



On the site of demolished apartments, an empty field waited. Grown from the dream of a few neighbors, an urban preserve awaits. Your donation to Twelve Hills Nature Center helps ensure a place to breathe free for wildlife and the whole community too!

Dear Friends,

We see more and more families at Twelve Hills enjoying a beautiful day, taking family photos, and participating in Twelve Hills' programs. We are delighted that Rosemont Elementary's *Kids on the Move* Family Fun Walks brought hundreds of parents and children through Twelve Hills this fall.

One of our most important goals is getting youth in touch with the natural landscape. Experiencing and learning to understand wild areas is key to realizing their value and protecting them. You, our donors, provide these experiences to our community's youth by supporting Twelve Hills. And you can enjoy them, too!

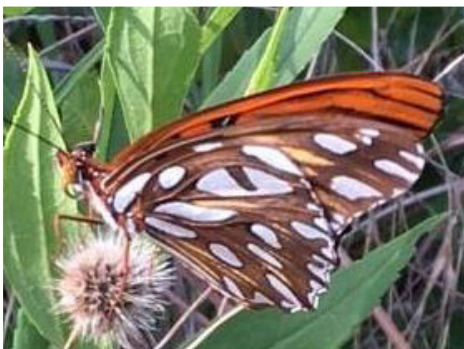
Please make a year-end donation and help us continue to improve the Nature Center's prairie and programs! By helping to pay our water bill, landscape, butterfly garden and prairie restoration costs, administrative costs and costs of our educational programs you provide an urban oasis in North Oak Cliff that directly impacts the area's youth. Gifts are fully tax deductible and are easy to make via the donate link at twelvehills.org. Mail checks to Twelve Hills Nature Center, PO Box 224926, Dallas, TX 75222-4926.

Sincerely,

Marcie Haley
 Marcie Haley, President
 Twelve Hills Nature Center
 December 2016

"Passion is lifted from the earth itself by the muddy hands of the young; it travels along grass-stained sleeves to the heart. If we are going to save environmentalism and the environment, we must also save an endangered indicator species: the child in nature."

- Richard Louv, Last Child in the Woods



Children from three nearby schools explore all things wild in the great outdoors-the best science classroom ever!



What Are Nature Leaders?

Twelve Hills collaborates with Rosemont Elementary School and North Texas Master Naturalists to present the Nature Leader's Program each spring. Now in its 10th year, the program endeavors to teach youth about nature, habitat diversity, conservation, environmental stewardship, outdoor ethics, and leadership. Twenty fifth-grade student Nature Leaders attend weekly afterschool classes throughout the spring. Each class involves hands-on outdoor experiences learning about different aspects of the Blackland Prairie ecosystem.

The program culminates in a two-week period during which the Nature Leaders guide nature walks for the 1000+ students at Rosemont Elementary School. The nature leaders are role models for these students, demonstrating that nature is cool and interesting, something to engage with and protect. Many students enter fifth-grade with plans to become a Nature Leader themselves.

Read this heart-warming letter about how the program impacts students.

Hello, my name is Miranda J. Guerra and I am in the 6th grade. Last school year I was chosen to be a Nature Leader. I am proud that I go to a school that has access to a Nature Center.

Through my experience of being a Nature Leader I learned how valuable Nature is and how important it is to preserve it. Being a nature leader also taught me valuable skills that will help me through my lifetime. Some of these ~~sets~~ skills include public speaking, responsibility, patience, and most importantly, leadership. Without the Nature Center I would have missed out on many learning experiences and leadership opportunities.

I realize there are many students who aren't as fortunate to have access to an amazing Nature Center as we do here at Rosemont. Learning about nature has opened up a new world to me and ^{now} show~~ed~~ me there is so much more to explore in the future. So I thank you greatly for giving all of us here at Rosemont this opportunity.



The Founders' Tree

The Twelve Hills Founding Board designated a beautiful live oak tree "The Founders' Tree" due to its nearly horizontal branches that resemble a mother's arms wrapping around. Founding board member Paula Craig said it was like a gesture of mother earth, symbolizing the intent of Twelve Hills to nurture the community through nature.

In 2004, Dallas artist Millicent Meng Behar painted this tree (pictured above). Copies of this painting were used in the initial fundraising for Twelve Hills Nature Center.



As happens in nature, a dense thicket of privet, ligustrum, poison ivy, and other plants grew under the tree. Last winter, Master Naturalist and board member John Wilt spent months clearing the thicket to once again reveal the tree's iconic shape.

The tree is located toward the back of Twelve Hills on the north side.



Grape Expectations

Grape Expectations 2017 is traveling a few blocks west to the home of Jonathan Kaye in Kessler Woods. Guests will be able to wander through Twelve Hills and experience the sights and sounds of a spring evening! A few steps away, they can enjoy a party on par with past parties at the home of generous hosts Vince Rowe and Susan Kohl.

Stay tuned for a date in May. Plan to join us to celebrate and support this neighborhood gem!

Twelve Hills Nature Center is sincerely thankful for the community's ongoing support.

Grape Expectations 2016 Sponsors

Methodist Dallas Medical Center
Grand Bank of Texas
Kessler Travel
Wilbow Corporation
Eno's
Vineyard Brands
Vince Rowe & Susan Kohl

Scott Chase & Debra Witter
Charles & Marcia Haley
Matt & Hilary Cook

Special thanks to:
Kate, Kiara, and Rachel of Booker T Washington
High School Meistersingers

Grape Expectations 2016 Silent Auction Donors

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Trader Joe's
The Verandah Club
Whisk Crepe



Participants in a recent evening nature walk got to pet special guest Forest the Barn Owl.

Nature Walks

Would you like to learn more about birds, butterflies, edible plants, and wildflowers? Watch for announcements about free public nature walks that take place monthly.

Preschool Nature Activities

Monthly programs for preschoolers accompanied by an adult introduce families to nature through themed activities.

All walks are publicized through Twelve Hills' Facebook page, website, emails, and Oak Cliff Next Door Neighbor.



Twelve Hills and Methodist Dallas Medical Center invited City of Dallas urban biologist Bret Johnson to discuss coyote sightings. He advised keeping pet food inside at night and preventing coyotes from becoming acclimated to people by scaring them with noise.



In the fall, the board participated in a three-year strategic planning process, graciously hosted by Rosemont Elementary School. We are excited to implement planned improvements to site management, education, partnerships, fiscal management and human resources.



Each May, Twelve Hills hosts Nature Appreciation Day, featuring nature activities for the community and honoring Rosemont's fifth-grade Nature Leaders. Pictured, board member John Wilt showing butterfly caterpillars to attendees.

Thank you for voting Twelve Hills as The Best Place to Relax in Oak Cliff in the Oak Cliff Advocate's "best of" awards this summer!



Sport Texas Conservation License Plates!

The hummingbird, Texas horned lizard, and rattlesnake license plates you see around town fund the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Conservation License Plate grants. Getting these license plates helps to fund nature conservation efforts such as those at Twelve Hills.

Visit www.conservationplate.org to learn more.



Restoration

Have you noticed all the landscape activity at Twelve Hills? North Texas Master Naturalist volunteers work almost weekly towards creating a diverse native plant community (over 210 different plant species and increasing) that supports pollinators throughout the year. Some special prairie plants that are well established

are: Liatris, Indiangrass, False Guara, and purple prairie clover. In the spring watch for Barbara's buttons, penstemon, 4-nerve daisy, and others.

The iNaturalist App is an easy way to identify plants and insects at Twelve Hills. Visit iNaturalist.org and search for Twelve Hills Nature Center under projects. 200 species are documented here with photos and descriptions.

At twelvetails.org, under About>Resources, you will find a bird chart and a flower chart. Birds are also listed under Twelve Hills at eBird.com.



What do volunteers do at Twelve Hills? Everything!!!

Twelve Hills has no paid employees. It is operated by our volunteer board and relies on volunteers for everything.

Volunteers, we depend on you! Landscape help is an ongoing need, but we also need help with graphic design, fundraising, public relations, events, community programs, and litter cleanup.

To volunteer, contact Twelve Hills using the information below.

twelvetailsnaturecenter@gmail.com

Mailing Address:

Twelve Hills Nature Center
PO Box 224926
Dallas, Texas 75222-4926

469-249-2817

twelvetails.org



Join our Yahoo Group to receive e-mails:
twelvetails-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Twelve Hills Nature Center gratefully acknowledges operating fund gifts, November 2015 through November 2016.

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Karen Bick	Sue Hounsell	Amy Reid
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Taylor Haley	Don Pearson	Nancy Wonders
Allen Haskell	Meredith Petree	
Kathy Hewitt	Amanda Pounds	

Donations in Honor of

Scott Chase, from Irene & Leonard Ellis
Marcia & Charles Haley, from East Kessler Park Neighborhood Association

In-kind Donations

Twelve Hills Nature Center gratefully acknowledges the generous in-kind donations of time and services from the following businesses:

Full Moon Design Group
P-Tree Garden Concepts

2016 Grants

Twelve Hills Nature Center gratefully acknowledges the following grants:

North Texas Master Naturalists
North Texas Giving Day Golden Ticket

North Texas Giving Day Matching Gift

Twelve Hills Nature Center gratefully acknowledges the generous matching gift from **Grand Bank of Texas**, which matched the first thousand dollars raised on North Texas Giving Day.

Twelve Hills appreciates the time you take to submit employer matching gifts.

2016 Board of Directors

Marcia Haley, Monica Emery, Maureen Ehrlicher, Jenni Brakey, Ellen Calhoun, Linda Donnelly, Jessica Johnson, Matt Kita, Kellie Lawson, John Wilt

*Help us nurture environmental stewardship
in the next generation. Please support
Twelve Hills with a year-end gift.*

Special thanks to Katie Haley for assisting with this newsletter.