



Newsletter

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City of Fayetteville to Address Problem of Invasive Plants

Two FNHA Board members, **Jennifer Ogle** (p. 1), and **Pete Heinzelmann** (p. 2), provide information and commentary on Fayetteville's recent efforts to control invasive non-natives plants

programs in place that promote sustainability, such as the recycling, composting, and urban agriculture programs, to name just a few. However, if I said that Fayetteville needs to work on being a little *less* green, I'd likely lose you. But it's true; Fayetteville needs to be less green! Please let me explain:

In very early spring, before our native trees and shrubs have a chance to leaf out, some of our non-native, invasive shrubs come out of winter dormancy and begin to put on leaves. By mid-spring, these leaves have fully matured, forming a dense, green layer in the forest understory that robs native plants growing beneath them of the sunlight they require to live. A prime example of this is Amur honeysuckle (*Lonicera maackii*), a thicket-forming shrub that escaped from cultivation in this area several years ago and has widely naturalized throughout town and beyond. Another example of an invasive shrub that forms dense, shady stands is Chinese privet (*Ligustrum sinense*), a semi-evergreen to evergreen ornamental that is sold in many local garden centers. Invasives such as these can gain a competitive advantage over native plants simply by being green earlier and/or for a longer period of time than native plants. While shading is not the only method employed by most invasives (don't get me started on allelopathy...), it is a very important one and has contributed to a decline of native plants in some areas, which in turn has impacted the pollinators and other animals that depend on these plants for their survival.

So that's the bad news. The good news is, the city of Fayetteville has decided to do something about this widespread problem. On May 5, the city council passed a resolution to address the problem of invasive plant species in the city. This is an important step toward the development of a policy or ordinance to control the introduction and spread of invasives in town. Although the city already has

an invasive plants eradication program in place, the council recognizes that more needs to be done to discourage the spread of invasive and potentially invasive plants in our town.

To that end, the city has invited a group of citizens, business owners, academics, and conservation professionals to meet on a regular basis over the next few months, with the goal of developing and recommending an inva-



sive plants policy to the city council. The group has had some great discussions about the city's existing program to control invasives, which plants are causing the most trouble in Fayetteville and should be the focus of a policy or ordinance, and ways that the city can educate the public about the importance of using natives and non-invasives in their landscapes and gardens.

If a policy or ordinance is implemented, we will soon see Fayetteville become a little less green at certain times of the year, leading to a "greener," more sustainable, more natural environment that encourages the growth of native plants and the animals that use them.

- Article by Jennifer Ogle

Inside: 3rd Annual Kessler Trail Run AND 2016 Gala for Kessler dates set

Responding to an appeal from many Fayetteville residents concerned about invasive plants in our community, the City Council recently voted to establish a committee to study the problem and recommend a policy to deal with it. It was understood that the policy needed to be based on science and facts so that there would be no question about its validity and that a subsequent policy to deal with invasive s would be on “solid ground.”

The committee is chaired by Peter Nierengarten, the director of the city’s Department of Sustainability and includes city employees, landscapers, plant nursery owners, a University of Arkansas entomology professor, environmentalists, FNHA members and others. One of the first goals of the committee was to identify which plants are causing most of the problem. The short list at this point includes:

- Bush Honeysuckle
- Bradford and Callery pears
- Chinese and European privet
- English Ivy
- Kudzu
- Multiflora rose
- Winter creeper

This list was selected from information from the National Park

Service, FNHA, Fayetteville in Bloom and the Washington County Extension Service.

For an invasive plant eradication program to be effective, many Fayetteville residents, in addition to city employees need to be involved. The program will require an education program for residents on identifying the plants to be removed and suggesting native plant species that can be planted in their place. Also, businesses that sell plants need to be aware of what species have a potential to become invasive and so they can advise customers appropriately.

I asked Joe Neal, an ornithologist and ecologist, for his take on the Invasive problem. His response, in part was, “I’m totally with you. Bush honeysuckle, privet, etc., are a problem because they crowd out the native plants associated with birds that are naturally part of our ecosystem. As you know well, once invasives are established, native plants don’t have a chance. This pattern impacts species dynamics of birds and insect pollinators, and ensures we are rearing generations of folks here who don’t realize how diverse and productive our native ecosystems can be. In effect, we are taking away from kids a key part of their natural heritage.”

- Article by Pete Heinzelmann



Chinese privet, *Ligustrum sinense*



English ivy, *Hedera helix*



Multiflora rose, *Rosa multiflora*

Some of the invasive plants commonly found in Fayetteville; see also Amur honeysuckle on the preceding page.

FNHA's Celebration of Kessler Mountain a Resounding Success!

The Fayetteville Natural Heritage Association's April 19 fundraiser, celebrating and benefiting the Kessler Mountain Reserve, was not without its challenges. Sudden gusts of wind and driving rain, arriving just as the party began, found us bringing the wine and beer tables inside the Pratt Place Barn and sent nametags and sign-up sheets flying. Despite the temporary chaos, our good-natured guests found a dry and warm refuge among dozens of round tables decorated with **Terri Lane's** beautiful flower arrangements in a space sparkling with white lights.

FNHA Chairman **John Coleman** welcomed the crowd and announced the raffle. The buffet dinner received rave reviews, and the barn was filled with conversation and good cheer as all awaited **Frank Sharp's** original skit about Phillip Kessler revisiting his namesake mountain.

The skit featured many notable Fayetteville denizens and Kessler Mountain Reserve stakeholders, including **Hugh Kincaid** as Phillip Kessler, **Julian Archer** as the groom (whose horse just would not cooperate), **Alex Mironoff** as dendrologist Dr. P. Dan Tech, **Chuck Maxwell** and **Lewie Lewis** of the Ozark Off-Road Cyclists group riding among the tables on their bicycles along with **Steve Schneider**, regional director of the International Mountain Biking Association. **Doug James** played an ornithologist (to no one's surprise), **Martin Miller** of Theater Squared and his sons, **Alexander** and **Nickolai Margulis**, were hikers as was UA Honors College student **Mitchell Pruitt** (an ornithologist/hiker in the skit and an accomplished birder in real

life.) **Alan Edmondson** of the Northwest Arkansas Land Trust portrayed a graduate student, and **Becca Chenault**, a senior at Fayetteville High School was a secondary school student. There were cameo appearances by **John Pennington**, executive director of the Beaver Watershed Alliance; **Delia Haak**, executive director of the Illinois River Watershed Partnership (Kessler Mountain divides the two watersheds); **Terri Lane**, vice-chair of FNHA and executive director of the Northwest Arkansas Land Trust; and FNHA chairman **John Coleman**. **Bob Caulk**, FNHA treasurer, and **Dana Smith**, sustainability coordinator for the Fayetteville Public Schools and FNHA board member, served as stage crew, as did **Frank Sharp**, who billed himself as stage hand, even though he wrote and directed the delightful skit.

The gala contributed over \$50,000 toward FNHA meeting its commitment to provide \$300,000, over three years, for the development of Kessler Mountain as a unique educational and recreational resource for students and citizens of all ages, now and in generations to come. Our contribution will be used, in part, for an ecological assessment, a conservation easement, a habitat management plan, a pavilion and educational signage on this ecologically sensitive site.

Thank you to all who attended and to all who helped organize the event! And thanks to those of you who attended. [Please see note at the bottom of this page.](#) ★

Did you enjoy this year's FNHA Gala for Kessler Mountain?

Look for another, more fabulous celebration coming Spring 2016

Frank Sharp is already working on the skit. . . . and we'll have a different (working!) sound system

The Kessler Medicine Show

April 24th

featuring original music by

Still on the Hill

★ A reminder to those who filled out pledge cards at the inaugural Gala: If you have not yet sent us your check or credit card information, kindly honor your pledge by sending your check to FNHA, PO Box 3635, Fayetteville, AR 72702-3635 or by contacting FNHA treasurer Bob Caulk at 479.973.2968 or bobcaulk@cox.net to **provide your credit card security code** so we may process your pledge. We apologize for not knowing to ask that you to provide this information on the pledge card you filled out at the gala ... Your help and support is appreciated, and we sincerely thank you.

Sustainable Landscape Awards Go to FNHA-Related Projects

This spring, the Urban Forestry Advisory Board of the City of Fayetteville recognized best examples of sustainable landscapes by presenting an award to one residential property and one commercial/institutional property. A team of judges toured each participant's landscape, using criteria based on design and aesthetics, preservation of the natural environment, environmental best management practices, and attraction to wildlife.

On June 10, two landscapes that are closely related to FNHA were awarded first place in the Sustainable Landscape Competition. The commercial/institutional award was given to the Prairie Restoration at **Fayetteville Unity Church**, located at 4880 West Wedington Drive. The residential award was given to the **Crocker** garden at 951 Pembroke Road. Each winning participant received a landscape recognition sign, a winner's medallion, and a certificate of award.

UNITY CHURCH

The Unity Church acreage lying between the highway and the church building had been continually mowed, but due to church goals of sustainability and energy efficiency, major plans for transformation were made in 2012. Landscape architect **Becky Roark** and her mother, **Tammy Jones**, decided to propose the creation of a prairie and rain garden. They invited **Karen Crocker**, **Joe Neal**, **Joe Woolbright**, and **Bruce Shackelford** to an initial meeting with Becky, Tammy, and Pastor **Annette Olson**. The Church Board and membership were given a presentation about the value of such an effort by Joe Woolbright and Joe Neal. When fundraising began, FNHA donated "seed" money to get the project started. As FNHA board member Joe Woolbright began removing Bermuda grass and seeding the site, fundraising continued. The prairie is now in its third year and received its first burn this spring. Occasional burning will keep it self-sustaining.

(Continued on next page.)



(Above) BEFORE: The Unity Church prairie restoration project in December, 2012, after clearing and hydroseeding.

(Below) AFTER: The Unity Church prairie restoration project in June, 2013, just 18 months after work began.



Sustainable Landscape Awards Go to FNHA-Related Projects (continued)

CROCKER GARDEN

The Crocker garden has been a long term project of FNHA board member **Karen Crocker**. When the Faye Jones residence was purchased over 18 years ago, it had a typical front yard landscape of mowed grass with ivy ground cover under the trees. A new landscape along the slope leading to the house was planned to serve as a partner to the beauty of the 1974 structure. Now, a curved walk moving through an alternation of light and shade reveals lush spaces of native plants visible from the house, the street and the central garden path. A stone seating area near the entry is constructed to look into the linear garden.

The garden design anticipated the requirements of the competition, and focused on preservation of the natural environment and environmental best management practices including use of over 90 native plants that can be grown in an urban garden in various types of habitats. Soil is amended to give loam to the existing clay and rock. Natives easily reseed and spread in ways that typical garden plants don't, so they have been replanted to many places, saving the cost of nursery plants. Management has included watering during several years of serious drought, but the past two years have not had much need. During rainstorms, flood waters running from the upper road are controlled by a small rain garden.



Iris cristata multiply in the Crocker garden

Various wildlife are attracted to the garden. Birds eat seeds from cone-flowers. Chipmunks live under rocks and walls. Rabbits and turtles have been seen. Although deer don't eat the native plants, they occasionally sleep in beds of spiderwort or in mulched areas under trees. Hundreds of honey bees and bumble bees come to gather pollen from mid-summer flowering native plants such as St. John's wort, coneflowers, ironweed and hummingbird clethera. The honey bees seem most interested in St. John's wort and bumble bees in coneflowers.

The landscape is planned around a series of native zones, each with specific groupings of plants. The first, named "post oak shade," is under the ancient spreading arms of a favorite neighborhood tree. It harbors early spring wildflowers such as Jacob's ladder, columbine, and iris cristata along with American holly and hay scented fern. Later, mid-summer shrubs bloom, such as shrubby St. John's wort and hummingbird clethera. The second zone is named "prairie sunshine." Here grasses such as little bluestem and side oats gramma combine with wildflowers such as cone-

flower, penstemon, coreopsis, butterfly weed, blue sage, goldenrod, baptisia, black-eyed Susan, and purple poppy mallow. Under the trees by the house is a third zone named "wooded ledges" where stone is laid to remind one of Northwest Arkansas strata formed by ancient seas. Here, ferns, heuchera, mayapple, trillium, and wild geranium grow. Up toward the street is a zone called "wooded slope" that boasts oak trees, flowering dogwoods, and blackgum trees with a carpet of wild ginger. At the far edge of the garden are other native trees and shrubs including holly, dogwood, pine, buckeye, and pawpaw trees. Two other zones add to the garden: small grass openings to contrast with the plantings, and the entry walk with samples of native plants that were originally planted as a testing ground. To give an example, an initial planting of five iris cristata have reproduced and are now planted in four beds of at least 100 plants each. The entry area also has major plantings of spiderwort, ironweed, river oats, southern blue iris, phlox pilosa, and bracken fern.

The primary use of the garden has been educational. It has been on two garden tours and has served as the basis for a high school class presentation about sustainability. The 2011 tour is on YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XBWYIB7VaE&feature=youtu.be>). A plant list has been developed and a map showing locations of plant groupings according to zones has been produced. The house and garden will be for sale this fall.

- Article by Karen Crocker

Chairman's Corner by John Coleman

Ethos, Logos, and Science

The proliferation of trails, both soft-surfaced and hard-surfaced, has raised an interesting debate within the ranks of FNHA as well as with partnering organizations like Ozark Off-Road Cyclists and the City of Fayetteville as of late. With the wildly successful opening of the Razorback Greenway the number of residents and visitors in Northwest Arkansas looking to get outside and be active is growing at a rapid pace. It's generating new economic activity in the region while promoting a healthier lifestyle which is a win-win. Soft-surfaced trails at Lake Fayetteville, Slaughter Pen, Mount Sequoyah Woods and, more recently, Kessler Mountain have been contributing to this movement for some time now. The participants vary from those who want to take a leisurely hike to those checking the box on their Audubon Society bird list to those looking to raise their adrenalin mountain biking or trail running.

Most people agree that the increased activity is a good thing for NWA. We all want people to get outside and experience the nature that surrounds us. In fact, this very activity helps raise awareness about many of the great places that need to be conserved and teaches the larger populace to make it a priority. It's hard to imagine Mayor Lioneld Jordan and the Fayetteville City Council agreeing to spend \$1.5 million on Kessler Mountain if so many people hadn't first accessed Rock City. With that said, the looming question within FNHA is, "How do we balance conservation and access?" The FNHA Board has been discussing this very question with regards to a proposed trail expansion at Mount Sequoyah and the upcoming planning efforts at Kessler Mountain.

In 2010, FNHA developed a Green Infrastructure Plan that identified lands in Fayetteville and surrounding areas with the highest ecological value and sensitivity. This plan afforded FNHA and community leaders the ability to target areas for conservation. The science and data behind this effort made it difficult to argue the logic of which lands should be conserved. Kessler Mountain is a great example, as it ranked number one on that list. In fact, the Plan has had such an impact that the Walton Family Foundation, Northwest Arkansas Council and NWA Regional Planning Commission are looking to duplicate it for the entire region.

While the green infrastructure planning effort is growing to a regional scale, my question is, why not follow a similar process within the areas that are being conserved? How can we look at Mt. Sequoyah or Kessler Mountain and ask, at a micro-level, what are the most sensitive areas within these properties and ensure some of these spaces are left "wild" while still maximizing access and recreation in areas that don't rank as high? How do we develop trails that highlight the best of these properties without generating erosion or disturbing sensitive flora and fauna? Some have even gone so far as to ask what types of users should be allowed to access certain trails. While this last question seems extreme to me, a [recent article in Outside Magazine](#) shows that Arkansas is not the only place where this question is being asked.

As this debate continues, it is evident that the ethos of the NWA region recognizes the value of conservation as indicated by recent developments. The data and science behind efforts like the Green Infrastructure Plan appeal to the logic of those involved, and to date this methodology has served the region well.



The Kessler Trail Run returns
on November 7th!

See the next page for more information
and registration links.





2015 Kessler Trail Run Will be held on November 7th; Registration Is Now Open

Save the date and spread the word! FNHA is partnering with the **Pack Rat Outdoor Center** on **November 7th** to host the **THIRD** annual **KESSLER TRAIL RUN**. Sponsored by **Specialized Real Estate Group**, the Kessler Trail Run raises awareness for Kessler Mountain and the need to preserve critical habitat in the Fayetteville community. Over the past couple of years we have engaged the growing running community in Northwest Arkansas, a group of folks that already are sensitive to the need for land conservation, but may not be aware of FNHA's mission or its efforts to conserve Kessler Mountain.

The Kessler Trail Run will begin at the City's trailhead on Judge Cummings Road and finish at the Old Smokehouse off of Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard (Highway 62) in west Fayetteville. There will be a **10k** and **20k** run with an **after-party** featuring local **food trucks** and a few of our **finest local breweries**. Participants will wind through **Rock City** and travel through the **old oak groves of Kessler Mountain**, exposing the scenic **views of the Ozark Plateau to the west**. This serves as a unique experience for Northwest Arkansas!

For more **DETAILS** check out our Facebook page at www.Facebook.com/fayettevillenaturalheritageassociation or

REGISTER for the Kessler Trail Run at <https://www.register-wizard.com/register/?ID=1341>



Aubrey Shepherd generously spent his time at the gala with video recorder in hand to capture the Frank Sharp skit about Phillip Kessler's time-travel trip to today's Kessler Mountain. The video may be seen at <https://www.facebook.com/FayettevilleNaturalHeritageAssociation/posts/10206716297775896>. Below are a couple ScreenShot captures from the video for your viewing pleasure! Thanks again, Aubrey, for filming the program despite a very loud electrical storm and a temperamental sound system!



Phillip Kessler (Hugh Kincaid) recalls his life on Kessler Mountain in 1866



Phillip Kessler's groom (Julian Archer) tries to coax his horse to "Enter stage left"... Neigh



Phillip Kessler hears an ear-piercing silver bird overhead as bird watchers and naturalists Becca Chenault, Nickolai Margulis, Alexander Margulis, Martin Miller, and Mitchell Pruitt explain the sound to be a jet airplane.



Earth scientist Alan Edmundson explains old-growth forest history through use of tree ring analyses. (...boring? coring?)



Hugh Kincaid explains to the equine cast member, led by Julian Archer, that the stage fright episode was **not** appreciated.



"HMPH! I quit." (Snort. Exit stage right)

THE END