

PARKS

Charro Ranch Park

The monthly volunteer workdays are vital to the upkeep and care of Charro Ranch Park. Spearheaded by Sue Harding and several volunteers and committee members much progress is happening this fall.

The below summary was provided by Charro Park volunteer and Hays County Master Naturalist Sue Harding.

September 12, 2020: 12 volunteers worked 3 hours: (Total of 36 volunteer hours in September)

- weeding paths in native plant area and re-mulched with the remaining pile of shredded cedar mulch (originally 20 cy donated to us by Kinser Ranch in July, 2019)
- restored areas where oak wilt trenching took place this past summer; spreading dirt, shrinking piles, covering with trimmed ashe juniper branches and piled branches to indicate 'no pass-thru' on these areas
- created a new spur trail on the SW side, including weed eating and delineating the ends; GPSed the new official spur

October 10, 2020: 9 volunteers worked 3 hours: (Total of 27 volunteer hours in October)

- weed whacked entire native plant area that had heavy KR bluestem growth; pulled KR bluestem and other weedy grasses from paths in native plant area
- continued smoothing of caliche piles left over from oak wilt trenching this past summer
- heavy weed whacking around solstice circle and peace labyrinth

Charro Ranch Park was a stop for a documentary film crew featuring Texas dark skies. Mayor Foulds and City Administrator Fischer greeted the team and served as City Liaisons for their visit.

Maggie Martin – Programs and Events Coordinator has wrapped up the bird viewing station identification binder improvements. They are in the process of being produced on materials that will withstand outdoor wear and tear and public use. Goal of December for installation.

Dripping Springs Ranch Park -Submitted by: *Tina Adams – Event Center Manager*



The Ranch Park had a strong October with several weekends jam packed with events and hosting the 2020 Dripping Springs Fair & Rodeo. This was rescheduled from July due to Covid-19. Several successful roping events and a shopping fair rounded out the month. We look forward to November with our own DSRP riding series Hunter Jumper Horse Show this month! We have gained a new guest services coordinator, Lily Sellers. She is busy connecting with our current DSRP members while actively pursuing renewals and new memberships for our arena memberships. The DSRP team is working hard to keep the event center maintained and preparing for the next upcoming major event, Fall classic. This goat, pig and lamb show is an extremely large event showcasing our county's youth and their show animals. Our networking with other local RV parks has led an increase in RV bookings and interest from the community outside if the booked events. We are currently working with the City of Dripping Springs' Marketing Director, Lisa Sullivan, to create updated signage for the park and event center. Lots of great things happening at DSRP this fall!

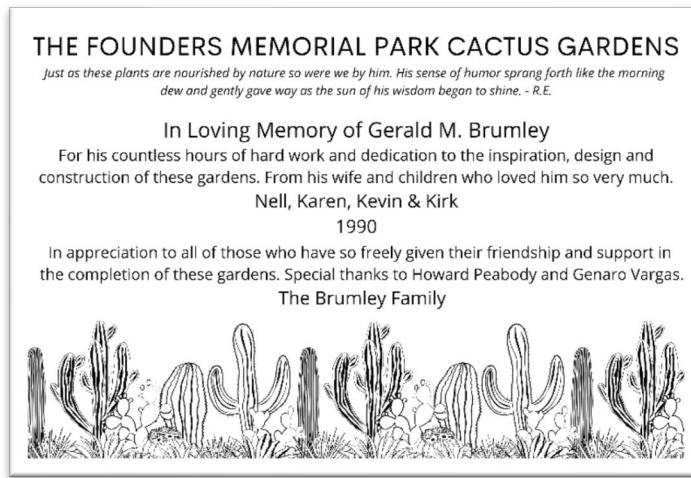
Connie Boltz-

Hays County Master Naturalist notes- 6 Hays Country Master Naturalist worked on removal of invasive species such as Malta Star Thistle and King Ranch Bluestem in the area around the trail near the Bird Viewing Station. A general vegetation survey was done in the area nearest the parking lot by the bird station was conducted. 18 species of

plants were identified in the area that will be developed as an example of a native prairie. The beginning work on building a terraced garden by the bird feeders on the west side of the bird station was initiated. The objective for the day was to remove invasive plants around the bird viewing area and begin work on a bird and butterfly attracting native plant garden.

Founders Memorial Park & Pool –

Renck Donation Memorial Bench has been approved by council and has been ordered. Cactus Garden replacement monument and new plaque has been ordered. An interpretive panel that identifies the cactus species was not a part of the original agreement so that was not pursued. The material of the new plaque is an aluminum photo plate that is design to last in outdoor climates and will not be impacted by fading or weathering from heat or other environmental elements.



Issues continue to arise with the pool. Currently, there is a main drain leak that is being located and identified in scope and scale of issue. Maintenance staff has called in for a leak detection and isolation service from Progressive Aquatics.

Rathgeber Natural Resource Park (Pending)

Use agreement still being drafted with Capitol Area BSA for Rathgeber. Awaiting the results of the November election. Staff has begun developing a preliminary operations budget for the park with a plan for bringing it on-line as a budgeted addition to the PRC budget in 2022.

Sports & Recreation Park

Engineered plans are currently with the City Building Official for review and code compliance prior to our submittal to the International Dark Sky Association for certification.

Veterans Memorial Park & Triangle

Community rental capabilities of the portion of the Triangle west of the low water crossing are no longer permitted.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Community Initiatives

Bird City Texas:

We will be starting a Community-wide Dripping Springs Backyard Habitat program to meet a goal of expanding and encouraging awareness of migratory birds and pollinators and the need for an increased presence of migratory bird

and pollinator places to rest along their journey and feed. Resting stations will be encouraged and foliage that promotes resources for pollinators.

Applications for the 2021 Texas Bird City designation process opened June 15, 2020 with a deadline of December 4, 2020 . An application committee was formed and consists of the following partners:

Hope Boatright – Destination Dripping Springs, Visitors Bureau
Maggie Martin – CODS Programs & Events Specialist
Paul Fushille – CODS Parks & Recreation Commissioner
Kelly Schmidt – CODS Parks & Community Services Director
Lisa Sullivan – CODS Communications Director
Amanda Pena Bustillos – Wild Birds Unlimited
Connie Boltz – Hays County Master Naturalists
Anne Forish – Hays County Master Gardeners



The committee met in October and is progressing on their various assigned application components. There are two more meeting before final submittal for the Bird City application.

International Dark Sky Community:

Submitted by Michelle Fischer:

August - October "Lights Out Migratory Months" in the City of Dripping Springs wrapped up. Almost one hundred people took the online pledge.

October 2020 was the first Hill Country Night Sky Month, which celebrated the region's night skies and the hard work that Hill Country communities do to preserve them. The city approved a proclamation, posted educational information on its Facebook pages, created a new Night Sky page on the city website, and publicized Hill Country Night Sky events happening throughout the region.



Filming for the documentary "A Texas Tour of the Night Sky," Richard Acosta, documentarian, occurred on October 17th at Charro Ranch Park and various locations in Dripping Springs. Mayor Bill Foulds, Jr., City Administrator Michelle Fischer, IDA Texas President Cindy Luongo Cassidy, and local photographer Jerry Moreno were interviewed. The city was a sponsor of the Hill Country Living Festival + Rainwater Revival, a virtual event held October 24-25. Hope Boatright with the Dripping Springs Visitors Bureau presented the video "Dripping Springs A Night Sky Pioneer" and Hill Country Alliance Program Director Cliff Kaplan gave a presentation on Hill Country Night Sky Month. The city and Pedernales Electric Cooperative were the sponsors of the Night Sky session.

On October 28th the city's Building Official, Sarah Cole, and City Administrator Michelle Fischer presented "City of Dripping Springs Lighting Ordinance for Residential Properties." The presentation is on the city's website.

It's Time Texas: On Going- prepping for 2021 program.

Keep Dripping Springs Beautiful: In order to maintain our Affiliate designation certification of Keep Texas Beautiful, a number of beautification events must be hosted by the City each year followed by the submittal of an annual report. The Fall Sweep is one of the required events and will be held on November 17, 2020 from 1pm-4pm and coordinated by Maggie Martin.

Scenic City: On Going - Nothing to report.

Community Outreach Volunteer Services

Nothing to report for October. Covid still continues to impact normal operations. Beginning our planning for the 2021 volunteer season and creating organizational structure for on-going opportunities for recruitment of community volunteers.

Banner Requests & Co-Sponsorships

- 9/11 - 10/15 & 10/19 - 10/31 Destination Dripping Springs Banner / DS Chamber of Commerce
- 9/28 - 10/12 Hill Country Harvest Market Show / Texas Market Guide
- 10/1 - 10/31 Fall Enrollment Advertisement / DS Christian Academy
- 10/1 - 10/25 Chili / Salsa Cook-off / DS Cook Off Club
- 10/5 - 10/31 Pumpkin Patch / DSUMC
- 10/14 - 10/31 Movie In The Park / CODS Parks & Realty Austin
- 10/16 - 10/18 Dripping Springs Rodeo Banner / Dripping Springs AG Boosters
- 10/26 - 10/31 Shop Local / CODS

Community Events & Programs – Submitted by: *Maggie Martin, Programs and Events Specialist*



Bird City:

We are continuing our efforts for earning the Bird City Designation. The Bird City Committee is completing their final activities and we are planned to wrap up in early November. We are in the final month of the Lights Out Campaign and we have finished with about 100 signatures, of which many opted in to get future information about birding programs and initiatives.

Keep Dripping Springs Beautiful:

The Fall Sweep is on! We are planning a Fall Sweep clean up on Nutty Brown Road come November. We are teaming up with the Dripping Springs High School Environmental Awareness and Protection (LEAP) group. Supplies such as trash bags, trash collector tools, and gloves will be available for those who wish to participate. The clean-up will take place on November 17th from 1:00pm to 4:00pm.

Other News:

In Charro Ranch Park we have our Silver Star Award applicant, Autumn Pape, beginning her work in restoring the information Kiosk. Her plan includes designated days of work as well as what she plans to complete each day she works. You may find Autumn at Charro Park every now and again working on her project! She is projected to complete the first day of December.

Christmas on Mercer:

Continued planning of Christmas on Mercer 2020- we have exceeded our goal for sponsorship support this year! We are also working on an updated layout of the event due to changes in real estate availability in the Historic District. This year, there will still be a trackless train ride and pony rides located behind the Stevenson building and Old Fitzhugh Road. We are also full for vendor opportunities! Promotion of Christmas on Mercer is well underway.

Movie in the Park:

Continued planning of the Halloween special movie in the park! The movie is taking place on Friday, October 30th - This Friday and we have reserved all the parking spaces! Entry to the



movie will begin at 7:00pm and the movie will begin at approximately 7:45pm.

MOVIE IN THE PARK
Friday, October 30th, 7:30
Dripping Springs Ranch Park
RESERVATIONS REQUIRED
sign up:
www.cityofdrippingsprings.com



Presented by
PARKS & COMMUNITY
CITY OF DRIPPING SPRINGS
and
The Melissa & Amy Team
MelissaAndAmyTeam@RealtyAustin.com



of Women Voters disseminated information about voting in Hays County at markets during September and October.

The number of shoppers has increased now that cooler weather is here, although the real upswing in those numbers started last March, when grocery store shelves were picked clean with panic shopping. Folks who first shopped at the Farmers Market back then have continued to return weekly, happy with both the selection of food and the safety of outdoor shopping.

We're looking forward to the holiday season at market, though it will be somewhat changed this year. We're adding additional craft vendors for increased gift options – though social spacing between booths will reduce the number of booth spaces available. We're also looking forward to our move to the DS Ranch Park Event Center from January through mid-March, following our successful experience moving indoors there last winter.

Marketing, Website, Social Media, Branding & Communications

The PCS department continues to expand their website pages to encompass the resource as a tool to provide the full scope of services within the department's span of responsibility. Currently, the "Community Services" aspect of the department is lacking in web presence and ease of service access. Staff is in the process of creating an easier application process and information dissemination platform.

- Road closure requests
- Itinerant Vendor Permits
- Event Permit for events held on city property and events held within City Limits
- Co-Sponsorship Requests and banners at the triangle requests