

**MAY  
2006**

## Same Old Price for "Progress" John Darling

We can't avoid hearing that wonderful things are ahead for Arlington. Our city seems to be careening toward a golden future fueled by an enormous football stadium, associated developments of unprecedented density, and ever bigger highways, roads and bridges.

Over the last months we have heard about lives disrupted as old family homes became impediments to progress. Two features of this drama are almost always ignored: As far as I can tell, there's no recycling of the MASSIVE quantities of demolition waste. Apparently everything torn down is going to a landfill. Tarrant County has the demolition contract—which bypassed the bidding process—but nobody claims responsibility for this unforgivable decision.

The other feature is that perennial victim, green space. Big old trees and prime habitat are giving way to parking lots for folks trying out for beer commercials. Look and weep, if you've got any tears left:

## May Meeting

- TOPIC:** Let's Clear the Air for DFW
- SPEAKER:** Rita Beving, consultant to Downwinders at Risk and Sierra Club Co-chair of Conservation
- WHEN:** Wednesday, May 10, 7:00 pm
- WHERE:** First United Methodist Church,  
313 N Center at Division  
(enter through north door)

**Bring Something  
for the Raffle!**



### From the President Wayne Halliburton



With the Wildscape Workshop, the Wildscape plant sale, Hill Elementary Wildscape Anniversary celebration, Wimbish Elementary

Earth Day, UTA Earth Day, Mr Steiner's presentation to our group, a couple of cleanups, and the usual workdays in the Wildscape, Blackland Prairie, and CGA (which may soon have a second site!), I overlooked Arbor Day, which was April 27 this year.

The reason I mention this (aside from the obvious—we all want to protect, preserve, and plant more trees) is because of an article I ran across in

National Geographic Online this past week. It is titled "New Orleans Trees Hit by Katrina Face Uncertain Outlook," and states: "When Hurricane Katrina made a devastating hit on New Orleans last August, many trees were weakened, sheared, or uprooted. But given the severe damage to the city's homes and residents, the trees were the last thing on people's minds. Now, eight months after the hurricane, a change in the city's landscape is evident. New Orleans is home to some of the largest collections of mature trees in the world. The city contains nearly 50 species, including magnolia, pine, live oak, bald cypress (Louisiana's official state tree), and red maple. These native trees are important not only for humans but also for many

birds, which depend on the habitats for feeding and nesting."

Two-thirds of the city lost all of their Magnolia trees. Sitting in water for days after Katrina, they either died or were easily uprooted by the winds of Rita a few weeks later. Many of those trees that are still standing are beginning to show signs of root damage.

There is good news on the tree front, however. The National Audubon Society and the National Arbor Day Foundation recognized the problem and started the Katrina Tree Recovery Campaign. So far over 22,000 trees have been donated to coastal Mississippi and Louisiana to replace trees damaged or lost by the hurricanes.

### Last Friday Environmental Meetup

Want to learn more about current environmental issues? Or just vent freely about the latest outrage perpetrated on Arlington's vanishing natural remnants? Come to the next very casual meeting on May 26 at 1:00 pm at Cup O Joe, Abram Street, east side of McDonalds just east of Cooper.



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## New York Avenue Blackland Prairie Jan Miller

Land conservation note #1: Plans for an industrial warehouse development on the land immediately north and east of the New York Avenue Blackland Prairie Park have been submitted to the city. At the April Parks Board meeting, Gordon Robertson discussed the developer's (IDI) industrial warehouse development and their desire to share right-of-way (ROW) along the prairie's north boundary. The proposed development is in compliance with the prairie park's current 'CS' zoning, so may only be reviewed by the city's Development Review Committee (DRC). The status of the ROW is being investigated by the city: If a ROW exists, IDI would like to use it to create a public road aligned with Bayou Drive, the residential street west of New York Avenue. Sharing the ROW with NYABP would cost a strip of virgin prairie at least 20' deep across most of the northern border. With less than 0.5% remaining of the original blackland prairie, now less than 5000 acres, every bit is that much more important.

*Late update on the prairie: a park board subcommittee met with IDI last week and a decision was made to pursue a wider median opening on New York for their drive, but no access to park land would be required. IDI will work with Parks to design the buffer between the properties, probably a masonry fence.*

There are many issues involved with development adjacent to the prairie park: drainage, protecting prairie boundaries, adjacent non-native species, visual and noise buffers, status of the ROW, ownership of the road, adjacent heavy truck traffic, etc. Gordon Robertson and APRD staff are investigating the issues, maintaining contact with IDI, and will follow through as this proposed development takes shape.

Also: With the prairie mowed in 2005 and recent rains, spring wildflowers are staging a comeback! Prairie celestials were seen over most of the prairie two weeks ago. The park is definitely worth a look. A tour will be scheduled soon; watch for details via the ACC Yahoo group.

Land conservation note #2: Did you notice the Star-Telegram article citing 23 acres along Johnson Creek's west bank near the future Cowboys stadium that will now be used for stadium parking, not parks? Part of this 23-acre parcel appears to be the sensitive environmental area designated as US Fish and Wildlife Resource Category 2: highly diverse bottomland hardwoods. For many years these precious woods have been off-limits to any development plans. Businesses along Collins and the Eastern Star Home will be spared the bulldozer, but literally, they'll "pave paradise and put up a parking lot."



### Thanks to Our April Speaker

Developer Yaromir Steiner discussed his plans for the Arlington Town Center before a crowd of about 100 people who learned about the talk from a Star-Telegram story. The huge project, he said, won't be LEED-certified but will have some sustainable features. To the extent that it encourages people to live much closer to their jobs, the development might help

with our irrational transportation system and filthy air. On the other hand, if it works the project will draw thousands of new residents to a city already struggling to maintain services to its citizens. Over-reaching or forward-thinking?



## Electronic Post Oaks in Color Too

Help ACC save money and trees by having your newsletters delivered by email. Contact John Darling ([1darling@sbcglobal.net](mailto:1darling@sbcglobal.net)) and your ACC newsletter will be sent to your email box fresh each month, before the paper copies are delivered by snail mail.

## Pecan Street Apartments Pass Planning and Zoning

On May 3 the developers tried again and succeeded (again) in winning P&Z approval for their student housing project. The redesigned apartments barely avoid the Johnson Creek floodplain. Like last time, only Commissioner Julia Burgen opposed the project. She pointed out that the scale of the apartments (six stories) was inappropriate for the neighborhood. Will this project sail through City Council? Probably.

## Successful Wildscape Workshop and Plant Sale Molly Hollar



*Just a little more fiddling with the projector and we'll be on our way.*

setup, takedown, etc. I can also remember the Darling family procuring and hauling a giant screen, finding a wonderful sound system along with much other technical equipment setup, troubleshoot, and takedown; managing and directing traffic; and producing professional folders complete with classy program, handouts, and name tags along with co-producer Jan Miller, which involved stuffing activities going on into the



*Another good native plant sale. All it took was great weather, many weeks of greenhouse labor, and a big push by volunteers in the final days.*

After this unbelievably successful workshop ended, I really enjoyed lunch with Rosa Finsley, followed by leisurely walks through the wildscape with Rosa and John Davis while the greenhouse volunteers were rushing around selling and loading plants at the spring native plant sale. And they sold a lot of plants!

These remarkable events together could hardly have been imagined 10 years ago at our half-acre wildscape. Look at us now, enjoying a 3-acre wildlife habitat with significant influence in our community, providing a place where visitors can connect with nature while observing wildlife and learning to conserve natural resources.

The absolutely perfect spring day was the setting for this most incredible day in the history of the wildscape, which happened as a result of the efforts of the most dedicated and talented volunteers in history. Thank you all!

ACC members, you've done it again! Everyone who made the wildscape workshop a success has made wildscape history again. You have once again lifted our project to new heights by successfully planning and pulling off the ultimate wildscape workshop!

The achievements of Marian Hiler's team are so numerous I can't even remember them all, but I can remember your canny solving of the chair problem (thanks, First Presbyterian Church), the Hiler family turning out to haul, bake unbelievable amounts of banana bread, load, unload,



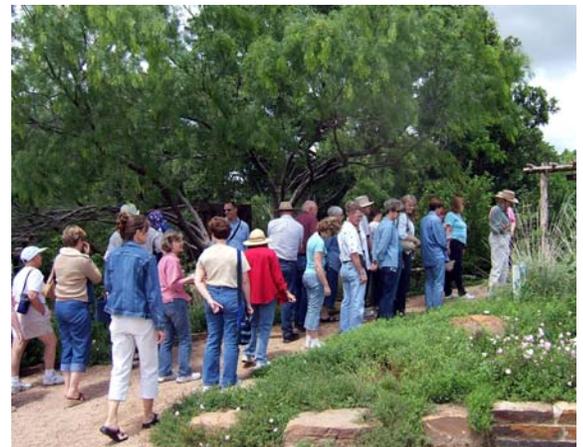
*Jan Miller, Grace Darling, and Ann Knudsen demonstrate the less glamorous side of the workshop.*

wee hours of the night. Then there was the refreshment serving with cups, water, ice, tea, coffee, etc., for more than 100 people with Jennifer and Ann presiding over kitchen and food, and on and on and on.

Also memorable was the "whatever it takes" response to the broken remote control by the substitute called Marian, the deft handling of the technical problem delay by filling the interruption with additional door prize offerings, the nifty handling of registration, name tags, and lunch dispersal with Jo Ann and Jan insuring a smooth operation.

And I can't forget the generosity of the Montessori Academy, whose big room was perfect and kitchen invaluable.

I was enjoying an insider's view of all these entertaining goings on from my very comfortable padded chair near the front while the excellent microphone enabled even half-deaf people to hear well. The cool giant screen was easily seen from every seat in the room and while I drank my coffee and ate my cake I admired your scurrying around heading off crises.



*Workshop participants prepare to tour the wildscape with our speakers, Rosa Finsley and John Davis, who ensured our success with their expertise.*

## New Project for ACC

Lorrie Anderle, Arlington’s Recycling Coordinator, has asked for our help, and at the last board meeting we decided to accept the challenge.

Lorrie’s got a bunch of heavy plastic bags that are meant to encourage apartment dwellers to recycle. The bags have instructions on what to recycle and where—at special dumpsters she’s arranged to be placed at each library. The instructions are printed right on the bags in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

This looks like a good solution for the many people who don’t have access to curbside recycling and would like to recycle, but somebody has to get the bags distributed to the apartments—and that’s us. To get started we’ll need volunteers to make some phone calls to apartment managers and more volunteers to deliver the bags. You can spend as much (or as little) time as you want on this project, but every bit will certainly help. Please contact John Darling if you can make some calls or deliver some bags. It’s a good project, and we should remember that it’s Lorrie who always lends us her projector for our meetings. Most recently she provided the backup projector and the sound system for the wildscape workshop.



## Free Book Available on Nonnative Invasives



Native Plant Society President John Bridges was happily staffing a table at the plant sale and handing out a free book on nonnative invasive plants. Here’s what he said about it in the last NPSOT newsletter:

To receive your copies e-mail [pubrequest@srs.fs.usda.gov](mailto:pubrequest@srs.fs.usda.gov), which is the Southern Research Station for the US Forest Service. Simply request a box of 40 of their *Nonnative Invasive Plants of Southern Forests* to hand out whenever you can. In around 8 days, UPS will deliver a box of 40. It **IS** that simple. It costs you nothing and is a great resource. If you haven’t seen this book, you can view it at [www.invasive.org/eastern/srs/](http://www.invasive.org/eastern/srs/).

We always tell people to ignore the control section in the back of the book. Instead of spending millions of dollars in labor to put out train cars full of herbicides just to control these invasive plants, save the manpower and the money by leaving the plants in the store. Everybody understands this point.

## Hill’s Happy Habitat Marks 10 Years

On April 28 a sizable crowd celebrated the 10-year anniversary of the founding of their environmentally friendly native plant garden. AISD Superintendent Mac Bernd was there, along with a number of familiar ACC faces, some of whom participated in starting the original garden.



Lots of ACC members, old and new, showed up for the occasion.



AISD Superintendent Mac Bernd.



Former ACC president and city council member Julia Burgen and Martha May Martin enjoying the ceremony.

### Arlington Conservation Council Membership Application

Memberships are good for one year, renewable each January. Your dues go directly to our public education efforts.

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Please circle membership category.

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## Don't forget!

Next Meeting  
Wednesday, May 10

Rita Beving:  
*Let's Clear the Air for DFW*

Be sure to visit us at  
*arlingtonconservationcouncil.org*