

# RIVER LEGACY

RIVER LEGACY FOUNDATION • RIVER LEGACY LIVING SCIENCE CENTER • RIVER LEGACY PARKS

Newsletter vol. 26 • Summer 2018




## River Legacy Foundation Named 2018 Nonprofit of the Year!

Thanks to YOU, River Legacy Foundation was awarded the 2018 Outstanding Nonprofit Organization of the Year by the Arlington Chamber of Commerce in May.

River Legacy shares the nonprofit award with the Arlington Sunrise Rotary Club and is also in esteemed company with the Small Business Award Winners of Sugar Bee Sweets; 3Di Sign & Design and Arlington Today magazine.

"We are proud to recognize the significant accomplishments of our award recipients," stated Michael Jacobson, President and CEO of the Arlington Chamber of Commerce. "Our businesses of the year are managed by bright and highly motivated people who are committed to superior service and making a difference in the lives of people and the entire Greater Arlington community."

Award recipients had to receive a nomination and submit an extensive nomination application with supporting community references to be considered. The Chamber's criteria for selection as a Small Business of the Year include growth, relevant innovation and contributions to furthering the Chamber's Mission – "Together, We Champion Economic and Community Prosperity."

River Legacy is honored to receive this award and to be recognized for connecting children, families and students to nature. Of course, we share this award with YOU - the hundreds of donors and volunteers who give us your gifts of time, talent and money. We could not do what we do without you. 

## 30 Reasons Why You Matter to River Legacy!

For the past three decades, your vision, passion, and dedication have made it possible for River Legacy Foundation to provide a gateway to nature for children of all ages (3 to 93!) through education, recreation and preservation at River Legacy Living Science Center and River Legacy Park.

Today, more than 14,000 school students a year visit the Science Center for hands-on lessons that escape the classroom for authentic woodlands investigations. More than 50,000 yearly visitors to the Science Center experience first-hand explorations in nature through engaging, hands-on public programs, exhibits, workshops and events. An estimated 200,000 people visit River Legacy Park to walk, bike and play annually. River Legacy Foundation is grooming the next generation of environmental stewards through these fun and exciting nature connections – all because of YOU.

In celebration of our 30 years, we would like to share 30 reasons why YOU matter to River Legacy's mission.

Because of your donations, gifts of time and talents, and participation in our events or programs, YOU:

1. Discover that an understanding of nature breeds an appreciation for it.
2. Connect children with the natural world where they live (North Texas) vs. the remote/exotic habitats they are often exposed to via television and other media experiences.
3. Teach them how to interact with nature to minimize the impact of their presence.
4. Provide experiences with live native animals and plants, prompting one student to exclaim how "sweet" it is: "I liked seeing Winston, the box turtle. I also liked looking at the mommy rat, daddy rat and baby rat. I liked exploring outside... I also liked seeing the lizards. It was SWEET!"
5. Pull privet to help minimize the impact this invasive plant can have on our native trees and plants. Privet forms a dense thicket which chokes out the native plant life in the forest. Monthly teams of volunteers work to extract as much of the privet plant as possible.
6. Provide food and habitat supplies for our Wildlife Educational Ambassadors. Volunteers help with the endless task of caring for our 92 educational animals.
7. Allow Nature School children to learn big words like "metamorphosis" so they can explain it to their parents!
8. Give field trippers an engaging experience with animals and nature. "Using the magnifying glass let me explore and helped me see things that were tiny. I saw a beetle on the tree using the magnifying glass... I really liked the center with the eggs. Opening the eggs showed me where some animals lived and where they took shelter. Thank you for teaching us," wrote a student after a recent Field Investigation to River Legacy.
9. Preserve green space for our native wildlife and plants to flourish in an area with plenty of food resources and places for shelter.
10. Create safe opportunities for biking and hiking in this same shared green space with our plant and animal neighbors.



*"I liked seeing Winston, the box turtle. I also liked looking at the mommy rat, daddy rat and baby rat. I liked exploring outside... I also liked seeing the lizards. It was SWEET!"*

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### Arlington Happenings in 1988:

- The Parks at Arlington Mall opened
- Depeche Mode performed at Six Flags Over Texas
- River Legacy Foundation formed as a unique non-profit partnership with the City of Arlington



## Directory

### Officers:

Larry Fowler, President  
Mark Warren, Vice President  
Elizabeth Marks, Secretary  
Mike Davis, Treasurer.

### Directors:

Robert Blake, Keith Cargile, Dr. Marcelo Cavazos, Stephen Cavender, Susan Eaves, Stewart Garrison, Richard Greene, Carole Hoyer, Vince Hrabal, Pete Jamieson, Robert Kembel, Jonathan Kissel, Larry Lutz, Steven G. Martindale, Jerry McCullough, John Promise, Rezolia Roberson, Judy Rupay, Scott Slocum, Cathey Wise.

### Staff:

Jill Hill, Executive Director; Barbara Pritcher, Administrative Assistant/Registrar; Sherrie Ripple, Volunteer Manager & Venue Coordinator; Debbie Vernon, Director of Education; Kristi Payne, Marketing Coordinator; Becky Nussbaum, Fund Development Coordinator; Shannon Porter, Naturalist Supervisor; Ellen Ravkind, Jorge Garcia, Jessica Rodriguez, Anne Alderfer, Naturalists; Terry Carver, Ellis Elliott, Cindy Barry, Amy Johnson, Nature School Teachers; Angela Chadwick, Blake Kuppinger Linda Dryden, Early Childhood Field Investigation Facilitators; Lisa McCaskey, Assistant.

### Contributors:

Kristi Payne, Debbie Vernon, Jill Hill, Ellen Ravkind, Shannon Porter, Jorge Garcia, Sherrie Ripple

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Arno Knapen, Robert Blake, Ellen Ravkind

### River Legacy Foundation

#### River Legacy Living Science Center

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Arlington, Texas 76006  
817.860.6752 817.860.1595 fax  
[www.riverlegacy.org](http://www.riverlegacy.org)



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### Follow us on:



## Message from the Executive Director



## Nature Inspires, Heals and Beckons- Thanks to You!

Recently I was invited to speak about River Legacy at a sporting goods company as they hosted an evening event focused on Fly Fishing. It was surprising to find that breast cancer survivors were among the participants. I learned that fly fishing replicates the physical therapy exercises breast cancer survivors do as they recover.

The featured instructor was an engaging young man of about 25, and his passion for fly fishing and nature was more than evident. He told his attentive audience to be sure and use their GPS to investigate their own neighborhoods for nearby parks, ponds, trails and lakes. It was easy to imagine his adventures exploring the paths hunting for grasshoppers, worms and bugs along the way to use as bait. When he talked about the healing qualities of nature, the cancer survivors nodded emphatically. The message he delivered was passionate and heartfelt.

After the event I was eager to let him know how he inspired us with his knowledge and enthusiasm, and that he was reaffirming information we believe and advocate. Nature's healing effects reduce stress, obesity, depression, ADD, ADHD and challenges many of us face every day.

I was thrilled to learn that his early exposure to nature was with his grandparents RIGHT HERE AT RIVER LEGACY! He said those first unforgettable experiences cemented his love of nature. Now, as a new Dad, he can't wait to bring his little one here to the woodland that occupies a special place in his heart and history. Another generation of environmental stewards is born. The frequently told personal stories of encounters with nature are heartwarming. These amazing perspectives of the outside world around us reaffirm my appreciation of the profound power and beauty of nature.

This year, 2018, we celebrate 30 years of River Legacy Foundation as a nonprofit. The Arlington Chamber of Commerce has honored River Legacy Foundation by naming us 2018 OUTSTANDING NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION OF THE YEAR. The Discovery Room, our \$2.5-million-dollar renovation, is complete and open to the public.

*We always remember that we could never accomplish these amazing feats without your consistent and generous support for these last 30 years. Your donations of time, energy and money have enabled us to touch the lives of more than 500,000 people. Your participation has helped River Legacy achieve state-of-the-art exhibits and award-winning educational programs for visitors of all ages.*

We are grateful for your faithful support and are counting on YOU for another 30 years of bringing nature's healing and childhood adventures to the next generation. **Please donate online at [www.riverlegacy.org](http://www.riverlegacy.org) or use the enclosed envelope to send your gifts today. We could not do what we do without YOU!**

Warm regards,

Jill Hill  
Executive Director




## 30 Reasons Why You Matter to River Legacy! *continued from page 1*



*"It is fun to see a kid's face light up when they see their first bobcat or live snake. I like relaying our philosophy of enjoying and preserving nature and the opportunities for learning about the environment we live in through classroom experiences and special events."*



11. Experience the peace and joy of being in nature.
12. Help to combat childhood depression and obesity by preserving outdoor spaces for unstructured play, learning and exercise.
13. Notice the beauty of the box turtle along the path or the snake slithering across a log. You know that by leaving them undisturbed, you are taking an active role in allowing nature to prosper.
14. Spot a bobcat on your daily walk through the park and grab your camera or phone to take a picture because you know it is a special sight to capture.
15. Go on a bird walk to listen and count the birds you see and hear in February during Great Backyard Bird Count. By taking part in this citizen science activity, you are helping researchers learn more about the migration patterns of birds across the world.
16. Replace your shower head with a water efficient one to save water.
17. Take the pledge to help heal our Earth during our Earth Day festival.
18. Recycle cans and paper to reduce the amount of trash in our landfills.
19. Forget you are in the middle of the Metroplex while canoeing on the Trinity River in River Legacy Park. You spot herons, egrets, fish, turtles, and maybe even a fox along the riverbank.
20. Explore a decaying tree trunk to find a Devil's Cigar, a unique fungus only found in Texas and Japan. It is a rare sight only seen around October through December. But, you can visit our NEW Discovery Room to hear it hiss as it unfolds in our decaying log exhibit.
21. Play on the custom treehouse playground and playscapes at River Legacy Park.
22. Inspire others to be good stewards by picking up trash along the creek banks.
23. Understand more fully the natural world and your place in it.
24. Inspire the next generation to lead change, whether it is in their backyards, neighborhoods, or in their next journey.
25. Serve on our volunteer boards and committees helping in the day-to-day operations of the Science Center; and planning and executing our fundraisers.
26. Welcome our visitors to the Science Center while serving as a champion of our programs. Front Desk ambassador Karen comments: *"It is fun to see a kid's face light up when they see their first bobcat or live snake. I like relaying our philosophy of enjoying and preserving nature and the opportunities for learning about the environment we live in through classroom experiences and special events. I myself have learned a lot from my time here."*
27. Engage children in hands-on lessons about wildlife, ecology, conservation, animal science careers and more in our Summer at the Science Center camps. According to one parent: *"We love having a safe, fun educational activity to participate in each summer. We love the enrichment the summer program provides. Thank you for doing a magnificent job."*
28. Create safe spaces where children and families can be curious about their natural world and venture outside to explore it.
29. Cultivate a sense of wonder in children that leads to special "Aha" moments when they experience something as simple as a roly-poly, snail or even fungi that you can brush to release spores, prompting a student to exclaim: *"This is cool. This is like cool stuff!"*
30. Lay the foundations of lifelong stewardship. *"We conserve what we love; we love what we understand; we understand what we are taught"* – Environmentalist Baba Dioum.

Thank YOU for being an integral part of this journey with us for the past 30 years! We certainly hope you will continue to visit us, support us, volunteer with us and engage with us for the next 30 years on this wonder-full nature adventure! 

## Nature Is a Stress-Buster!

Anxiety and depression seem to be hot topics these days. The recent media coverage given to the tragic effects of these disorders in the lives of high profile individuals has amplified our concerns as a society. "What," we ask, "is going on that there are so many unhappy and anxious people in our world?" Health care professionals echo that question as they meet an ever-increasing population of children and young adults who struggle with these mental health challenges. How can our children, growing up in a culture that seems to meet their needs almost instantly, be so stressed and unhappy?



These complicated issues certainly can't be solved with a quick pill or easy change in routines. But one possible cause that is also receiving a lot of media attention is the amount of "screen time" that is routine in the daily lives of today's children, starting at a very young age. This shift away from playing outside, which was the norm just a generation ago, and towards technology-based entertainment has had what most of us would see as a frightening impact on childhood activity patterns. It is estimated that the average American child in our tech-driven culture spends over 7 hours a day in front of a screen, and only 4 to 7 minutes a day in unstructured play outdoors!

Contrast these statistics with the work of Edward O. Wilson, a Harvard University professor in the 1980's, and his theory of biophilia: that humans are instinctively drawn toward their natural surroundings. If Wilson was correct in his thinking (and many child health professionals tend to agree with him), our children are growing up in a culture that neglects opportunities to fulfill an innate need by exploring the natural world around them.

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River Legacy Living Science Center celebrated the opening of the NEW Discovery Room with a Donor Preview Event in January. A special thanks to all of our donors, guests, board of directors and YOU for making this Transformation possible.





# Experience our NEW Discovery Room!

Thanks to YOUR generosity, the *Transformation* of River Legacy Living Science Center's Exhibit Hall is now *complete*!

We invite you, your family and friends to come enjoy the magnificent, one-of-a-kind Discovery Room, designed to showcase habitats in water, riverbanks and the forest. You will enjoy action-packed fun with the 30-foot interactive screens and learn fun facts about our environment through visual exhibits and hands-on "lift and learn" features. Learn about the life cycles of a frog as you climb on the giant leopard frog model and discover a variety of underwater creatures as you push aside a large boulder. Marvel at realistic replicas of trees and its inhabitants and explore magnified views of insect wings and various plants through the Wentzscopes.

Binoculars in the glass-walled riparian viewing room show nature up close without disturbing natural habitats; Be sure to look at the turtle island on the pond. Native fish and three kinds of turtles are on display in our 700- and 800-gallon aquariums in the Discovery Room. Life cycles, seasons, water conservation, stewardship and Texas rivers are illustrated throughout our exhibits, with changeable features for winter, spring, summer and fall.

A collapsible wall featuring vibrant graphics closes in our learning labs providing secure and private access for our field investigations and classes, but it can be opened to expand the exhibit area when not in use. This new space allows more opportunities to host meetings, weddings and traveling exhibits.

The Discovery Room experiences equip our guests with the knowledge and tools to appreciate the outdoor natural environment in our beautiful park. River Legacy Living Science Center would have never been able to develop

and maintain this world-class nature museum without the help of so many of you dedicated to the cause of environmental preservation and education.

In order to maintain the state-of-the-art features in the Discovery Room and attract traveling exhibits, there is a nominal entry fee. Admission to the Discovery Room is \$3 for children (ages 3 to 12); \$5 for adults (ages 13 to 59); and \$4 for seniors (60 +). Annual Membership Packages are available that allow members unlimited access to the Discovery Room, as well as other perks, such as guest passes, private events and free tickets to special events. Visit [www.riverlegacy.org](http://www.riverlegacy.org) to learn more about the membership benefit levels that best suit your family's needs.

The Science Center's atrium with its activity tables, exploration stations and terrariums and the surrounding nature trails are still accessible to the community at no cost, offering views of our toads, tree frogs, salamander, snakes, box turtles and even a tarantula! The Science Center continues to offer FREE family programs on Saturdays and FREE family festivals. Every Friday at 4:30 pm, you can watch our naturalists feed the exhibit animals.

River Legacy Foundation would especially like to thank our major donors and partners: The Arlington Tomorrow Foundation; the Gene & Jerry Jones Arlington Youth Foundation; Baylor Orthopedic and Spine Hospital at Arlington; ACP International; the Sid W. Richardson Foundation; the Ann L. and Carol Green Rhodes Charitable Trust; The Meadows Foundation; Amon G. Carter Foundation; Sedalco Construction Services; Quorum Architects Inc.; Republic Waste Services; Arlington Water Utilities Department; Becky and David Moritz; anonymous donors; individuals, the River Legacy Foundation Board



of Directors and YOU for helping to make this \$2.5 million renovation a reality.

Thanks to all of our donors, guests and members who support us with their presence as well as their entry fees to the Discovery Room. Your continued enthusiasm and willingness to support our goal of renovation and its ongoing maintenance is so very appreciated! We look forward to seeing you at the Science Center soon! 🦋



## River Legacy Discovery Room

Open 9 am to 5 pm Mondays through Saturdays

Last admission sold at 4:30 pm

\$5 for adults (13 to 59)

\$3 for children (3 to 12; free for children 2 and under)\*

\$4 for seniors (60 +)

\* All children must be accompanied by a paying adult

# River Legacy Living Science Center: A One-of-a-Kind Rental Venue



River Legacy Living Science Center's unique architectural qualities and surrounding forest provide a natural backdrop for your one-of-a-kind event or special occasion. Designed by renowned architecture firm, Jones Studio, the limestone and granite building features three enormous red oak trees as structural support for the roof, literally bringing the outside in and providing a seamless connection to the surrounding woodlands. River Legacy Living Science Center is an excellent indoor/outdoor site for the couple wanting a nontraditional and unique venue.

The newly renovated Discovery Room also offers many new features including flexible folding walls and a 30-foot interactive screen to allow you to further customize your special occasion – from weddings, receptions to corporate dinners and more.

## What the Science Center has to offer:

- Beautiful, peaceful venue sitting under soaring oak trees near a tranquil pond
- A newly renovated 3,000 square foot Discovery Room
- 2,000 square foot Atrium with floor to ceiling windows
- Beautiful outdoor terrace featuring a large limestone patio and staircase
- Indoor and outdoor spaces (inclement weather backup)
- Convenient circular drive and plentiful free parking at the Science Center and adjacent River Legacy Park
- Convenient location just minutes away from DFW airport and numerous hotels

## Other Amenities:

- Host capacity up to 200
- Staff on site to manage the facility during your event
- Prep kitchen for caterers
- 1-hour rehearsal time included with rental fee
- Use of interactive screen in Discovery Room to display customized messages, videos, photos, logos, etc. for an additional fee

## Price and Availability:

- \$450 per hour for our Atrium, Discovery Room & Outdoor Terrace
- Fridays and Saturdays after 5 pm
- Sundays – anytime
- \$200 per hour for Atrium only
- Bridal room available for an additional fee
- Year round

To request more information about renting River Legacy Living Science Center or to book a tour, contact Venue Coordinator Sherrie Ripple at [sherrie@riverlegacy.org](mailto:sherrie@riverlegacy.org) or call 817.860.6752, ext. 109. River Legacy Park and pavilion rentals are handled by the Arlington Parks and Recreation Department. If you are interested in renting a pavilion or space in River Legacy Park, please contact the Arlington Parks and Recreation Department at 817.459.5474 or visit [www.naturallyfun.org](http://www.naturallyfun.org).

## Nature is a Stress-Buster

*continued from page 3*



Our country is not alone in facing this growing crisis; studies in the U.S. and beyond indicate that this is a concern in developed nations around the world. Results of research both here and abroad all suggest that exposure to nature bolsters children's resilience and helps them to better cope with the stress and adverse life events that are sometimes inevitable in the lives of growing children. Families relocate and require adjustment to a new school, peer pressure and bullying happen despite our best attempts to prevent them, serious illness and even death of loved ones invade a child's world; all of these factors have the potential to shake a child's sense of security and self confidence, and to trigger anxiety. Self-esteem plummets and a

stressful cycle of worry and continued feelings of stress saps the joy from childhood days that ought to be filled with delight and exploration. Depressed children struggle in school and in their social relationships, and the cycle is perpetuated.

So, if exposure to the natural world is indeed, as research suggests, an antidote to this epidemic of childhood stress and anxiety, one obvious solution is to get our children OUTSIDE on a regular basis. Backyard play, weekend family adventures and hikes in natural areas, even taking the time to focus on the natural elements on a walk through the neighborhood can have beneficial effects on a child's psychological state. It has been documented for many years that activity in green spaces calms the mind and increases the mental focus of children who are dealing with ADHD. Certainly all children, not just those with learning differences, could experience the same benefits!

For over 25 years, River Legacy has been providing a constantly-evolving array of opportunities to "unplug" from our devices and instead connect with our natural surroundings. Located as we are in an urban region, River Legacy's 1,300 acres and its Living Science Center are an oasis in the midst of freeway access roads, shopping center parking lots, electronic billboards and apartment complexes, a respite for families of all means from across the

Metroplex. Both our newly-renovated Discovery Room and the Atrium area introduce visitors to the nature wonderland that lies outside our doors, and encourage visitors to get outside and have an adventure of their own. Free Saturday family programs and various festivals throughout the year offer some guided introduction to the wonders of our woodland and aquatic habitats.

In addition, a range of curriculum-based classes and programs introduce children ages 3 and older to our wildlife neighbors and help to dispel any fears that they might have about exploring the natural world. Nature School preschool classes, Home School, and After School classes, as well as Field Investigations and Multi-Age Group Visits are available during the school year. Week-long summer classes fill summer days with exciting and fun learning adventures. Holiday and Spring Break week programs offer families a chance to come connect with our animal neighbors and explore our trails while they create happy, relaxed memories.

Throughout the seasons, there is always something to discover in the woodlands outside our doors! Come take advantage of the stress-busting, memory-making natural world that is always here awaiting you and your family. The physical and mental health of your whole family will surely benefit from a walk in the woods!!!



# FUNdraisers

## Feature Fun for All Ages!

From cardboard boat races to a friendly sporting competition, to a family-friendly fall festival and an evening under the stars, there is an event for everyone to enjoy and to support River Legacy. These four special events throughout the year provide much-needed monetary contributions for

River Legacy Foundation's environmental education programs, while also providing a unique and fun community experience. Of course, each event is only successful thanks to our corporate sponsors, donors, participants, and YOU!

### 29th annual Cardboard Boat Regatta – April 21

A rainy and chilly April day may have dampened some boats, but it definitely didn't dampen any spirits during River Legacy Foundation's 29th Annual Cardboard Boat Regatta! More than 150 crews braved the elements to test the seaworthiness of their cardboard creations! As always there were some pretty spectacular ships designed and built completely out of cardboard – some seaworthy and others, not so much! Harris Packaging, one of our generous sponsors, helped many of our school participants by providing pre-built boat kits. To see a list of this year's winners, visit [www.riverlegacy.org/cardboard-boat-regatta](http://www.riverlegacy.org/cardboard-boat-regatta). A special thanks to Six Flags Hurricane Harbor for donating the use of the venue and for managing the concessions, and to the Arlington Parks and Recreation Department for providing our water safety and race results. Thanks to the generosity of our sponsors and participants, this year's Regatta netted almost \$45,000 for the Foundation's programs.



### 9th annual Sporting Clay Shoot – May 18

An earlier date drew more than 210 participants for a day of camaraderie and friendly competition during the 9th Annual Sporting Clay Shoot Fundraiser at Ellis County Sportsman's Club in Waxahachie on May 18. A special thanks to the UTA Maverick golf team for lending us their pro golf swings for the Golf Ball Shootout and to Spring Creek Barbeque for the delicious lunch! To check out event pictures and results, visit [www.riverlegacy.org/sporting-clay-shoot-tournament](http://www.riverlegacy.org/sporting-clay-shoot-tournament). Thanks to the generosity of our shooters, company sponsors and guests, more than \$50,000 was raised for River Legacy Foundation!



### COMING UP:

#### 22nd annual After Dark in the Park Fall Festival– October 5, 6 & 7

This very popular fall festival has become THE event that families turn to for a safe and fun seasonal experience in the great outdoors. So be sure to join us this year for all of your fall favorites, plus some NEW activities during our 22nd annual After Dark in the Park, Oct. 5-7 at River Legacy Living Science Center and River Legacy Park. Join us for games, crafts, activities, storytelling, karaoke, bounce houses, pumpkin patch, food trucks and so much more! Be sure to watch our Web site ([www.riverlegacy.org/after-dark-in-the-park](http://www.riverlegacy.org/after-dark-in-the-park)) and Facebook page to see what food vendors, games, activities and events will be on hand for this year's festival. Thanks to the thousands of guests who enjoyed the festival last year and our gracious sponsors, After Dark in the Park garnered almost \$40,000 for the Foundation's environmental education programs. We are looking forward to another great event and hope to see you and your family at After Dark in the Park in October!



#### 7th Annual A Night With Nature – November 9

Enjoy s'mores by the fire, live music, stargazing, live animal encounters and food & drinks at the 7th annual A Night With Nature on Friday, November 9. This fall evening benefit is sure to entertain and engage our expected 200 adult guests with a beautiful nature experience under the stars of River Legacy Park. Guests will enjoy a light dinner buffet, fine wine, Deep Eddy Vodka specialty drinks and craft beer. A silent auction will include a variety of fabulous gifts, prizes and vacations for our most generous highest bidders – and this year, guests can bid straight from their mobile phones whether at home or at the event. Thanks to last year's generous attendees, sponsors and donors, \$55,000 was raised to close the gap on our **Exhibit Transformation Campaign**. This year's proceeds will help us sustain our new exhibits and even bring in traveling exhibits from time to time. So be sure to join us and our NEW event hosts, **Linda and Andy Broadus**, for a fantastic fall evening! To request your invitation, e-mail [reply@riverlegacy.org](mailto:reply@riverlegacy.org) or call 817.860.6752, ext. 107.



Volunteers are a major part of the success of all of our events, and we are grateful for their contributions of time and skill. To learn more about volunteering, contact Sherrie Ripple at 817.860.6752 ext. 109 or e-mail her at [sherrie@riverlegacy.org](mailto:sherrie@riverlegacy.org).

For more information on how to support River Legacy through these events, call Becky Nussbaum at 817.860.6762, ext. 120 or e-mail her at [beckyn@riverlegacy.org](mailto:beckyn@riverlegacy.org) or call Kristi Payne at 817.860.6752, ext. 107 or e-mail her at [kristi@riverlegacy.org](mailto:kristi@riverlegacy.org).

Be sure to visit and support our 2017-2018 Event Sponsors:



The Pond Family | David and Kathy Atnip | NAI Robert Lynn | Steve and Paula Martindale | Archer Western Construction | KWA Construction | May Financial Solutions | Cody Pools | American Landscape Systems | Republic Services – Landfill | Bit By Bit Computer Consultants | Affiliated Bank | Pope, Hardwicke, Christie, Schell, Kelly & Taplett, L.L.P. | LaTour Tree Service | 3Di Sign + Design | QuikTrip Corporation | David Vo Farmers Insurance | Drs. Hyde, Miller & Associates | Frost Bank | Smurfit Kappa | Texas AirHogs | Smile Doctors Braces | Kumon Learning Center | Peerless Tent & Event | Green's Produce | Atmos Energy | Jerry & Becky McCullough | Durham Contractors | Kent & Diane Rasmussen | Stadium Parking | Kendall & Tim Lake | Split Rock Studios | Arlington Voice | Deep Eddy Vodka | Division Brewing | Nothing Bundt Cakes North

# Priceless Value of Volunteers

There is no doubt that without the support of our volunteers, we wouldn't be able to fulfill our mission each and every day. Volunteers, and the work they do, provide a valuable service to our Foundation and beyond.

Volunteers answer the phone, help with animal care, assist in classrooms, facilitate activities at festivals, remove invasive plants from our grounds, assist at fundraising events, serve on our board and committees and more! Front Desk Volunteer Ginny says, "I like volunteering at River Legacy because the Science Center is so interesting and guest friendly. I get to meet and greet new people each day and the staff is always friendly, helpful and appreciative that I am there."

Sometimes their value is estimated monetarily. For example, in 2017, 1,500 volunteers contributed over 10,000 hours of their time, talents and energy to River Legacy Foundation. That's an estimated value of over \$200,000!



Their value, of course, is much deeper than that. For us, what they provide strengthens our programs, our community and our city. For them, they gain experience, meet new people, develop new skills, strengthen college applications and resumes, and so much more.

David, who volunteers as a committee member, at fundraisers, festivals and the front desk, says "I volunteer at River Legacy Living Science Center because I believe strongly in their overall vision and mission statements, enjoy and admire the leadership and staff for their commitment to realizing the established River Legacy goals and objectives while treating all they encounter with respect and appreciation, and FINALLY and probably most importantly, I enjoy watching the programming and special events light up the minds and hearts of the youngsters that pass through the Living Science Center experience."

However, the value of volunteering simply cannot be quantified. How do you put a number on something that has infinite worth? The real value of volunteerism is priceless!

*"Not everything that counts can be counted. And not everything that can be counted, counts." — Albert Einstein*

If you would like to join River Legacy's family of volunteers, contact Volunteer Manager Sherrie Ripple at [sherrie@riverlegacy.org](mailto:sherrie@riverlegacy.org) or call 817.860.6752, ext. 109. 🦋



Thanks to Brandon Williamson for using his Eagle Scout Project to build and install these beautiful wood benches and stools near our bird blind. If you are interested in completing a Scout project at River Legacy, please contact Shannon Porter at [shannon@riverlegacy.org](mailto:shannon@riverlegacy.org) or 817.860.6752, ext. 119. Bring your own ideas, or we have many projects that we could suggest.

**Scout Badge Day**  
10 am – 2 pm, Saturday, Dec. 1



**RIVER LEGACY**  
LIVING SCIENCE CENTER

703 NW Green Oaks Blvd.  
Arlington, TX 76006  
Cost is \$15 per Scout/sibling  
Register online at  
[www.riverlegacy.org/scout-programs](http://www.riverlegacy.org/scout-programs)  
For more information, call  
817.860.6752, ext. 119



## Naturalist Corner:



# Unsightly Trail Encounters

By Ellen Ravkind

Imagine you are a student coming to River Legacy Living Science Center for a Field Investigation. The day has arrived, buses have been loaded and you are on your way. Excitement builds as your bus pulls into the park, you unload and meet your Naturalists. As you excitedly begin down the trail, your first encounter is the pedestrian bridge over Snider Creek. You take a moment to look down into the creek and what do you see? Trash! This sight takes many students by surprise, but sadly, has become commonplace in our society.

There are plastic drink bottles, straws and bags, food wrappers and containers, aluminum cans, glass bottles, Styrofoam containers and more litter - a byproduct of our disposable society which has become part of our life and the environment. It can be harmful to not only the animals and plants, but the planet too. Animals can get entangled in plastic six pack rings, fishing line and bottles causing death. Some animals even get stuck in food wrappers trying to get that last little bit out. Litter can be mistaken for food and eaten by our wildlife. Plastic cannot be digested which could lead to a nutritional deficiency or obstruction. We see litter almost everywhere collecting in sewers, streets and even the oceans. It does not degrade quickly. Plastic can take from 10 to 1,000 years to completely decompose. Aluminum cans remain in the environment for over 200 years, and Styrofoam does not biodegrade. Glass can take a million years to decompose!

Another group of students start their exploration along the wooded trails in River Legacy Park. They also see litter, but often encounter another hazard, dog poop! Stepping in dog poop is not fun, but did you know this fecal matter also poses a potential environmental hazard? Dog waste is not fertilizer. It can be toxic to lawns causing discoloration and burn spots. If left on the soil, rain and/or watering will lead to its breakdown and the dispersion

of fecal matter into the soil and eventually into our water system. Feces can contain parvovirus and parasitic worms such as hookworms and tapeworms. Coliform bacterial presence is also an indicator of fecal contamination and may signal the presence of other disease carrying pathogens in that body of water. *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*) is the most common member of this bacterial group and consequences from outbreaks have been reported in the news. Symptoms of illnesses contracted from such organisms include, but are not limited to, fever, cramps, diarrhea, gastroenteritis and kidney disorders in people.

**What can we do?** As individuals, we can make a difference. Don't litter. Dispose of trash properly if it is unable to be reused or recycled. You can also pick up litter on your daily walks through your neighborhood or park trails. Pick up your dogs' waste. Many communities, Arlington included, have laws requiring the owner to do this. Bags for pet waste disposal are readily available in many stores and at stations in city parks, including River Legacy. There are even biodegradable ones. Together, we can make a difference and ultimately experience a more pleasant kind of trail encounter for all to enjoy. 🦋



Arlington Parks and Recreation Department Crew members found this bird trapped in a food bag.

## Join us for our NEW Conservation Saturdays!



One component of our mission at River Legacy Living Science Center is environmental conservation. Environmental conservation refers to the caring of nature and its resources and the preservation of them for the future. As human populations increase around the world and pressure on nature mounts, environmental conservation has never been more important.

As part of our commitment to this pillar of our mission, we are excited to announce the beginning of a new program focused on this goal. Starting in the fall, Conservation Saturdays will focus on specific topics ranging from water conservation to wildlife conservation. The program will be free and open to all ages. Activities might include a clean-up of our trails, planting of trees, animal presentations, crafts, and many more. So, mark your calendars for these exciting and rewarding events!

Starting in August, families can reserve their spot simply by calling our front desk number at 817.860.6752. The event will have a maximum of 40 participants total so make sure to call ahead.

Conservation Saturdays will take place from 11 am to 12 pm on:

- September 22
- October 20
- November 17
- January 19
- February 16 \*
- May 18

*\*The February 16 event will take place from 9 am to 10 am as a precursor to our Great Backyard Bird Count Festival.*

Stay tuned for more details on our Web site and social media pages in the following weeks and months as the dates get closer.

Our children, the next generation of environmental stewards, will be much more prepared to tackle future conservation challenges if they learn about them from a young age. We hope you join us for Conservation Saturdays as we help you plant that conservation seed in them. 🦋

# Thank you to our Donors

June 1, 2017 – May 31, 2018

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# Community Rewards Program:

River Legacy Foundation and River Legacy Living Science Center can benefit from your everyday purchases. So shop and support by following the guidelines for each one below:

## AMAZON

Registration is done online. Simply go to <https://smile.amazon.com> and login to your Amazon account or create a new account and then select River Legacy Foundation as the charitable organization of choice. This only has to be done once a year and it will apply to all purchases that are eligible for charitable donations.

## KROGER

Registration is done online. Go to [www.kroger.com/community-rewards](http://www.kroger.com/community-rewards) and sign in or create a new account and then select River Legacy Foundation as the charitable organization of choice. This only has to be done once a year and River Legacy Foundation will benefit every time your Kroger card is scanned or used.

## TOM THUMB

River Legacy Foundation's charity number is 2998. Participants can download a Good Neighbor Program card at [www.tomthumb.com/ShopStores/Good-Neighbor](http://www.tomthumb.com/ShopStores/Good-Neighbor) page. Once complete, River Legacy Foundation is registered as your chosen charitable organization every time you use your Tom Thumb Reward card.

## CHARITABLE PLANNING:

What if you could have more money for your retirement and your heirs by giving money to charity? Some of the "Ripple Effects" of these strategies include:

- Avoid Taxes on Appreciated Assets such as Stocks, Real Estate, the Sale of a Business, etc...
- More Retirement Income
- Convert a Portion or All of an IRA to a Roth Without Having to Pay Taxes
- More Money for Your Heirs – Tax Free
- More Money Goes to a Charity – Tax Free
- And More...

.....  
 If you would like to learn more about these opportunities, please call Executive Director Jill Hill to set up a private consultation. We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you, your attorney and your CPA.



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



Newsletter Volume 26. Summer 2018

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# Join the Movement: North Texas Giving Day is Sept. 20!

This year, on Thursday, September 20, 2018, River Legacy Foundation is once again participating in Communities Foundation of Texas' 10th annual North Texas Giving Day, a one day online giving extravaganza for our whole region.

Last year, Communities Foundation of Texas brought together more than 2,700 organizations to raise \$39 million. Thanks to your generosity and our own matching donor, River Legacy Foundation raised \$31,840 last year! Let's do it again this year!

Since its founding in 2009, North Texas Giving Day has inspired people to give, resulting in increased donations and services provided in North Texas. We invite you to join the movement and donate to River Legacy Foundation on September 20 from 6 am to midnight via [www.northtexasgivingday.org/river-legacy-foundation](http://www.northtexasgivingday.org/river-legacy-foundation).

### Here's how you can join the movement:

#### 1. Get up and give on September 20th!

Your gift matters! On September 20th if you donate to River Legacy Foundation online at [www.northtexasgivingday.org/river-legacy-foundation](http://www.northtexasgivingday.org/river-legacy-foundation) between 6am and midnight your dollar will be stretched with bonus funds and prizes raised by Communities Foundation of Texas!

#### 2. Schedule Your Gift!

Not available on September 20? No worries! Schedule your donation at [www.northtexasgivingday.org/river-legacy-foundation](http://www.northtexasgivingday.org/river-legacy-foundation) between September 10 and September 19 and make your gift count!

#### 3. Spread the word!

Spread the word to your friends and loved ones about River Legacy Foundation and North Texas Giving Day! Don't forget to tag [@RiverLegacyParks](https://twitter.com/RiverLegacyParks) and [#NTxGivingDay](https://twitter.com/NTxGivingDay) if you're posting online! Encourage your friends and family to get up and give as well!

This year, you can even create your own peer-to-peer FUNdraising page on [NorthTexasGivingDay.org](http://NorthTexasGivingDay.org) to activate your network to donate too. Our impact is greater when we give together!

#### 4. Join us for the Arlington Gives! Concert & VOTE!

Vote for River Legacy Foundation for the People's Choice Award (to help us win a \$10,000 bonus grant!) and enjoy free music and more during the Arlington Gives! Concert presented by the Arlington Tomorrow Foundation at Levitt Pavilion. The fun begins at 6:30 pm on Sept. 20 with food trucks and donation stations; program and concert begin at 7:30 pm.

#### 5. Follow us!

Follow us on [Facebook.com/riverlegacyparks](https://Facebook.com/riverlegacyparks) or [Twitter.com/rlsciencecenter](https://Twitter.com/rlsciencecenter) to stay up to date on North Texas Giving Day!

For more information on North Texas Giving Day, visit [NorthTexasGivingDay.org](http://NorthTexasGivingDay.org)! For more information on how you can help River Legacy Foundation on North Texas Giving Day, September 20, please reach out to Becky Nussbaum at [beckyn@riverlegacy.org](mailto:beckyn@riverlegacy.org) or Kristi Payne at [kristi@riverlegacy.org](mailto:kristi@riverlegacy.org).

Thank you for joining River Legacy Foundation in the North Texas Giving Day regional giving experience! We couldn't do it without YOU!

