

### PARKS

#### **Charro Ranch Park – Submitted by Sue Harding – Project Coordinator, Hays County Master Naturalists**

On Saturday, November 14, 2020, 13 volunteers each spent 3 hours, 8:30-11:30am, on the following projects at the park: (All work involved invasive species removal, improvement of natural habitat, native plant seed dispersal, and/or maintenance of existing trails):

- 1) Hand pulled Johnson grass and Brazilian vervain invasives near the bridge. Plants were bagged up for disposal and stacked near the main trail head for disposal by the DS maintenance team.
- 2) Another invasive, KR bluestem, was weed whacked in select areas where in close contact with desirable native grass species such as seep muhly and little bluestem.
- 3) The wildlife water bowl (water guzzler) on the east side of the park was found to be rusted through and the rainwater collection tank was found to be filled with water and sludge. A replacement pan will be purchased; the tank will be cleaned out on another workday.
- 4) Seeds of native plants (Texas mountain laurel, Lindheimer's senna, and Mexican flame vine) were scattered near the picnic area at the solstice circle. Some bur oak acorns (less than 6 ??) were distributed throughout the park.
- 5) Trash was picked up and bagged along the frontage road of the park, along Ranch Road 12.
- 6) The Oak Tree spur trail was weed whacked.
- 7) Some small cedars were removed and used to cover up one of the last remaining trenches from the oak wilt trenching of this past summer.
- 8) Many of the native plants of the demonstration garden were hand watered with a slow drip hose connected to the rainwater collection tank.
- 9) A small, crescent shaped, 3-4" tall caliche berm was formed at the entrance to the main trail leading off the parking lot to prevent erosion of the trail.

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



DSRP had a successful November. On November 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> we hosted our final Hunter Jumper DSRP Riding Show Series event with high turnout. The DSRP Team was very excited to welcome two new full-time staff members, Noah and Riley. Their previous work experience and dynamic personalities make them great choices for the Ranch Hand position. For the third year in a row we hosted the Ken McNabb Horsemanship Clinic, which was a huge hit. They have even confirmed their dates for next year already! To finish out the month, Ag Boosters put on their annual Fall Classic lamb, goat, steer, and hog show this past weekend. Unfortunately, due to Covid things will be slowing down at the Event Center for December and January, with events postponing and being canceled. We have scheduled major arena maintenance for the first and second week of December to utilize the downtime. Meanwhile, park patrons are out enjoying the park and its amenities daily!

Submitted By: Connie Boltz- Hays County Master Naturalist - Project Coordinator DSRP. On November 12, 2020 HCMN planted 5 pigeon berry plants, a cherry Barbados, yaupon holly, burr oak, and moved a

possum haw tree. They also sowed Texas Sage and antelope horn seeds. These are all plants that are attractive to birds and butterflies. A few more plants will be added that provide berries and seeds for birds. These plants will be monitored and nurtured. It is difficult to monitor the efficacy of these plantings except via observation and anecdotal reporting in our visitor's log.

## **Founders Memorial Park | Swim & Skate**

### **Park & Rentals**

Patron traffic has increased significantly at Founders Park in the month of November. DSYSYA wrapped up its flag football season and pavilion rentals are happening every weekend.

### **Pool**

The pool continued to leak approximately 2" per day. A repair order has been placed on the schedule and will be completed at the end of December. Until then, the pool pumps have been turned off to decrease the leak water loss, conserve energy and cease chemical usage in the upkeep of an unused system.

Heaters will need to be replaced and upgraded to commercial grade so that the pool can be utilized for a longer seasonal run than has been the practice in the past. Also- thermal blankets and a blanket reel will need to be purchased. In response to a demand by community user groups, staff is proposing an extension of the Founders Memorial Pool Season to April 2021 – October 2021 vs. Memorial Day to Labor Day which will extend the season from 3 months to 7 months. Annual 5-month shutdowns during the winter and early spring will allow for pool and facility annual improvements and the implementation of any extended maintenance projects that would impact pool operations.

Along with this goal, the Parks and Community Services department will be requesting that the full-time seasonal Pool Manager position (February – September) evolve into a full-time, benefited, year-round team member. In addition to managing the pool they will analyze, improve and develop needed Community and Aquatic programs. A revamped title from Pool Manager to Programs & Aquatics Manager is proposed. The position scope will continue to oversee pool operations & staff but will also include camp operations & staff as well as current and future programs that take place in Dripping Springs parks & facilities (DSYSA, DSASA, & future PCS programs).

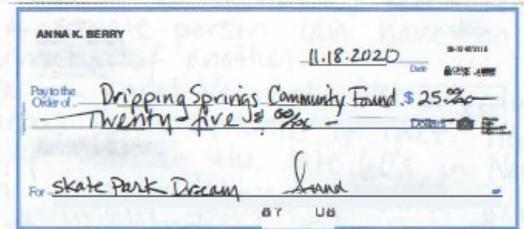
### **Skate Park**

On November 18, 2020 and Skate Park initiative + city staff introductory team meeting was held via zoom in anticipation of moving forward with the skate park construction project. Representative from the planning department, parks & community services department, building department and skate park initiative community members were present. The project is in discussions however has not received notice of funding from the pending HAYS County Bond Measure.

The skate park and its advocates continue to draw local and national support. Below is a letter from a supporter who has learned about one of the skate park advocates and is impressed with his passion and drive.

November 18, 2020  
Dear "Boss Man" Dennis Baldwin (As you were referred to):  
I follow Nifa Kaniga on social media. He is a remarkable human being. I have learned a lot from his open, honest and sincere invitations to talk about difficult topics. It was on his social media site that I learned about the Skate Park project. As I said to him in a brief message, I want to pay his generosity forward!  
I am not a person of great means, but I am an educator, a mother, a daughter, a wife, and a believer in the inherent goodness of people. Nifa embodies this goodness & has the heart of a teacher. I recognize the power a single person can have on the transformation of another.  
I live in rural Vermont. Also a very homogeneous space in terms of race. However, I grew up poor in the late 60's in New York City in a predominantly black and immigrant neighborhood. I've seen firsthand the ravages of the intersection of race & poverty and I've seen the power of community to lift & inspire. I have no idea of the demographics of your community & acknowledge that I do not "know" Nifa. Still I experience the impact he makes. Please accept this very small contribution to the →

skate park that he & others are working so hard to bring to life. And, if you have contact with Nifa, please share my good wishes & appreciation for his presence in this world.  
Best of luck!  
Anna Berry



Rathgeber Natural Resource Park (Pending)  
Nothing to report.

Sports & Recreation Park  
Light project still under review.

Veterans Memorial Park & Triangle  
Nothing to report.

## COMMUNITY SERVICES

Bird City Texas:

The application will be submitted the first week of December. The Bird City Committee has worked very hard and collaboratively to see it through this year and deliver the highest standards of commitment. Here is the application format and the list of our categories and events that we have accomplished as a city and community stakeholders. Some actions below are also activities that we're committed to collaborating on and implementing during the certification period July 2019 - 2023.



### Base Level Actions: (9 required) - 9 selected

R1	Form a collaborative body that supports Bird City Texas application			
R2	Enact a resolution and conduct an event for World Migratory Bird Day			
R3	Have at least 1 highly visible bird-friendly demonstration landscape			
R4	Enhance tourism and/or Chamber of Commerce website with birding information			
R5	Officially promote American Bird Conservancy's <i>Cats Indoors</i> program			
R6	Education/outreach about dark sky lighting solutions			
R7	Education/outreach about reducing bird collisions with buildings			
R8	Promote use of native plants and National Audubon Society's Plants for Birds program			
R9	Promote the importance of controlling invasive species (plant & animal)			

### Category 1: Community Engagement (5 required) - 5 selected

1a	Participates in a least one community science program annually			
1e	Create bird watching amenities in public parks			
1f	Host at least one native plant sale with high emphasis on native plants (>75%) and advertise community-wide for the event.			
1j	Quarterly column/outreach/social media campaign centered on native birds			
1n	Educate the public about the responsibilities and best practices of providing food and water for birds vs natural habitat			

Category 2: Habitat Enhancement and Protection (8 required) - 8 selected

- |    |   |   |   |   |
|----|---|---|---|---|
| 2b | Acquire and conserve land for birds, wildlife, and native plant communities                     |  |  |  |
| 2c | Modify and improve existing habitat for birds, wildlife, and native plant communities           |  |  |  |
| 2e | Incentivize local habitat enhancement/restoration programs                                      |  |  |  |
| 2f | Implement wetland habitat restorations or installations rather than stream channelization       |  |  |  |
| 2g | Preserve dead trees in parks/natural areas to provide foraging and nesting habitat              |  |  |  |
| 2j | Implement an active invasive plant species removal program on public lands                      |  |  |  |
| 2p | Manage natural areas to encourage wildlife habitat, including 'No Mow' areas for native plants  |  |  |  |
| 2s | Conduct inventory of city lands to document plant and animal species & assesses habitat quality |  |  |  |

Category 3: Creating Safer Spaces for Birds (4 required) - 4 selected

- |    |  |   |   |   |
|----|--|---|---|---|
| 3c | Participate in National Lights Out Program   |    |    |    |
| 3d | Educational campaign on the impacts of pesticides and herbicides on birds                  |    |    |    |
| 3e | Implement strategies to minimize use of pesticides and herbicides on city-managed property |   |   |   |
| 3h | Reduce light pollution   |  |  |  |

Bird City - World Migratory Bird Day - Festival of Flight – 2021 – New Event

The image shows a screenshot of the City of Dripping Springs website. At the top, a navigation bar includes links for Government, Residents, Business, Visitors, Events, Employment, Blog, and Night Sky. The city logo and name 'City of Dripping Springs TEXAS' are prominently displayed. A search bar and social media icons are also visible. On the left, a 'Quicklinks' menu lists various city services. The main content area features a large banner for the 'Festival of Flight' event, which is part of World Migratory Bird Day. The banner includes the event date and time, location, and a list of activities.

Government Residents Business Visitors Events Employment Blog Night Sky

City of Dripping Springs TEXAS

Quicklinks

- About Us
- Aquatics - Founders Memorial Pool
- Community Initiatives
- Community Services
- Events
- Park System
- Programs
- Volunteer Opportunities

**DRIPPING SPRINGS**

*Festival of Flight*

**WORLD MIGRATORY BIRD DAY**

**MAY 8 2021** | Join us for a morning of aviary wonder!  
**8AM-12PM** | CHARRO RANCH PARK  
22690 W. FM 150, Dripping Springs, TX

- 8 AM - GUIDED BIRD HIKE
- 9 AM - BIG DAY BRAG
- 10 AM - ID SCAVENGER HUNT
- 11 AM - INTRO TO BIRDING

**PARKS & COMMUNITY**  
CITY OF DRIPPING SPRINGS

TEXAS  
Master Naturalist  
LEEDS COUNTY CHAPTER

Wild Birds Unlimited  
Nest Day

DESTINATION  
DRIPPING SPRINGS

## Bird City - B3- Habit Enhancement in Dripping Springs – New Program

### Quicklinks

About Us

Aquatics - Founders Memorial Pool

Community Initiatives ▶

Community Services ▶

Events ▶

Park System ▶

Programs ▶

Volunteer Opportunities ▶



 [NWF Certified Habitat Checklist.pdf](#)

**YOU DID IT!!! CONGRATULATIONS!**  
DOCUMENT YOUR EFFORTS BY SIGNING UP FOR THE B3 PROGRAM HERE AND JOIN OUR HABITAT ENHANCEMENT MOVEMENT.

### **B3 REGISTRATION**



# B3

## ENHANCING HABITAT BIRDS|BUTTERFLIES|BEES

It is our mission to foster community by preserving parks and open space, connecting people to our natural resources and history and by offering engaging programs and events. Join Dripping Springs Parks and Community Services team in achieving their mission by connecting people to their natural resources through expanding wildlife habitats in our community!

Did you know that your backyard and place of business with a little enhancement can expand viable wildlife habitat in Dripping Springs?

There are many efforts underway world-wide that incentivize enhancement and expansion of natural places to create wildlife corridors, habitats and waystations for migrating birds and other wildlife. The PCS team has decided to create our very own program; B3 –Birds|Butterflies|Bees and adopt the National Wildlife Federation's program to assist in our objective of creating more habitat and food resources for migrating birds and other pollinators in Dripping Springs and the Texas Hill Country.



The National Wildlife Federation Habitat Certification program is but one of dozens of certification programs out there. The City of Dripping Springs' utilization of the Habitat Program is not a formal endorsement but a tool the Parks and Community Services department is using to achieve the objective of enhancing and expanding wildlife habitats throughout the City. B3 participants are welcome to find a different program as well. The same documentation, submitted image of enhanced habitat to [parks@cityofdrippingssprings.com](mailto:parks@cityofdrippingssprings.com), and B3 registration are required to be counted toward the collaborative community efforts. Thank you for your interest and participation!

#### HOW DO YOU GET INVOLVED?

- Go to City of Dripping Springs website -Parks & Community Services - Programs - B3
- Click on the link for the World Wildlife Habitat certification Program - follow guidelines.
- Once you have certified your habitat (can be through any program) - register for B3 program (free) and email your Certified Habitat image to [parks@cityofdrippingssprings.com](mailto:parks@cityofdrippingssprings.com).

#### WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

- Replenishing Bird | Butterfly | Bee resources from lost habitat locally and along migratory corridor.
- Beautification with native plant species adjacent to home and local businesses.
- Participating in family friendly fun.
- We're creating community through our collaborative love of and care for, the natural world around us.

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



### Bird City:

We are in the final stages of the Bird City application with only one week remaining. As one of my contributions, I along with Parks and Recreation Commissioner Paul Fushille will be identifying and recording the snags in our parks. We will be formalizing an intentional program that protects and promotes their existence if they do not present a public safety concern. Of special interest are those exhibiting active wildlife presence and being used as shelter or food. There are a few activities still being wrapped up in the application between all the committee members. We are 90% through the documentation portion of the application as well. The committee is confident that the City of Dripping Springs will be awarded a Texas Bird City designation this year due to the detailed effort that has been given to our application along with the work gone on to maintain those requirements.

### Christmas on Mercer:

Christmas on Mercer is fast approaching, and we have made changes to the event to adhere to COVID precautions more closely. Trackless train rides and pony rides will no longer be available. The virtual tree lighting will also have minor changes to reduce the potential attendance from guests. The lighting will be available on our social media sites Saturday, December 5<sup>th</sup> in the evening.



### In Other News:

Progress is being made on the Charro Ranch Kiosk project by the Silver Award Girl Scout- Autumn Pape. She has completed the necessary repairs and is giving it a new paint job. The older, hard-to-read materials are also being replaced with current PCS news and events pertaining to Charro Park. Estimated project completion is end of the month in December.

### Its Time Texas:

We are in the beginning stages of rolling out the 2021 Its Time Texas community challenge! This year we will be hosting virtual community events to get Dripping Springs out to the parks and moving! The challenge runs from January 4<sup>th</sup> to February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2021. We will be utilizing the free app to input our hard work throughout the initiative. Last year Dripping Springs was awarded fourth place, this year we are aiming for top three!

### Keep Dripping Springs Beautiful:

Join us for the final clean up this year! We will be doing a festive holiday clean up with the businesses located along Highway 290. You can't miss us; the dress code for this holiday clean-up is your most festive Santa hat! Gloves, trash bags, and pick up utensils will be provided. Date is Monday December 21, 2020. Out of an abundance of caution and adherence to Covid-19 measures we will be limiting the number of volunteers, requiring waivers and pre-registration through Sign Up Genius.

### Movie in the Park:

Although hosted in October, the Halloween Movie in the Park was a hit! We had 80% attendance from those who registered online. Response was positive across the board from those who attended!



### Banner Requests & Co-Sponsorships:

- Christmas On Mercer CoDS 11/2/2020 to 12/7/2020
- 23rd Annual Empty Bowls Project Helping Hands 11/2/2020 to 12/1/2020
- Destination Dripping Springs Chamber 10/19/2020 to 11/8/2020
- Shop Small Saturday Chamber 11/9/2020 to 12/1/2020
- Shop Local CoDS 10/26/2020 to 12/1/2020

### Farmers Market – Submitted by: *Laurel Robertson, Market Manager*



The holiday season is in full swing at the Dripping Springs Farmers Market with the addition of a dozen new Holiday Vendors (half arts/crafts, half food vendors). Currently, market has more vendor booths than at any time since COVID hit in March.



Musicians are also back in market, after Mayor Foulds gave the green light for them to return at the beginning of November. Rocking chairs and picnic tables are still not available for seating, so customers appreciate the live music on the go. Masks are still required for everyone and social distancing between booths and between shoppers is enforced/encouraged.

The Market's planned move to DSRP Event Center this coming January through March was cancelled by the FM Board at their November meeting, due to increased COVID numbers in Hays County/Texas and an unforeseen conflict with the Event Center's bookings on January 27. The market will remain at the Triangle for the 2020-21 winter season.

The FM Board is planning an exciting "Friends of the Farmers Market" program, to be premiered within the next few months. By registering for the program, members of the community will be able to support the market and receive special benefits at the same time! More to come soon....

### 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