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West Austin

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Volunteers spruce up Mount Bonnell for holiday visitors

By Alana Moehring Mallard

West Point Society of Austin hosted its ninth Mount Bonnell cleanup event in November, after adopting the historic park several years ago. The cleanup event was in conjunction with Service Austin Days, an annual community service event sponsored by Rotary Clubs of Austin.

“What a great job all of you did yesterday getting one of Austin’s most visited landmarks back to pristine condition for the holidays,” West Point Society’s Stan Bacon told nearly 30 volunteers in his thank-you email. “The park really looks great. A huge thanks to all of you. By my rough calculation, you collected the equivalent of some nine large bags of litter, three bags of weeds and cuttings and countless cigarette butts, ugh! The gardens and kiosk look really good.”



Austin Cosmopolitan Rotary Club members Monique Hodges, Andy Barclay, and Julienne and Aaron Thorp work at Mount Bonnell Park on a cleanup day in November

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Volunteers included members of West Point Society of Austin, Austin Cosmopolitan Rotary Club, Student Engineering Council at the University of Texas, Pre-Optometry Professionals of UT, and students from Anderson High. Also lending a hand on the workday were Austin Parks and Recreation Department employees Sara Hensley, Robert Smith, and Alex Castillo.

Mount Bonnell Park has a new kiosk on its summit, thanks to a partnership of West Point Society, Austin Parks and Recreation Department, Friends of Mount Bonnell and Keep Austin Beautiful. The kiosk features a display of flora, fauna and geology of the park along with current events and items of cultural and historical interest.

West Point Society’s project to replace an existing but damaged marker and to add improvements such as a dais,



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West Point Society member Stan Bacon (center) and members of UT’s Student Engineering Council working at the new kiosk at Mount Bonnell Park

benches and handrails have been put on hold by Austin Parks and Recreation Department. Bacon said the snags rests in concern by Austin’s Historic Landmark Commission that such improvements might constitute “historic

creep.” Bacon and members of West Point Society have appeared at Austin City Council Citizen Forum to urge council members to allow the improvements and make Mount Bonnell a more attractive and safer destination for visitors.

Donations for Mount Bonnell Park can be made through Friends of Mount Bonnell at Austin Parks Foundation or online at austinparks.org.

PHOTOS BY ALANA MOEHRING MALLARD