



FRIENDS OF OAK CLIFF PARKS

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Members, Volunteers, & all Friends of Oak Cliff Parks,

The board of FOCP and I wanted to provide you with an update of what has been going on during this past year of some pretty big changes. We would normally provide a yearly summary of club activities at our Holiday Party, but due to the Covid situation we have elected not to have the year-end dinner. As you might expect, our volunteer days have been drastically curtailed. But even with this heavy burden, we have actually accomplished quite a bit as you will see in this presentation.

Before we begin however, let me introduce two new board members who have come on board since the start of this year. Many of you probably know at least one of them. Our new board members are Judi Glazier and Melissa Weis. Both are and have been very active in their work in Oak Cliff and we are happy to have added them to our board.

Thanks again for your continued support and here's to hoping next year gets a little bit closer to our old normal!

-Jon Papp, President



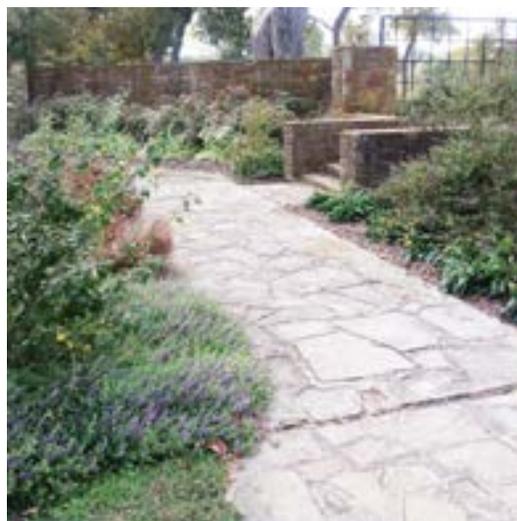
LAKE CLIFF PARK

2020 PARK HIGHLIGHTS:

A huge thanks to John Ellis and Mark Pritchett for transforming the beds around the pineapple fountain into a showplace! In the past, they installed the Crepe Myrtle demonstration garden in the upper beds along Colorado and an Abeilia demonstration garden in the outer beds around the fountain.

This year aside from maintaining the previously completed beds, they have redone the inner beds around the fountain (and some of the outer beds) transforming them into a beautiful nectar garden.

This great garden transformation was awarded a top state honor by the Master Gardeners. Thanks to John and Mark and volunteers for making this project possible.





2020 PARK HIGHLIGHTS:

- FOOCP held the fall quarterly meeting at Lake Cliff Gardens
 - John Ellis provided both an overview of the garden master plan and a tour of the plantings
- Texas Tree Foundation planted 50 trees with outside volunteers
- Completion of the redesign of the formal rose gardens lost to the rose rosette disease
- Completion of the replanting of the inner ring of the fountain garden
 - Flower/pollinator garden, hundreds of perennials were planted, along with a butterfly-favorite annual, Porter Weed

FUTURE TASKS:

- Shoreline clean-up is scheduled by Cliff Temple Baptist Church volunteers



FOUNDER'S PARK

2020 PARK HIGHLIGHTS:

- Multiple days of weeding existing beds
- Replacement of 20 Santa Barbara Salvia in the long road-side bed
- Benches installed in August
- Planting of 500 bulbs on the hillside of the bowl
 - Lycoris radiata (Red Spider Lily) 300 bulbs
 - Erythronium (White Beauty) 200 bulbs

FUTURE TASKS:

- Replanting the lantana bed
- Additional weeding



KIDD SPRINGS PARK

2020 PARK HIGHLIGHTS:

- Thanks to Carol Rybarski for taking the lead in the extensive weeding and cutting back lots of bamboo
- Numerous plant replacements in established beds
- Park Department has scheduled resumption of work on the irrigation system in November and hopes to have that completed in December

FUTURE TASKS:

- Bond money was allocated to do restorative work on the hardscape at the Japanese Garden
 - We are hoping that work will begin this spring
- It was decided by FOCP board members that we would not do any new plantings until sidewalks and bed borders have been restored
- 12 foot Japanese Maple to be planted this fall



2020 PARK HIGHLIGHTS:

- Work has continued on the Hibiscus Demonstration Garden in the formal beds
- Last year we planted 22 different varieties of Rose of Sharon in two of the long beds alongside the rill
- This spring 22 more Rose of Sharon were planted in two additional beds
- ID signs were installed for the new beds
 - Additional are to be ordered for remaining plantings
- In October we began clearing and prepping two more beds
 - One beds was full of iris and the other day lilies
 - Neighbors allowed to dig out as many of the plants from those beds- Over 30 people did!
- Following trees were planted:
 - 8 foot Possumhaws (2)
 - 12 foot Cherokee Princess Dogwood
 - "Jane" Magnolia Tree
 - 2 foot Crepe Myrtles (2 have already been stolen)
 - 2 foot Rusty Blackhaw Viburnum
- Lighting in and around the Memorial Garden has been brought back to working condition



KIEST MEMORIAL GARDEN

FUTURE TASKS:

- Beds are being prepped for planting this spring
 - We will be continuing with 16 more varieties of hibiscus- different mallow varieties
- We are working with the Parks Department to get the rill working properly
 - We are hopeful this will be a reality by late this spring

Thanks to the following who are maintaining a bed in our adopt-a-garden project at Kiest:

Mark, Barbara, Becky, Becca, Warren and Carol



KIEST CONSERVATION AREA

2020 PARK HIGHLIGHTS:

- 4 days of work cutting brush and clearing invasives from trails by Groundworks Dallas this spring and fall
- Multiple works days picking up trash and clearing out cut brush in both the spring and fall
 - Follow-up to Groundworks Dallas work on the trails
- Repainting of all picnic tables in the picnic area along the entrance trail
- This fall we sponsored two socially distanced trail walks
 - One was a bird walk and the other a tree ID walk



FUTURE TASKS:

- Continued removal of cut brush from the trail
- Bug walk and a wildflower walk rescheduled for spring due to covid



SPECIAL NOTE:

The Friends of Oak Cliff Parks are currently paying roughly \$4,000.00 a year with trail maintenance to keep the trails clear. We are trying to find a sponsor to help with this expense. If you know of any group or company that might consider helping with this please let us know.

GRANTS

2020 SUBMITTED GRANTS:

- City of Dallas' Neighborhood Vitality Grants
- Carol Rybarski wrote the grant for \$10,000 to place bilingual educational signs in each park and to add small information signs by individual plants connecting them to the Plants Map data base
 - We were informed we were awarded the grant in early February
 - However, in late March, the funding for the grants were rescinded
- We reworked the grant and submitted a smaller version to Heritage Oak Cliff's grants for community not-for-profits
 - We were awarded \$533, which we are using to purchase information signs that connect to the Plantsmap data base for the Kiest Memorial Garden

If anyone is aware of other sources we might tap that accepts grants requests, please let Carol Rybarski or Ellen Fitzsimmons know.



VOLUNTEERS

Our plans for 2020 were set back when Covid hit in the early spring. All our scheduled work groups cancelled which was no surprise since most of the groups were businesses where employees are now working remotely.

On May 27th, we were fortunate to get an email from the Just Serve Coordinator with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Their members had volunteered with us several times in the past and they were seeking outdoor, safe volunteer opportunities for missionaries temporarily assigned to Dallas.

Four young men began volunteering each Wednesday. This number eventually grew to 11! They have volunteered every Wednesday since June. Their enthusiasm has really lifted our spirits and they are terrific workers. Over the summer, the missionaries and a small group of super FOCP members worked tirelessly to keep the parks in the best shape possible.

As of mid-November, volunteers have spent 1,766 hours in the parks...less than usual but still a huge contribution to Oak Cliff Parks.

-Ellen Fitzsimmons,

FOCP Board Member & Volunteer Coordinator



AWARDS

In 2019, our major goal at Lake Cliff was the installation of an Abelia Demonstration Garden in the outer ring of the fountain garden area. This joint project of FOCP, Methodist Dallas Medical Center, and Dallas County Master Gardeners entailed the planting of 44 abelias of 14 different varieties, all with plant identification signs linked to our Plantsmap site.

In their first full year, all have grown beautifully and perfectly highlight the diversity and utility of this old standard in today's gardens.

In August 2020, the Texas Master Gardeners Association's Search for Excellence Awards for 2019 were announced. The Dallas County Master Gardeners Association won First Place in state in the Project Category for "Beyond Rose Rosette-Lake Cliff Park Abelia Demonstration Garden". This is a joint project between Friends of Oak Cliff Parks and Dallas County Master Gardeners.

The persons responsible for the idea, design, fund raising and obtaining the plants are our FOCP members John Mark Ellis and Mark Pritchett. Methodist Central Hospital provided the funding for this project and sent a team of volunteers to help set it up.



AWARDS

Friends of Oak Cliff Parks also recieved the Green Garden Club of the year for the state of Texas for the third year in a row! This is a culmination of many people volunteering many hours in the five historic Oak Cliff Parks. Awards announced were for work done in 2019.

Additional State winning awards include (first place awards only):

- *Backyard Wildlife Habitat- Club member backyard conversion*
- *TGC President's Report- Report of club activities for the year*
- *Wildlife Preservation Award- Work done at Kiest Conservation Area*
- *Community Gardens Service Project- Restoration of the Lake Cliff Gardens*
- *Kellogg Civic Achievement Award- Daffodil bed at Founders Park*
- *Lucille Droge Mauntel Conservation Award- Work at Kiest Conservation Area*
- *Pollinators Award- Work at Kiest Memorial Garden*
- *May Duff Walters Historic Preservation Award- Restoration of Lake Cliff Gardens*
- *Outdoor Classroom/ Nature Trail- Docent walks at Kiest Conservation Area*





THANKS FOR A GREAT YEAR

SEE YOU IN 2021!

Facebook Page

<https://friendsofoakcliffparks.org/>

