

RIVER LEGACY

RIVER LEGACY FOUNDATION • RIVER LEGACY LIVING SCIENCE CENTER • RIVER LEGACY PARK

Newsletter vol. 29 • Summer 2021



Dinosaur Safari Exhibit ROARRRS into River Legacy This Fall!


Grab your safari hat and binoculars, because things are about to get wild! The Nature Center is undergoing a prehistoric transformation in preparation for the November 13th opening of its most anticipated traveling exhibit to date, Dinosaur Safari. Created by Omaha Children's Museum and presented in part by Arlington Tomorrow Foundation, Dinosaur Safari lets your kids ride in a Jurassic Park-style jeep and explore alongside moving animatronic Dinosaurs.

Immerse yourself in a jungle setting and get up close and personal with fascinating prehistoric creatures, ranging from the mighty T-Rex of North America to the armored Stegosaurus, and experience hands-on activities and close encounters with life-sized dinosaurs and fossils.



The exhibit features six animatronic dinosaurs, a Tyrannosaurus Rex photo-op, a junior archeologist dig site, three climbable dinosaurs and a paleontologist tent with a discovery lab. Exciting hands-on activities include climbing behind the wheel of the RAWR2GO Safari Jeep to explore the jungle with friends and using various dig tools at the dig site to uncover fascinating dinosaur fossils.

"The dinosaurs are super realistic and throughout the entire safari visitors are surrounded by thick jungle foliage, which really adds to the experience and helps you imagine that you have traveled back in time to see these amazing creatures." Says Shannon Porter, Event/Exhibit Manager at River Legacy Living Science Center.

A few dinosaur species that will call the Nature Center home during this time include favorites like a baby Tyrannosaurus rex, a species that was an apex predator much like the lions on the zoo's African Plains today; a baby Triceratops, characterized by its 3 horns, a parrot-like beak and a large frill that could reach nearly 3 feet across; a stegosaurus, a herbivorous, four-legged dinosaur from the late Jurassic, which is characterized by the distinctive upright plates along their backs; and a Velociraptor, a bipedal, feathered carnivore with a long tail and an enlarged sickle-shaped claw on each hindfoot! 

These and many more exciting prehistoric pals will be on display during **Dinosaur Safari, located in River Legacy Living Science Center's Discovery Room from November 13, 2021 to February 12, 2022.** The cost is \$10 for adults, \$9 for seniors and \$7 for ages 2 and older.



Dinosaur Safari is made possible by the generosity of Arlington Tomorrow Foundation, Adeline & George McQueen Foundation and our annual sponsors:



**Continuing a
25 YEAR
LEGACY
of Environmental
Education** page 4



Directory

Officers: Robert Blake, *President*; Mark Warren, *Vice President*; Elizabeth Marks, *Secretary*; Mike Davis, *Treasurer*.

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Staff: Jill Hill, *Executive Director*; Sherrie Ripple, *Director of Education*; Becky Nussbaum Gerro, *Director of Development*; Shannon Porter, *Event/Exhibit Manager*; Christine Bartkowski, *Marketing Coordinator*; Jennifer Zamboni, *Administrative Assistant/Registrar*; Karen Tomlinson, *Volunteer Coordinator*; Dr. Ellen Edwards Ravkind, *Naturalist Manager*; Anne Alderfer, Chad Etheridge, Jorge Garcia, Sam King, *Naturalists*; Cindy Barry, Tiffany Dragun, Ellis Elliott, Amy Johnson, *Nature School Teachers*; Blake Kuppinger, Linda Dryden, Tiffany Dragun, Robin Swindle, *Early Childhood Field Investigation Facilitators*; Lisa McCaskey, *Assistant*; Mary Moreno, *Assistant & Venue Coordinator*.

Contributors: Christine Bartkowski, Becky Nussbaum Gerro, Richard & Sylvia Greene, Jill Hill, Carole Hoyer, Pete Jamieson, Sam King, Lisa McCaskey, Shannon Porter, John Promise, Dr. Ellen Edwards Ravkind, Sherrie Ripple

Photography: Christine Bartkowski, Robert Blake, Richard Greene, Arno Knapen

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Newsletter Volume 29. Summer 2021

Follow us on:



Message from the Executive Director



**25 years,
1 million children,
and a lifetime
of education –
ALL THANKS
TO YOU!**


As time has gone by, our town has grown up to be a vibrant city. Every year more people discover what a wonderful place Arlington is to live, work, and raise a family. And while growth is good, it often relegates nature to the fringes of a city, preventing opportunities for education and environmental stewardship. But in Arlington, a precious preserved 1,300-acre urban oasis created by River Legacy Foundation and its public/private partnership with the City of Arlington Parks and Recreation Department, has ensured that nature would remain central and accessible to all.

This land, in the center of our growing city, is home to forest, wetlands and prairies providing habitats to countless birds, fish, mammals and native plants. It is an amazing ecosystem that provides ample educational opportunities for conservation and stewardship.

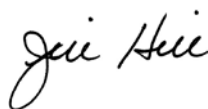
The true gem within the park is the River Legacy Living Science Center. This beautiful building provides the Foundation the ability to ensure the continued preservation of land through its phenomenal environmental education programs, as well as its state-of-the-art exhibits, and of course, the beloved resident animals. These experiences promote environmental stewardship and foster a sense of love for both nature and community.

Since opening in 1996, over **1 million children** have been educated in environmental education at River Legacy Living Science Center. Think about that for a minute, **1 million children**.

That is not only astonishing, but also unique. Arlington is an amazing city that is actively growing, while also continuing the vital work of land preservation through educating both youth and adults alike on our natural world, as it has been for 25 years.

And this has all been possible only due to your donations and support. As the anthropologist Margaret Mead said, "*A small group of thoughtful people could change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.*" **You** are that small group of thoughtful people. You are that small group that has created an amazing place for generations of children to learn about, and fall in love with the precious, beautiful environment that has been preserved for, and entrusted to them. Your continued support will surely help change Arlington as it grows and might even help change the world. Thank you so much, and happy 25th anniversary to the River Legacy Living Science Center, **your** nature center! Let the celebration begin! 

Sincerely,



Jill Hill, *Executive Director*



River Legacy MILESTONES

1976:

The first portion of land for the Nature Center is acquired

2013:

Phase I of the permanent exhibit renovation is complete



1988: River Legacy Foundation is established



..From This

To This...



1996:

Grand opening of the Nature Center

2018:

Phase II of the permanent exhibit renovation is complete



1999:

First annual After Dark in the Park fundraiser (now called River Legacy Fall Festival)

2019:

First Traveling Exhibit



2001:

First annual Cardboard Boat Regatta fundraiser

2021:

River Legacy celebrates 25 years of the Nature Center, Nature School & Summer Classes

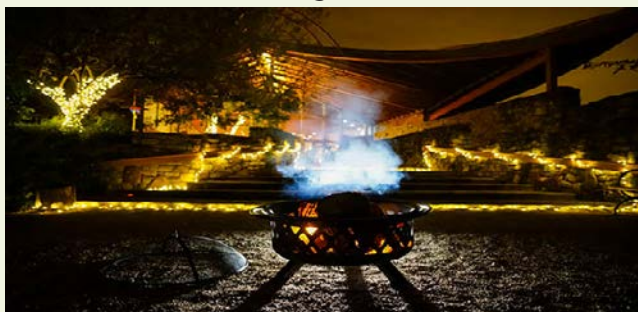


2010:

First annual Sporting Clay Shoot fundraiser



2012: First annual A Night with Nature fundraiser



2046:

We will open the time capsule under the Nature Center that was buried in 1996!



Continuing a 25 YEAR LEGACY of Environmental Education

By Sherrie Ripple, Director of Education

In 1988, River Legacy Foundation was formed by a group of visionary citizens who imagined a premier city park and an educational facility that would ensure future stewards of the parkland. Our mission then and now is to educate the next generation of stewards using the resources of both River Legacy Park and the Center.

Public funds collected by local families together with private funds were secured in 1996 to build our beautiful, sustainably designed nature center. Now 25 years later, children and their families are still at the core of our mission and programs. Though some things have changed along the way, River Legacy continues to keep its finger on the pulse of the ever-evolving needs of our community. Today, especially due to the recent pandemic, families recognize the importance of having a connection to nature. We also have a greater understanding of the vital role that exposure to the natural world plays in the health and development of our children.

Nature School began with just three teachers offering classes to three and four year olds once a week in either the morning or afternoon. Today we still offer classes for preschoolers, but we have added more choices for families.

Some of our classes meet for three hours while others meet for five. We offer a two-day a week program for our four year olds and also offer classes for five year olds who have not yet enrolled in Kindergarten.

Summer classes, which used to largely focus on early elementary age students, started with staff and volunteers taking students into the park even before the building was completed. Now, especially with the 2.5 million dollar renovation in 2018, we have 6 classrooms and offer weeklong camps simultaneously during both June and July. We have also expanded our camp offerings to students 3 years old through those entering 8th grade.



Ellis Elliott, who started as one of our original teachers 25 years ago, continues to be an integral part of the River Legacy mission.

Also, our need for volunteers continues. Many of our current staff started as volunteers and some of our original volunteers continue to graciously give their time and talents. We simply couldn't have gotten this far and been able to fulfill our mission without them!

We are proud to celebrate our 25th birthday with our community! It's our privilege to provide a constantly evolving array of opportunities for students and families to connect with nature. Throughout the years, there has always been something to discover in the woods right outside our doors! 🦋



A few things have remained the same over the last 25 years, including the hands-on learning approach that River Legacy employs in all of its programs. Our students are encouraged to explore their place in the natural world through interactive and engaging classes with a focus on wildlife, ecology, and the environment.



My Favorite River Legacy Memory is...

Experiencing the enthusiasm, awe, and knowledge shared by our own family members (our nephew in the first year, our granddaughter as she turned three, our niece and nephew a few years later) as they attended Nature School. Also, every time we were in the park seeing so many relishing their recreational outdoor experiences that enhanced their lives in our great city. And, last but not least, working beside so many dedicated volunteers and staff members at special events and fund-raisers through the years, who love River Legacy as much as we do and being able to be confident that it would be in great hands for the long run into the future.

Richard & Sylvia Greene

My MIDDLE DAUGHTER'S FASCINATION WITH THE TURTLE TANK. SHE LOVED TO WATCH THEM SWIM AROUND. WE THEN GOT HER A STUFFED TURTLE TOY AND SHE'S LOVED TURTLES EVER SINCE. "TURTLE" WAS EVEN HER FIRST WORD!

Tim Ackermann

Watching the building being constructed and attending the grand opening. Watching our boys and now our grandkids grow up coming here. The excitement in their eyes is priceless. Tommy Crumpton

The construction of the East entrance and the big bridge that connected the trails, working with Schrickel, Rollins & Associates, and many more.

Suzanne Sweek

Firstly, discovering this precious spot for the first time. I felt like a Peter Pan Lost Boy! Secondly, watching my three girls do their preschool years at Nature School with the beloved Ms. Ellis, Ms. Terry, Ms. Cindy and Ms. Shannon. Lastly, volunteering at After Dark in the Park and Cardboard Boat Regatta! Here's to another 25 years!

Laurie Ackermann

Watching my two boys "grow up" here and watching my grandchildren LOVE summer classes! Also being able to volunteer with a great staff!

Carol Crumpton

The first Cardboard Boat Regatta when it was at the pond.

Susan Eaves

When our son Brennan attended what he called "bug school" here and all the After Dark in the Park events.

Melody & Larry Fowler

OUR ENGAGEMENT PARTY, CHRISTMAS REUNION PARTY, TAKING OUR MATERNITY PICTURES HERE, AND OUR GIRLS GOING THROUGH NATURE SCHOOL.

BEN & LINDSI

I've brought my son's Cub Scout and Boy Scout troop and we've enjoyed seeing the Nature Center and working to help by completing conservation service hours. My son's Eagle Project is my favorite.

Alexandra Taylor Cowart

When Jill Hill, her son Tanner, and I were brave enough to swing on the bungee swing at Hurricane Harbor after the Cardboard Boat Regatta in 2009.

Elizabeth Marks

Completing my bee boxes, duck box, and wildflower garden here at the Nature Center.

Kyle Cowart

My grandson loved doing leaf rubbings when he was five at River Legacy. Then he wrote each family member's name on each rubbing and we used them for place cards at Thanksgiving!

Peggy Poynter

Meeting staff and visitors that change my life every time.

Michael Garcia



DOUBLE YOUR DONATION!

Because of your generous gifts, River Legacy Foundation crossed a **huge** milestone. 25 years of excellence in environmental education at your Nature Center!

THANK YOU!

You have made a difference in the lives of 1,000,000 people!
One million people!

There is still so much to do...

To celebrate 25 years of excellence in environmental education and to prepare for the next quarter of a century and beyond, **the Honey B Foundation, A Hive of Grace will double your donation during this special year!**

This is a dollar-for-dollar match up to \$25,000 for River Legacy Foundation. \$25 becomes \$50. \$250 becomes \$500. \$2,500 becomes \$5,000!



**You can help twice
as many children
connect to nature.**

Please grow the legacy by donating at **www.riverlegacy.org** then look for the donate button. You can mail your check to River Legacy Foundation, 703 NW Green Oaks Blvd, Arlington, TX 76006. Feel free to bring your check in to the Nature Center and **discover** everything that's new.

From Field Trips for 15,000 school children each year to small, guided hikes....

From long-time favorites like After Dark in the Park to the re-named and reinvigorated Fall Festival...

From the Caddy Shack Golf Tournament to the upcoming River Legacy Charity Classic...

...the legacy of River Legacy continues to grow.

**PLEASE HELP TWICE AS
MANY CHILDREN FALL
IN LOVE WITH NATURE
BY DONATING TODAY.**

**You can double
the number of
animals who
receive superior
care at the
Nature Center.
Your dollars
can do twice as
much good in
our community.**



Special Events

Put the FUN in Fundraising!

Throughout the year, four special events provide a financial lifeline for River Legacy Foundation's environmental education programs, while also providing a unique and fun community experience. From a friendly clay shoot sporting competition to an exciting NEW golf tournament, to a family-friendly fall festival and an evening under the stars, there is an event for everyone to experience and enjoy. Of course, each event is only successful thanks to our corporate sponsors, donors and participants! We couldn't do it without you!



12th Annual Sporting Clay Shoot — May 7th

More than 150 shooters registered for River Legacy's 12th annual Sporting Clay Shoot and enjoyed a day of camaraderie and friendly competition at Defender Outdoors Clay Sports Ranch in Fort Worth on May 7. Afterwards, shooters gathered for a combined lunch provided by Spring Creek Barbeque and a live auction. Everyone enjoyed the beautiful setting and beautiful weather and variety of opportunities to win fabulous prizes and awards! Thanks to the generosity of our shooters, company sponsors and guests, almost \$50,000 was raised for River Legacy Foundation! **Don't miss our next Sporting Clay Shoot on Friday, May 6, 2022.**

COMING UP:

Tee Up at Riverside Golf Club for River Legacy's 1st Annual Charity Classic — September 10th

The 1st annual Charity Classic Scramble gets off to a shotgun start at 8 a.m., Friday, September 10, at Riverside Golf Club. Riverside Golf Club blends native vegetation with the beauty of a modern championship golf course. Players can participate in a variety of contests such as the longest drive and closest to the pin. Players will also partake in an awards ceremony, door prizes, raffles and a delicious lunch provided by Spring Creek Barbeque.



2nd Annual Fall Festival — October 9th

Mark your calendars for the 2nd annual Fall Festival on Saturday, Oct. 9th. This one-day family-fun fall festival features a Children's Area with creative and unique games, crafts and activities; as well as bounce houses, climbing wall, dunk house, a pumpkin patch and so much more! Park in River Legacy Park and catch a hayride shuttle to the event entrance. Family Fun Packs include 4 admission tickets and coupons and can be purchased online in September. Check out

www.riverlegacy.org or sign up to receive our e-news for the latest details and new activities for Fall Festival this year.



9th Annual A Night with Nature - November 5th

Stargazing, s'mores by the fire, light dinner, drinks, animal encounters and more make this unique annual event a must for community couples looking for "A Night with Nature!" Join us this year on Friday, November 5, 2021, for a beautiful evening under the stars at the Nature Center.



For registration or sponsorship information on any of these events, contact Shannon Porter at 817.860.6752 or by e-mail at shannon@riverlegacy.org. Details are also available at www.riverlegacy.org

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, go to www.riverlegacy.org/volunteer-with-us.

Be sure to visit and support our 2020-2021 Event Sponsors:



Steve & Ann Cavender
Mike & Becky Gerro
Steve Martindale
The Moritz Family
Reilly Family Foundation
Jerry Stool

Carole Hoyer

I have been involved with River Legacy since 1994. I had heard about the Cardboard Boat Regatta and wanted to see this event in which people think it is a great idea to build a paper boat, fill it with 9 or 10 friends, and race it! So, I volunteered to help with the registration process, and I have been doing so ever since. My husband has been the Titanic Judge for years, and he chooses the Most Spectacular Sinking. Obviously, we love the event and the creativity, construction skill, teamwork and fun involved – to say nothing of the fearlessness!

I was elected to the Board of Directors in 1995, and I continue in that role as Chair of the Projects Committee. I was new to the Board when the Center was dedicated. I especially like the way it is nestled into the woods so that even inside it feels like a nature experience. It is a truly iconic building that is instantly recognized by the citizens of Arlington.

When our grandchildren, who live out of town were young, each one would spend a week every summer with us. We always had to go to River Legacy. The trip included exploring the Nature Center and



then a walk in the park. Those grandchildren are now all in their 20's. They were all at our house not long ago, and they were reminiscing about their River Legacy days. One of their favorite stories is about the day we saw three armadillos, a bobcat sitting on the abandoned bridge abutment as if posing for a picture, and a nut falling from a tree that hit their grandfather's head and the sound absolutely echoed! ***You never know when you are making memories.***

River Legacy is a treasure in our City. As the 99 square miles gradually are developed and the trees and open spaces disappear, it is vitally important that the park and the Nature Center be preserved so that generations to come can experience and connect to nature as we have been able to do. 🦋



John Promise

For almost a half-century, my personal and professional lives have been intertwined in the love and protection of the Trinity River.

I am the retired Director of Environment and Development for the North Central Texas Council of Governments, the area's regional planning agency of more than 200 local governments. I am also a very early and long-standing Board member of Arlington's River Legacy Foundation.

You ask what I remember... I remember that when I arrived in 1975, Arlington's official master plan showed the Trinity River as a barge canal with industrial development along the banks that we now call River Legacy Park. This had been the region's vision since the mid-1800s.

I remember serving as the chair of the US Army Corps of Engineers regional Citizens Committee that killed the barge canal idea in 1981.

I remember working with our local governments for many years to establish the "Common Vision" partnership that commits to a safe, clean and green Trinity River corridor, our shared 21st century vision.

I remember visiting the nascent River Legacy Park site (no infrastructure yet built) with Sylvia Greene as we watched it flood to the edge of Green Oaks Boulevard ... and many times explaining to folks that it MUST flood to hold water (Valley Storage in engineering terms) so that nearby homes & businesses are protected.

I remember as a River Legacy Foundation board member participating in so many different and varied activities, from critiquing language on park signs to selling shirts at Cardboard Boat Regatta to doing environmental education with kids ... and my greatest failure, the wetland's boardwalk (not surprised you never heard of it).

I remember spearheading the initial planning efforts for a continuous trail



system along the Trinity River... and often being laughed at... and being so proud when Arlington became the first (and so far, only) city to complete its segment. We are now on the threshold of that finished regional trail.

I remember when Sylvia's dream of River Legacy Living Science Center was just that.

I remember the many, many people, some of whom will likely never be remembered, who put all they had into making the magic of River Legacy Park. 🦋

I remember so much... that's what a legacy does for you.

Pete Jamieson

In 1985, I had the honor and good fortune to lead the planning for what would become River Legacy Park. To be honest, at the time, I'm not sure I fully understood or appreciated the significance of this project. There were many at the time who didn't share the vision for this property, much less the larger vision of a Dallas to Fort Worth connection stretching 75 miles in length.



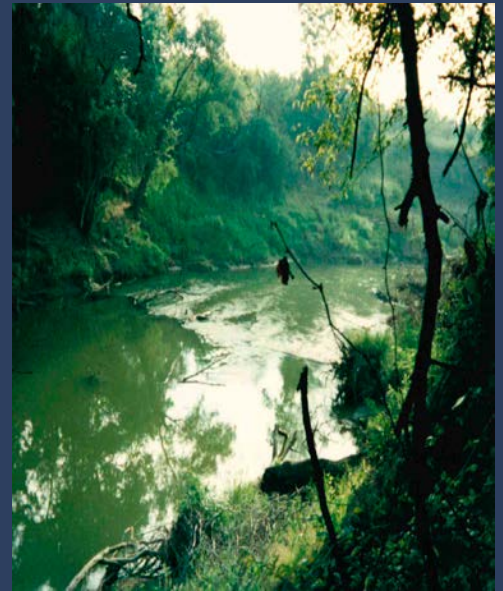
My understanding and appreciation for what we initially called Trinity River Linear Park was shaped over a five-year period, during planning, design and construction. It was the highlight of my career.

Early public use of the Trinity River land was limited primarily to scouting activity and hiking in a 200-acre area called Rose Brown May Park, named for the family who donated the land. Natural surface trails wound through the park, courtesy of many Boy Scout projects. It wasn't until 1985, that Rose Brown May Park became part of a larger vision for a park that would span the entire width of the city. My initial impressions of the property came during our site analysis hikes through the property with our planning and design consultants. We walked the entire property over several days, cataloging resources, opportunities and constraints.

A recurring theme throughout development of the park was the unintended human interaction with nature. For instance, during one of our initial visits to the park, we ran into spiders hanging down from the trees. It was a long time ago, and the lighting wasn't great. I just remember that they were big, grey and scary looking. Sure enough, one of them ends up clinging to the back of the neck of the person in front of me. I just remember yelling and a flurry of swatting.

This theme played out for several years. We probably encountered every snake species that exists in the park. Some, such as rat snakes, on virtually every visit. One of our planners had a major snake phobia, which might have resulted in a little horseplay. We also had our occasional run-in with chiggers and poison ivy, but that can be experienced almost anywhere. Surprisingly, in those days, I don't recall encountering any bobcats or coyotes.

Towards the end of construction, we experienced record rainfall, and the river overflowed into the park. This actually happened twice during construction, and one had to wonder if this was going to be business as usual. The park is in the floodplain after all. But these weren't just any flood events. The first event lasted weeks, as up-stream reservoirs released water into the river. The trails, roads, picnic areas, playground, all under



water. It would be an understatement to say that we were stressed about the circumstances. It took five years to get to that point in the project, and we couldn't be sure how the improvements would hold up. Hold up they did, but shortly after one of these events, there were hog sightings. It was the beginning of a feral hog problem in River Legacy Park. Some speculated that they washed down during one of the flood events. Regardless, it's an ongoing challenge, and another environmental threat to the park. 🐖

River Legacy Park is a tribute to the vision, philanthropy and hard work of many people and organizations, including River Legacy Foundation.

The Foundation was formed during these early years for the purpose of helping with the development and preservation of this special place. Shortly after, the Foundation expanded its mission to include environmental education and construction of the Nature Center.



Richard & Sylvia Greene

During the early part of our mayoral tenure, Arlington Parks Department Director Donna Brasher approached Sylvia with a proposal. Donna described a plan to enlarge, first, the small acreage of North Arlington donated land into a potential major park that would reach all the way to the river.

It would be "something very special," Donna explained – but it would be well out of reach of the city's park budget. For the ambitious project to have any prospect of success, it would require private-sector funding and significant land donations from property owners in the region. Sylvia accepted the challenge, recruited community members with a passion for the potential and went to work raising money and seeking land donations.

The work of the Foundation had moved forward and employed the services of the visionary architectural firm of Jones Studio whose principals created a design for the Center that captured the perfect image of a nature center that "fit" into the Trinity River Forest Floodplain. The plan was presented to the city council and was greeted with enthusiasm but lamented that the city only had \$500,000 in park bond money –

nowhere close to what it would cost to build such a project.

However, under Sylvia's leadership, the Foundation went to work to provide \$4.5 million in private funds to match the city's \$500,000 making the vision for the Center a reality. ***Sylvia recalls, "My own husband who speaks so eloquently and leads so effortlessly, whose own doubt at first led me to say, 'Oh ye of little faith...hide and watch.'"***

While it wasn't a challenge to find board members for the Foundation who had a passion for the vision, it always seemed unlikely that the money required to build the Center could be raised in the private sector. Also, the perception of the river as a natural resource was negative for the river was at times abused and thought of as a sewer instead.

However, doubters nonetheless would be wrong and the Foundation did succeed in changing that perception, in getting individuals and groups to grasp the vision, and in gaining the support of individuals and corporate entities to set a record for the most money ever raised up to that time for an Arlington non-profit entity.

Continued on next page.






The ribbon cutting, using a vine that grows in the park, on the day the Center was dedicated and gifted to the city was the fulfillment of a dream. Since then, every time I'm there and observe families discovering the Center and the wonders of the park, I know they are always part of the ongoing legacy of what has been and is being constantly achieved.

Experiencing the enthusiasm, awe, and knowledge shared by our own family members (our nephew in the first year, our granddaughter as she turned three, our niece and nephew a few years later) as they attended Nature School. Also, every time we were in the park seeing so many relishing their recreational outdoor experiences that enhanced their lives in our great city. And, last but not least, working beside so many dedicated volunteers and staff members at special events and fundraisers through the years, who love River Legacy as much as we do and being able to be confident that it would be in great hands for the long-run into the future.

Under Executive Director Jill Hill's leadership, the work of the Foundation has successfully innovated its role and service to the community while maintaining all the safety protocols necessitated by the pandemic. With the annual fundraising component of all non-profits dramatically cut, children and families isolated at

home, and yet knowing the benefits of nature programming and opportunities to get outside, River Legacy was a shining example of adaptation in difficult circumstances as it continued providing beneficial services.

Initially in 1996, the uniqueness and scope of the work of River Legacy Foundation was impressive in its fundraising efforts in preserving and enhancing an underappreciated natural resource for the benefit of the Arlington community and beyond, as well as, developing its educational programming component.

Today, the importance of the work of the Foundation can be identified as its continued successful mission to provide a singular experience in discovering the wonders of the natural world to everyone. 



The New Faces of River Legacy Foundation



Board of Directors

ROBERT BLAKE
Board President

As River Legacy celebrates 25 years, I reflect on my personal 20-year association with its foundation and park. In 2000, things started small with walks in the park as I discussed the future with my then fiancé. After we married and had kids, the park continued to provide joy as we walked there as a family with our dogs.

Somewhere along the way, we discovered a hidden gem in River Legacy Living Science Center. We started taking our boys to After Dark in the Park, now called Fall Festival, where they enjoyed games, decorating a pumpkin, and climbing into an Arlington Fire Department truck that is on-site every year. I have several pictures of them talking to the firemen, and I always found it amazing that I was just as excited as they were to check out the fire truck.

When my sons were old enough to start going to the summer programs and classes, they were exposed to a whole new world of excitement and knowledge. These special classes turned my kids into environmental stewards as they learned about the animals, trees, and plants surrounding the river. One of the most memorable classes for my oldest son was photography where he came home thrilled to show us the picture he took of a bobcat kitten. Even after they aged out of the summer programs, the Nature Center has continued to impact their environmental view. Both boys have restored an area of the park as their Eagle Scout project. After becoming volunteers at the Center, they have participated in events, given tours, and helped with the summer programs.

They thoroughly enjoy exploring all the wonderful things River Legacy has to offer.

Our family involvement continued as I started volunteering and my wife's pediatric dental office began sponsoring the event now called Fall Festival. Soon, I became an integral part of the technology at the Center and was excited to be part of their transition from an analog grouping of exhibits to a state-of-the-art tech meets nature exhibit that rivals many larger facilities.

Two years ago, I was humbled when asked to be part of River Legacy Foundation's Board. I jumped at the chance because it brought me even closer to the place my family holds near and dear to our hearts. For the past ten years, I have been at the Center weekly and can say with certainty that every time I'm there, I see, learn, and experience something new.

Recently, I was honored to be elected board president. I am proud to serve in this position and help the Center take steps towards its next 25 years. I truly feel River Legacy is not only a hidden jewel for Arlington, but all of the Dallas Fort Worth area, and I encourage others to explore the wonders of the park and support the foundation. This can be done by volunteering, attending events, making financial contributions, or simply spreading the word about the programs and River Legacy Living Science Center. It takes all of us to make it a success. 🦋

Thank you for this tremendous honor.



CINDY SALTER
Board Member

Cindy Salter co-founded Salter Bros. Coffee Roasters in 2018. She started her career as an attorney, later becoming a mother and event planner for arts and education. Her love of coffee began in childhood, with memories of her dad savoring coffee in Greek diners. He described it as, "The best coffee in the world!"

Salter Bros. Coffee Roasters is Arlington's only specialty coffee roaster of its kind. They now feature a coffeehouse in Downtown Arlington where roasting takes place there under the same roof.

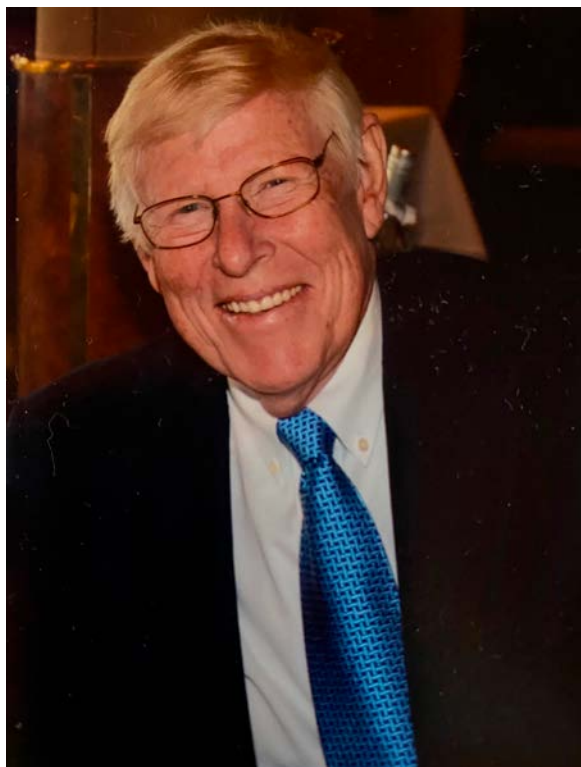
One core belief is community involvement at the local and national levels, while creating synergy with local businesses. Salter Bros. Coffee Roasters believes in serving and giving back to the community. She is thrilled to serve on River Legacy Foundation's Board of Directors. Cindy loves to walk in River Legacy Park. She and her family have so many great memories of time in the park and Nature Center including many summer camps and classes! 🦋

The New Faces of
River Legacy Foundation
Board of Directors
continued on next page. ➡

The New Faces of River Legacy Foundation Board of Directors continued

DICK MOISE

Board Member



"I value trees enormously," said Dick Moise, newly elected Member of River Legacy Foundation's Board of Directors. From the time he was a child and throughout his career (now retired) as a homebuilder and residential land developer in Midland, Keller, Austin and Philadelphia, Dick's love of trees and understanding of their value has driven him to save trees as land is developed.

Mr. Moise credits his grandfather for inspiring his amazing appreciation for **nature** and for all things that grow. Dick's grandfather would teach him the names of all the insects - bees and butterflies - around their pond. Dick remembers feeling awe as tadpoles turned into frogs.

Along with his grandfather's lessons in nature, his father also taught him how to identify trees and appreciate time in the woods. "It became a real passion for me. It instilled a deep love and appreciation of nature. Helen and I have raised our family of five kids, nine grandchildren, and three great grandchildren to love and care for the woods and forest." Dick is excited that as a River Legacy Foundation Board Member he will be able to share nature's inspiration and awe with thousands of guests of all ages who visit the Nature Center, as well as River Legacy's online learning opportunities. He said, "It blew my mind when I realized what a huge outreach River Legacy has. I had no idea how many people the Foundation serves; how many people who learn to respect and get to know what's out there (in the Park) in nature. I want to be part of that."

Dick served as a Naval officer for five years, three of those years in Okinawa. His wife Helen Moise serves as City Councilwoman, and River Legacy Park is in her district. They share a passion for community service and for nature. While volunteering their time and talents at a River Legacy Conservation Saturday event where they planted native Texas pecan trees around the Nature Center and in the adjacent Park, Dick commented, "The River Legacy Foundation staff is so well-versed in **everything** that is in the Park. I am really impressed with them. I think it is so important for that knowledge and appreciation to be passed on to others." 🦋

Thank you, Board Member Dick Moise,
for sharing your passion for nature.



Paul Brodie

Board Member

Paul Brodie is a Multi-time Bestselling Author and CEO of Brodie Consulting Group. As a Book Publisher, he helps medical professionals, attorneys, coaches, consultants, speakers, and business owners share their story with a proven system.

What makes Paul's books different is his ability to explain complex ideas and strategies in a simple, accessible way that you can implement immediately.

Paul is a lifelong learner and earned an M.A. in Teaching from Louisiana College and B.B.A. in Management from the University of Texas at Arlington.

In his spare time, he loves to read and write books, travel (especially to Maui and Las Vegas), and is an avid sports fan.

Paul is a proud Rotarian and holds membership in the Corporate Leadership Council of the Greater Arlington Chamber of Commerce. He also serves on the Board of Directors for the Rotary Club of Arlington Highlands, Timeless Concerts, and River Legacy Foundation. Paul is a strong supporter of River Legacy Foundation and their commitment to helping educate our youth about nature and the environment. 🦋

How This Cast Iron Forest Came to Be...

By Dr. Ellen Edwards Ravkind,
Naturalist Manager

Imagine you're hiking in River Legacy Park on a beautiful day. You've decided to forgo the paved trails and head deeper into the forest on those less traveled. You stop for a drink of water and in that moment, you realize the sounds of the Metroplex are barely audible. Instead, you hear the rustling of the leaves in the breeze, birds singing, maybe Cardinals, Blue Jays and Carolina Wrens, and squirrels scurrying about their business. You look around and discover you're in a forest of dense trees with their canopies almost intertwined. There are curtains of vines, some so prickly as to be almost impenetrable. The understory is thick with shrubs. You imagine this is what the westward travelers must have encountered years ago and wonder, how did they survive!

Let's travel back to Autumn of 1832. Through a chance encounter, Washington Irving, a famous American writer, has been invited to travel with U.S. Indian Commissioner Henry Ellsworth and a company of mounted rangers, as well as some other fascinating characters, on an expedition through the western frontier lands of Native American territory. The expedition set out from Ft. Gibson in present day Oklahoma. This troop would hunt for their food, sleep under the stars and encounter several Native American tribes including the Osage, Pawnees, and Creek on their travels. These adventures took them through areas of open prairies interspersed with islands of dense forests of Post Oaks, Blackjack Oaks, along with Elm, Hackberry and Hickory where prickly vines hung in thick curtains making progress difficult. This area is known as the Cross Timber or Cross Timbers because it is not comprised of a single band of forest, but a mosaic of them extending from Southeast Kansas through Central and Eastern Oklahoma into North Central Texas.

The company passed through these forests in October, and Irving was not a fan! Years later in 1835, he described these experiences in his travel journal, "A Tour on the Prairies". "I shall not easily forget the mortal toil, and the vexations of flesh and spirit, that we underwent occasionally, in our wanderings through the Cross Timber. It was like struggling through forests of cast iron." The Cross Timbers was indeed an obstruction faced by those early settlers moving west until the advent of roads and railroads.



Richard V. Francaviglia wrote a book about this region, "The Cast Iron Forest". He examined the natural environment of this area and its natural history. He states, "these post oaks and blackjacks are uniquely suited to the area's harsh environment, as their well-developed, strong roots work down into the bedrock." He goes on to suggest that Irving's description of the forest as being made of cast iron has a deeper meaning than even Irving probably imagined. Cast iron is forged in heat and tempered by cold. These trees are well suited to withstand the blistering summer heat, drought, and bitter cold of this region. The roots go deep helping the trees to obtain water and withstand strong winds during the most adverse weather. What an incredible history!

Back in present day, you have finished your drink and are ready to resume your hike. You continue to take in the sounds and sights of the surrounding forest. You think about the history and uniqueness of this area as you hike through River Legacy Park. What a wonderful natural place in the middle of this huge Metroplex. How did this park come into being? Pete Jamieson, former Director of Parks and Recreation for the City of Arlington, had, in his own words in 1985, "the honor and good fortune to lead the planning for what would become River

Continued on next page.

Naturalist Corner:

How This Cast Iron Forest Came to Be... continued.



Legacy Park.” He continues to say, “Looking back, what I now appreciate more than anything else was the natural integrity of the floodplain forest at the time. While many areas had been disturbed decades earlier, presumably from early gravel mining, railroad construction, etc., absent was the invasive plant material that exists today. While I lack the expertise to describe the exact, successional stage of the forest, I can tell you that

at the time, in 1985, the forest was largely a tree canopy and understory grasses – no privet, ragweed, or any other highly invasive species that I recall.” The forest has indeed changed since Washington Irving and the rangers traveled through the Cross Timbers and encountered the Cast Iron Forest, but aren’t we lucky that we can still experience an escape from the urban hustle and bustle and take a hike in River Legacy Park. 🦋

The Evolution of Hiking

By Sam King, Naturalist

It’s not about the destination, it’s about the journey. We’ve all heard this quote before, right? We’ve seen it plastered on inspirational posters and printed on coffee mugs. A walk in the woods is a greatly restorative journey we can all participate in. As decades go by, this journey has become drastically different for everyone, and as we grow older, we learn that change is constant in all things and hiking is no exception.

Hiking is an enjoyable experience for many, but for some the true fun comes from IDing the flora and fauna along the way. To do this in the past you would either need to have a photographic memory or bring field ID books along with you. Those books obviously take up space and weigh down your pack. Today, with the help of compact technology we can replace these heavy field books!

There are several apps that are useful for IDing plants, animals and more. One popular app is called Seek and is powered by iNaturalist. This app is great for helping ID organisms as well as making note of them. The use of apps also makes the IDing process much more streamlined, whereas flipping through a field guide may take up more time.



THEN

NOW

Another change we have seen over the last few decades is that hiking, in some ways, has become more accessible (although they could certainly be more accessible.) Most cities throughout the United States now incorporate the building of green spaces and trails into their planning. In Arlington alone we have over 100 different trails! While the increasing popularity of hiking is marvelous, there are problems with the surge in foot traffic on trails. Hiking trails in densely populated areas are quite literally *loved to death*. For trails that are unpaved, the constant stomping of feet widens trails which takes away from the surrounding habitat. The increase in visitors on trails also makes for more litter on the paths and less nature. Ill informed guests may bring in trash and take home pieces of nature by picking flowers or other natural objects. So, on your next hike remember to take only pictures and leave only footprints so that we may continue to enjoy hiking on our trails now and in the future. 🦋



The Safe Environment for Relieving Chronic Pain: Baylor Scott & White Orthopedic and Spine Hospital is Here for You.

Moving past the pandemic, we all yearn to get back to normal – not just a new normal, but a better normal. For some, that can mean overcoming chronic neck, back or joint pain.

Arlington is home to one of America's best facilities for treating and solving the issues that cause these types of pain: Baylor Scott & White Orthopedic and Spine Hospital – Arlington. This unique specialty hospital centers on comprehensive outpatient and inpatient treatment and provides orthopedic surgery, spine treatment, joint and total knee replacement, diagnostic imaging, pain management, sports medicine and physical therapy.

Baylor Scott & White – Arlington utilizes the ROSA® Robotic Surgical Assistant for total knee replacement. This extraordinary technology helps specially trained surgeons tailor the placement of knee implants just for each patient's unique anatomy. This leads to better outcomes after surgery, with activities such as driving after just two weeks, gardening after three to four weeks, and golf after six to eight weeks. In other words: You can get your life back.

This is Dallas-Fort Worth's only hospital that concentrates strictly on orthopedic and spine care. This allows Baylor Scott & White – Arlington to provide a safe, serene and focused health care environment to reduce the tension or apprehension patients might feel about going to a hospital.

Combining exceptional care with personal attention and compassion is the hospital's priority, whether treating a simple neck strain or a complex joint surgery. The boutique-style facility offers an exceptional staff and 10 operating

rooms, complete diagnostic imaging capabilities, and a Pain Management Center. The hospital also has a full-service ER open 24/7 making it a great alternative for emergency care.

The hospital's comprehensive COVID-19 Safe Care Plan expanded patient and visitor precautions. With a state-of-the-art multi-stage air filtration system that kills viruses in the air, the hospital provides an optimal environment for all patients. For all inpatient rooms and operating rooms, UV lighting systems scan the rooms after each cleaning to detect all types of bacteria that might remain so it can be addressed. Operating rooms are equipped with new double HEPA filtration, and aerobiotic machines clean the air and decrease particle counts in each room. Baylor Scott & White – Arlington's staff take extraordinary measures and wear appropriate PPE at all times, ensuring patients are protected.

With all these measures, the hospital also takes temperatures at the door, provides masks and encourages social distancing – policies that make it possible for loved ones to be with patients. As always, if you do feel sick, please stay home to protect others.

If you or a loved one need surgery to help alleviate pain, make 2021 your year for relief by getting scheduled. Baylor Scott & White Arlington is here to safely help you.

Visit www.bswarlington.com for a full list of physicians, services and to schedule an appointment.



Enjoy the Interaction with Nature Unique to Viridian and River Legacy!

With tree canopy streets, amazing parks inspired by the great sustainable old neighborhoods across the United States, and trails that connect to River Legacy Park, Viridian is a great blend of art, science, and natural creation. The features of Viridian are numerous and innovative.

The "Viridian Life" is a definitive way of life enjoyed only in this unique master-planned community. Every aspect of Viridian has been designed to deliver a comfortable, engaging and sustaining way of life for all ages. Homes facing common areas give children a safer place to play away from traffic and within sight of home. The expansive Lake Viridian is more than a decorative feature — amenities such as the Viridian Sailing Center give residents direct access to the non-motorized lake. Trails don't just meander through the community; they offer the serious jogger miles to explore and connect to the beautiful trails of River Legacy.

Teeming with wildlife, Viridian's 200-acre master plan includes five major lakes, 500 acres of open space and an additional 500 acres of lakes, rivers, streams and wetlands.

Viridian is thrilled to congratulate River Legacy Nature Center on 25 years of enriching our community. River Legacy and Viridian are the perfect neighbors!



SA-SO Signs and Safety Products Protect People and the Environment

SA-SO Signs and Safety has been providing products to protect people and the environment since 1948. It congratulates River Legacy Foundation on 25 years of top-quality, meaningful environmental education at the Nature Center! Well done!

SA-SO is proud to partner with River Legacy Foundation to spread the word about simple ways we can work together to keep our water system clean. It is vital that we protect lakes and rivers from pollutants. One simple way that we can each make a difference is to protect storm drains.

Storm drains are designed to handle stormwater runoff, which is rain that falls on buildings and paved areas. Water that is not absorbed into the ground ends up in our storm drains. This water goes directly to rivers, lakes, and ponds. It is not treated. It's very important that only rain goes down the drain. Anything other than rain that goes down storm drains pollutes our drinking water and can cause harm to public health and wildlife.

When the ground is saturated like it has been this spring, leaves, grass clippings and litter are swept into our storm drains. This dumps trash and chemicals into our lakes, rivers and streams, upsetting the delicate balance of nature. For example, too much phosphorus from lawn clippings in lakes can cause algae blooms and lower oxygen in the water. This can harm wildlife and make our drinking water more difficult to purify.

SA-SO appreciates River Legacy's message of environmental stewardship. SA-SO's Storm Drain Markers are an excellent way to educate the public on how to keep our cities clean and promote community beautification. Applying these signs to storm drains in your area makes a great BSA Eagle Scout or Girl Scout Golden Project.

Go to SA-SO.com to learn more about these and other signs and safety products.



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/communityrewards 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. Just link that number to your individual Loyalty account and your purchases will benefit River Legacy Foundation. Visit www.tomthumb.com/yourstore/good-neighbor.html to download the registration form to link the accounts.

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.

THANK YOU to our Donors

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Mike and Becky Gerro *in honor of Caden Blake's Eagle Scout Project*
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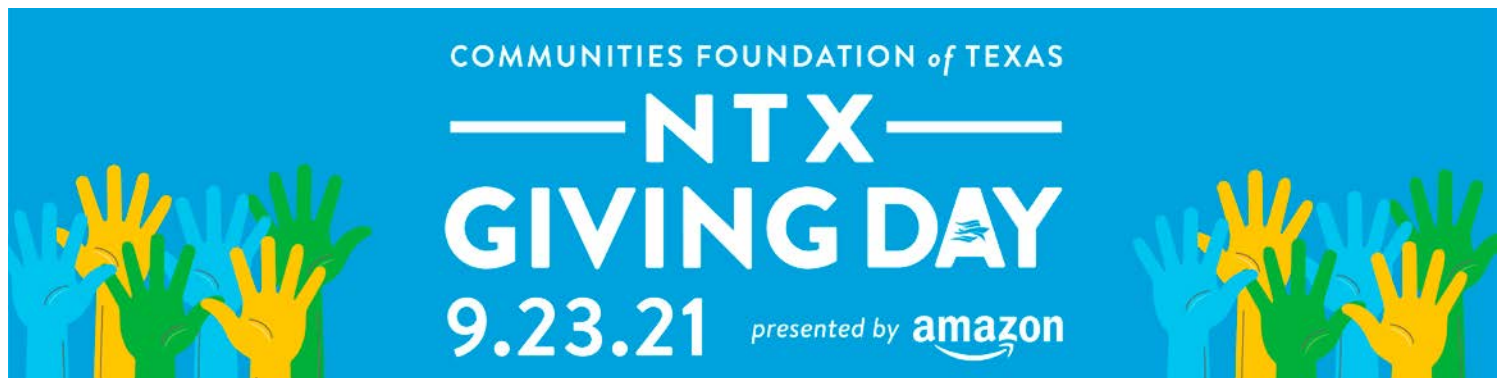
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SPECIAL THANKS

City of Arlington
Arlington Water Utilities
Arlington Parks and Recreation Department

North Texas Giving Day is Thursday, September 23, 2021

Please plan to give and #BeTheGood!



With your support River Legacy Foundation was able to take students on virtual field trips and introduce them to animal ambassadors throughout the pandemic. Dedicated teachers and naturalists delighted students with the wonders of life in the forest via Zoom, and also encouraged them to explore nature in their own neighborhoods.

But now it is time to return to the woods! Students on field trips will be returning to River Legacy in the fall! Please welcome students to **discover** the wonders of nature by supporting River Legacy on North Texas Giving Day.

Then join your friends from River Legacy Foundation (both human and animal ambassadors too!) at the Levitt Pavilion. Arlington Tomorrow Foundation will once again be sponsoring a spectacular **North Texas Giving Day concert at 7:30 p.m. on the evening of September 23**. The concert, featuring Take 6, an a cappella gospel group, will begin at 8:00 p.m.

Bring your friends and vote for River Legacy Foundation for the People's Choice Award, because the organization receiving the most votes will receive additional grant funds.

Here's how you can help:

1. GET UP AND GIVE ON

SEPTEMBER 23! Your gift matters! On September 23, if you donate to River Legacy Foundation on NorthTexasGivingDay.org between 6 a.m. and midnight, your dollars will be stretched with bonus funds and prizes raised by Communities Foundation of Texas! Not available on September 23? No worries! Make your gift early between September 1 and September 22!

2. SPREAD THE WORD!

Spread the word to your friends and loved ones about River Legacy Foundation and NTX Giving Day! Don't forget to tag [@riverlegacyparks](https://www.facebook.com/riverlegacyparks) on Facebook and [@livingsciencecenter](https://www.instagram.com/livingsciencecenter) on Instagram and use [#NTXGivingDay](https://twitter.com/NTXGivingDay) if you're posting online! Encourage your friends and family to get up and give as well!

3. FOLLOW US!

Follow our social media [@riverlegacyparks](https://www.facebook.com/riverlegacyparks) on Facebook and [@livingsciencecenter](https://www.instagram.com/livingsciencecenter) on Instagram and facebook.com/NorthTexasGivingDay to stay up to date on NTX Giving Day!



A Look Back at The Art & Science of Arachnids Traveling Exhibit and What We Learned from These Not-So-Creepy Crawlers

Many of the families that visited the Nature Center this past winter were able to get up close and personal with over 100 live arachnids from across the world. Some of the live arachnids that were on display included the Tiger tarantula, the Mexican Red Knee tarantula, Goliath Birdeater tarantula and Emperor scorpions.

This exhibit offered something for everyone, from weaving your own spider web, to being eye-to-eye with a Vinegaroon whip scorpion, to viewing a gallery of macro photography pictures of spiders by photographer Julian Kamzoi. This exhibit dove into how spiders have impacted our art, culture, technology and medicine.

River Legacy Living Science Center was thrilled to host this exhibit which provided engaging opportunities for guests to learn about how arachnids grow, their unique adaptations and how beneficial they are to the entire ecosystem, including the garden areas around your home. So, the next time you take a look at your garden, be sure to thank those arachnids for keeping the insect population under control.



A huge thank you to our sponsors for supporting the second traveling exhibit "The Art & Science of Arachnids".

Adeline & George McQueen Foundation

