

ARLINGTON  
CONSERVATION  
COUNCIL

# POSTOAK

WORKING TO CONSERVE ARLINGTON'S NATURAL RESOURCES  
VOLUME 9, NUMBER 3

MARCH 2008

[www.arlingtonconservationcouncil.org](http://www.arlingtonconservationcouncil.org)

## March Meeting Texas Invaders



Marilyn Sallee  
Master Gardener, Master Naturalist,  
Texas Invader, Citizen Forester,  
Master Composter

Wednesday, March 12, 7:00 pm  
Fielder Museum  
1616 W. Abram Street  
(corner of Fielder and Abram)

Bring something  
for the raffle

## Bits & Pieces

### Sounds Like Spring

Getting out of winter feels like a bad roller coaster ride so far, but on the good days our backyard birds are making a real racket about spring, and it sounds great. The cardinals and Carolina wrens seem to be leading the way, but now and then we're cheered by the plaintive whistle, "peter, peter, peter, peter" and there's a tufted titmouse, maybe the same one that's been so bold at the feeder all winter.



### Today's Inspirational Moment

One of the first laws against air pollution came in 1300 when King Edward I decreed the death penalty for burning of coal. At least one execution for that offense is recorded. But economics triumphed over health considerations, and air pollution became an appalling problem in England.

*Glenn T. Seaborg, Atomic Energy Commission  
chairman, speech, Argonne National Laboratory, 1969*

### Spring Again

We used to see this handsome rodent only in the most manicured grassy spots in town — golf courses and cemeteries. They are not appreciated in either place, but they do know how to take it easy: In parts of Texas they may hibernate up to 240 days a year. They're out now, though, if Arlington still tolerates its only ground squirrel, that is.



### Rowlett Adopts New Environmental Building Standards

The March online issue of *InSight*, a monthly publication of the NCTCOG Dept. of Environment and Development, reports that Rowlett's new municipal buildings will be LEED certified. Councilmember Steve Raggiotto said, "One key component is that most of what a city builds will stand for 50 to 100 years and over time the operational costs for a building far outstrip capital costs." Learn more at [www.nctcog.org/envir/features/2008/mar/rowlett.asp](http://www.nctcog.org/envir/features/2008/mar/rowlett.asp).

# From the President John Darling



Is Going Green just another mindless fad? The phrase itself is annoying because it seems so trivial. That's a big problem for this old inhabitant

of the environmental fringe. Or maybe all fanatics get so used to looking at things in a certain way that they can't see what normal people take for granted. I don't claim superior vision, but I do see bad things every day that regular folks just don't get — or worse, they like those things.

They're seemingly little things like bags of leaves piled on sterile, immaculate lawns. Or maybe huge things, like the football stadium or rulings on air quality.

When I started to fill this blank space the little photo above of the intrepid explorer in Mexico reminded me of this vision problem. Once years ago I gave a

ride to a couple of lost gringo surfers in Jalisco. As we passed through miles of ragged farmland, I lamented the complete loss of habitat. It turned out that they didn't know, didn't care, and literally couldn't picture the magnitude of the loss.

Much more recently I tried to find the ramshackle hotel near the tiny fishing village of San Blas where a group of us stayed in 1962 during a biology field trip. It was dank, picturesque, and almost swallowed up by lush rain forest. And it was the first time this New Mexico boy had wandered, open-mouthed, through tropical forest. I should have known better, of course. About to give up, I asked an old vendor at a roadside stall. She pointed across the street to a construction site (photo at right) and assured me that it was the spot, soon to be a major beer distribution center.



Another Earth Day will be here before we know it, and for years I've wondered about our ability to cruise along our destructive path, pausing annually to give lip service to the planet.

The cure? Take a deep (polluted) breath, and get busy. Do some ACC stuff. As spring gets going, so do we, and I'm thankful to have the opportunity for some productive activities right here at home.

## THE POST OAK

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Thanks A.C.C. for working to conserve Arlington's natural resources.

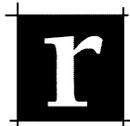


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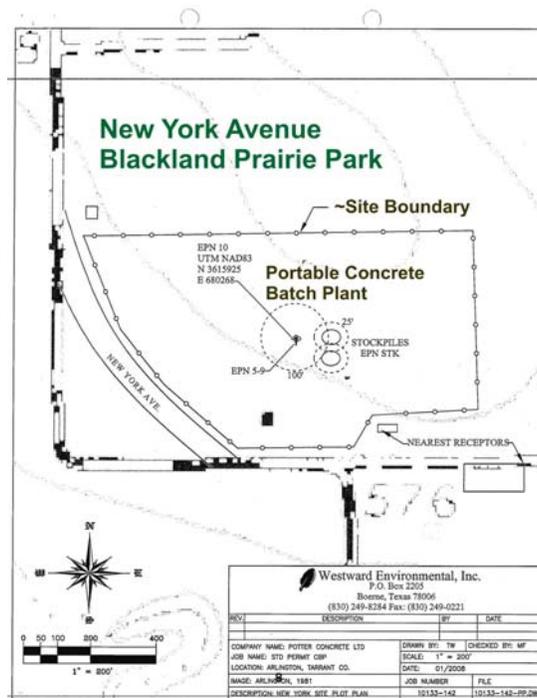
# New York Avenue Blackland Prairie

We've always known that our only tiny piece of pristine prairie was located in an area that would someday be developed. Land around the 9-acre dab is apparently zoned light industrial, so anything nasty could — and sooner or later will — happen.

We just weren't expecting a sneak attack, but that's what seems to be happening. Potter Concrete wants to place a concrete batch plant on land immediately south of our undeveloped prairie park. The company has filed an air-quality permit application with TCEQ and claims to have run a required notice in the *Fort Worth Weekly*.

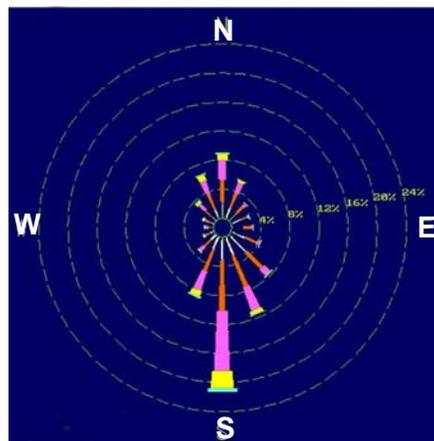
The TCEQ office tells us that the deadline for public comment, even to request a hearing or submit letters, was last Sunday, March 9. As of a few days ago, city officials hadn't heard anything about this.

Why do we care about this particular development? The proposed plant will emit particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter, aggregate, cement, and road dust. And the wind most often blows from the south, moving the plant's pollution directly over and onto the prairie. Is this a health hazard to people — and to our prairie plants?



What can we do? For starters, let your council members (all five of them) know how you feel. The prescribed comment period has supposedly expired, but you might call the local TCEQ office (817-588-5700) and tell them why a notice in an out-of-town publication doesn't cut it in Arlington.

UPDATE: Last Friday night Jim Parajon, Arlington Director of Community Development and Planning, sent a letter to TCEQ informing them that the zoning overlay does not permit permanent concrete batch plants at that location. He's waiting for a response, and so are we.



Above, A wind rose shows that our prevailing winds will usually blow the plant's particulates directly toward the prairie park.



# Wildscape Update: Feb 23 Molly's Privet Massacre John Dycus



Here's a big ol' Mollyquote: For 10 years we have pulled privet in the wildscape, so this final victory is truly the ultimate birthday present for me. Huge thanks to

Danny and the Kocureks for arranging this stupendous event, and to all of you fabulous people — you Arlington Parks & Recreation fellows, too — who gave your morning to come and fight and win the privet war! This 80th birthday has got to be the best ever.



80-year-old honoree Molly Hollar with Benjamin Kocurek, 5.



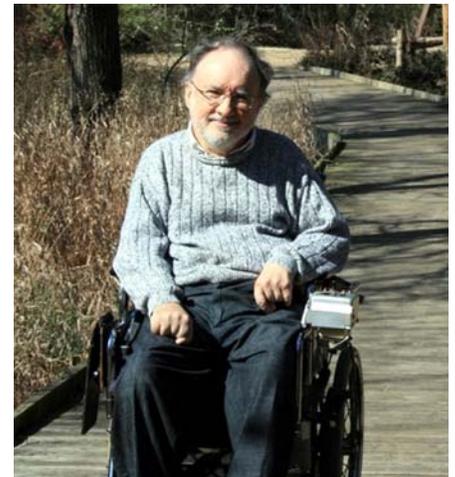
Julia Burgen, wildscape inspiration and former councilwoman.



Councilwoman Kathryn Wilemon helps Glenn Troutman, WECAN president and longtime wildscape propagation volunteer, install a super tool rack he built for the wildscape vault.



Martin Sanchez, APRD district supervisor.



John Dycus, Wildscape Update writer.



Bonnie Bowman, president, Tarrant Coalition for Environmental Awareness.



Danny Kocurek and responsible party (his mother, Peggy Quinn) conversing with privet pullers Julia Burgen and Sharon and Dick Schoech.



Ann Trenton, wildscape volunteer since 1996.

Happy Birthday, Molly. You're never too old to get people to pull privet.



Marilyn Sallee, coordinator, Cross Timbers Invasives Program.



Pete Jamieson, Arlington Parks and Recreation Department director.



Gregg Wilson, Veterans Park lead technician.



Nicholas Kocurek, following in his father's footsteps.



Danny Kocurek, ACC board member and wildscape co-chair.



Above, Frank Keeney, wildscape webmaster, and Wesley Miller, wildscape trail team and poison ivy control.

Left, longtime wildscape volunteers Mary McCoy, education team and Master Gardener liaison, and Jo Poppelreiter, Master Gardener.



Right, Sharon Schoech, wildscape secretary/treasurer, and Dick Schoech, dedicated privet pullers.

### 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.

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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. *I want to save trees; send my newsletter to my email address.*

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Arlington, TX 76004-0216

# Don't Forget!

Wednesday, March 12

7:00 pm

Marilyn Sallee,  
Master Gardener  
*Texas Invaders*

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

Be sure to visit us at  
[arlingtonconservationcouncil.org](http://arlingtonconservationcouncil.org)