, we will be letting you know specific activities the willing and able can help with. We want it to be as easy as possible for volunteers to know what they have available to sign up for and can schedule time for, whether it's a one-time event or some ongoing task.

Please continue to voice your visions and goals for ACC. Remember that **you** are ACC and any contribution you can make, from maintaining your membership to serving on a committee, helps to keep the tide flowing for a better Arlington.

A couple of closing notes: Peg and Tom Kennedy have volunteered to prepare the newsletters for mailing each month. Peg said they weren't able to do much but that every little bit helps. I know our editor views this as a BIG help! The ACC Board thanks Hedwiga Weatherford who has agreed to head up the ACC phone tree. The phone tree is used along with e-mail to get the word out quickly to the membership.

Nobody made a greater mistake than he who did nothing because he could do only a little.

Edmund Burke

POST OAK

Published 10 times a year by the
Arlington Conservation Council
P.O. Box 216, Arlington, TX 76004-0216

Direct all newsletter correspondence to:

John Darling, Editor
1316 S. Pecan St.
Arlington, Texas 76010
817-274-1077 1darling@airmail.net

Contributors

Ashleigh Barnett, Marian Hiler

Proofreader and Mailing Specialist

Grace Darling

On March 29 from 9:00 am until noon we'll have a chance to regain the litter title (and some badly needed cash) as we collect trash from some nasty mess in Arlington. We were the winners in our division the first year and fell to second place last year. If we're going to get back on top, we need a wonderfully trashy spot to clean up. Do you

have a favorite eyesore? If so, please contact John Darling (see box at left) or any other board member as soon as possible. So far, it looks like we can rely on getting enough ACC volunteers, we just need lots of litter (Yes, we're almost thinking of litter as a virtue, but not really). Keep your eyes peeled for a good spot and tell someone.



A Note to AISD Science Teachers

Starting this month we're sending our newsletter to you in the hope that you will find some of our activities useful, or at least interesting. We have one thing in common: Every day you practice what we preach—making Arlington a better place. You do it through education, while we work in a variety of ways. They're not glamorous: we pick up trash, set out recycling bins, and work at Arlington's biggest native plant demonstration area. We even dabble in education as we interact with people at special events and with passersby in a park who stop to ask what we're doing. Our largest educational effort is something we're calling Walk on the Wildside. At last year's WOW we helped introduce about 80 third-graders from Wimbish Elementary School to our local natural wonders at Veterans Park, and this May we plan to do it again.

We have more ideas we'd love to share, and we're certain that you have even more. If you agree, we hope you'll get in touch via e-mail, stop by and visit during a Saturday workday at Veterans Park, or maybe even attend a meeting on a Wednesday evening. Thanks for all you do—and please let us know if we might help you in some way.



EarthFest succumbs to budget shortfall

The city has called off what would have been its most ambitious celebration of Earth Day. It's a shame, but our budget problems extend far beyond this event—they're going to cut deeply into staff and services that we have taken for granted until now. Surely this is a time for us to do even more, with less help from the city.

Johnson Creek Bridges Update

Last year Parks Dept. personnel and a few ACC members removed young willows from the creek at the Center and Mesquite bridges. We left a few (1), and they seemed to be thriving. However, a few weeks ago, Bob Ressler, Water Dept. environmental engineer, mentioned that the last trees were gone; there was clear evidence of beavers at work (2) and a small dam had appeared that was backing up the stream (3). Your editor made a quick visit and was rewarded by a great look at a gray fox. A day later, after a noticeable rain, the dam was apparently washed out (4 and 5).



What will happen next? As the waters subsided the dam looked a little ragged. Meanwhile, our management approach will surely affect the area's future residents. Will we choose to do battle with any beavers that interfere? Will we continue to clear the successional trees and shrubs? Will we take extra precautions when planting saplings there? (That's an easy one.) And will we have another workday there any time soon?

Wildscape Update by John Darling



March Workday at Molly Hollar Wildscape

March came in like a cold, irritated lion, but that didn't

faze the faithful. A hardcore handful conducted business as usual, even as a brand-new thing happened: Arlington Master Composters held their first workday at the Wildscape. Over a dozen composters joined the regulars to take the first step toward a major facelift for the compost site. They tore down the gently decomposing pallet bins in preparation for installing some sort of attractive structure that will hide leaf

And there was another new thing: Ruth Ann Knudsen, assisted by Rachel Knudsen, taped a documentary on the Wildscape. It is a pleasure to report that no one decked them or even made funny faces.



Can Hollywood be far behind? Molly Hollar makes an unusually emphatic point to documentarians Rachel (left) and Ruth Ann Knudsen (right) while composters Ginny Buckingham and Stephen Smith focus on more mundane matters (compost, that is).

Meanwhile, Marian Hiler, Ann Trenton, Jennifer Hiler, Ashleigh Barnett and Jan Miller trimmed grasses and placed the trimmings for erosion control, planted eastern red cedars by the boardwalk (5 gallons worth, donated by Ann Trenton), and a dozen gallon-sized little bluestems donated by Shirley Craig. Shirley also donated 19 roughleal dogwoods and 6 rusty blackhaw viburnums.

They also scattered seedballs in the pocket prairie. Molly



Arlington Master Composters made short work of dismantling the old pallet bins, turning piles, and building new ones during their first Veterans Park Workday.

bags, provide protected storage, and support educational displays. There was a downside: suddenly all our leaf bags and assorted junk were exposed. So the composters not only turned the six existing piles but also emptied all the bags, adding to the piles and creating two new ones. Lorrie Anderle, City of Arlington Recycling Guru, looked it all over and immediately got several good ideas. As spiritual leader and driving force of Arlington Master Composters, she'll be working to make the improvements a reality.

Hollar, who seemed to be everywhere as usual, said that these seed-balls were constructed specifically for our prairie. That is, they contain appropriate pioneer prairie species like partridge pea, cowpen daisy, gayfeather, and purpletop grass. Unscientific calculation later produced a very rough estimate of 600 seedballs made for the occasion. At an application rate of 10 to 20 balls per square yard, that's enough for

30 to 60 square yards, which must include a big portion of the prairie. Your editor thought that the main purpose of seedballs was to entertain kids who are drawn to their innate mudness. Turns out that they protect the seeds from birds and insects until a good rain gives everything a start on germination.

Volunteer Opportunities

The Wildscape at Veterans Park
Next Saturday workday: April 12.

(NOTE: It's the Second Saturday next month.)

continued on page 5



It wasn't all composting: Jennifer Hiler (left) and Ashleigh Barnett (right) demonstrated amazing enthusiasm for messing around in very cold dirt on a gray, windy day.

Wildscape Update

continued from page 4

Time: 9 am until noon, refreshments provided.

We'll be planting coralberry and little bluestem, tossing lots of seedballs, and working out frustrations by ripping up privet with the new weed wrench. We'll also engage in general spring cleanup activities, so gloves, long sleeves and long pants are recommended. Bring trowels, small shovels, loppers, hay or pitchfork, and wheelbarrow if you can.

Directions: Veterans Park is at the corner of Arkansas Lane and Spanish Trail. Parking for the Wildscape is at the second entrance, off Spanish Trail south of Arkansas Lane.

Wednesday afternoons at Veterans Park

Time: 1:00 pm until 4:00 pm. If the weather is questionable, contact Molly to confirm.

Contact: Molly Hollar at 817-860-5580 or 817-319-6924. You may want to call ahead for confirmation as the dates draw near.

Friday plant propagation at Molly's house

Time: 9:00 am until noon.

Contact: Molly Hollar at 817-860-5580 or 817-319-6924 for details and directions.

Learn the tricks of the trade as propagators prepare for the spring native plant sale, tentatively set for May 10.

**Wildscape Workday—
A Different View**

by Ashleigh Barnett



On March 1, I spent my second Saturday volunteering at the Molly Hollar Wildscape. I had a blast working and helping the park. I planted five Eastern

Red Cedars near the pavilion. After planting, Jennifer Hiler and I watched the robins, squirrels, and rabbits play while waiting for Jan Miller to give us instructions on where to plant the blue stem. Then we broke little bluestem clippings and spread them across an embankment to help prevent erosion. While I was picking up trash, Ruth Ann Knudsen interviewed me for her documentary on the Wildscape. As we talked, I spotted lichen and was excited because I got to educate Ruth Ann about it. At the end of the workday, we all went to Mijo's for lunch, covered in mud. It was an extraordinary day!

The frog does not drink up the pond in which he lives.
Indian Proverb



Animal Deficit?

ACC Secretary Jo Briggs recently pointed out in no uncertain terms that we need some animals in this newsletter. Of course she's right. Your basic Wildscaper tends to think of animals mostly in terms of which butterfly needs which plant. Maybe a few hummingbirds wouldn't hurt; the radical fringe wants lizards and maybe a tiny snake. Well that's just not good enough.

On January 26, She Who Must Be Obeyed hauled your editor out to the Village Creek drying beds where we usually see a couple dozen kinds of birds on each trip during the winter. And there was a proper animal: an actual bobcat stared at us for several minutes. There's still hope for wildness in Arlington, even though that cat was technically in Fort Worth. *(Below, a winter sunset at our mostly undiscovered wetlands.)*

Thanks

To Shane Goetz for supporting our efforts. If you'd like to help and publicize your business, call any board member for details.

METRO 817/265-2902

ROSSETTI AND GOETZ
ATTORNEYS AND COUNSELORS

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.

Membership Information

Please circle membership category.

Name _____

Individual \$12.00

Address _____

Student \$6.00

Family \$18.00

Telephone _____ Fax _____

Supporting \$24.00

E-mail _____

Organization/Business \$36.00

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.

Arlington Conservation Council Officers and Board of Directors

President Marian Hiler
1st Vice President Stephen Smith
2nd Vice President Roy Miliner

Treasurer Jean-Marie Smith
Secretary Jo Briggs
Editor John Darling

Board Members

Ellen Baskerville Molly Hollar
Sarah Dendy John O'Malley

THE POST OAK

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

NONPROFIT
ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
ARLINGTON, TX
PERMIT NO. 633

Don't forget!

At the March meeting Joann Karges will speak on *Butterflies in Your Garden*. This may well be the most beautiful presentation of the year. Don't miss it!



Printed on recycled paper.