



Roger Gault

## Arboretum Friends, Donors Helped Secure New Parking Garage Property

The Dallas Arboretum has a new feature to add to its growing gardens: a 1,150-space parking garage.

The five-level parking garage is located on Garland Road, just across the street from the Rory Meyers Children's Adventure Garden and features a below-the-surface walkway that connects the bottom floor of the garage to the garden entrance. The garage and walkway are both handicap accessible.

The walkway from the garage is 153 feet long, 18 feet wide and 11 feet high and took nearly three months to complete. The walkway has abundant artificial lighting and both ends are filled with natural light. At the garage side of the walkway, there is a light well that gathers light from above while the other end closer to the garden entrance is completely open to the sky above.

The Arboretum owes a considerable thanks to Roger Gault, who originally had the majority of the property, a former trailer park, under contract for the future development of housing. Knowing how critical this land purchase would be towards meeting the Arboretum's need for parking, he assigned his interest in the property to the garden, costing him a considerable potential profit.

Additionally, the City of Dallas had monies set aside to help with parking for the garden; yet when properties became available, the City could not move quickly. The Arboretum therefore enlisted the help of good friends Liz Minyard and Paul Lokey; Phyllis and Tom McCasland; and Holly and Tom Mayer. They made the purchases of adjacent properties to the trailer park from willing donors a reality

and then held on to them for the garden until the City transactions were complete. If not for these individuals, the garage could not have been a reality.

The \$30 million parking garage was paid for entirely by the Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Society – no tax dollars were used in its construction. As the Arboretum continues to be one of the most popular spots to visit in the Dallas region, the attendance and lack of offsite parking in nearby areas brought about this critical need for more parking.

Keeping traffic disturbances to a minimum on Garland Road due to construction was a high priority for the Dallas Arboretum.

"We paid a premium for the tunneling operation so the people of Garland Road didn't even know this was going on," said John Armstrong, vice president of property development. "Otherwise traffic would have been problematic for a month."

The opening of the garage has more than doubled the available parking for Dallas Arboretum visitors.

The garage will have an emergency generator allowing for uninterrupted electrical service to life safety systems. The generator also allows pumps to remove water from the walkway and lower levels of the garage during rain events that result in power outages.

The garage planning started over two years ago with the help of Good Fulton and Farrell Architects. The garage complements the Arboretum's main public building by using similar materials for the garage entrance, stairs and elevator enclosure for the garage. Rogers O'Brien Construction saw the project through to its completion.

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