



Montgomery Farm

[Clean Country Living]

photography by Scott Womack

Why Montgomery Farm? This place was green before green became hip, hot, and happening. What began as Frances and Philip O'Bryan's 500-acre family horse farm north of Dallas is the area's first meticulously planned, self-sustaining suburban development that puts conservation ahead of profit margins. For many years, the main residence on the farm was a recycled army barracks. As development crept closer to the family land, two Montgomery grandchildren, Philip Williams and Amy Williams Monier, dug in their heels to ensure that the inevitable development would happen under the guidance of the nation's top conservation brainpower, with input from environmentally sensitive artists, engineers, builders, and landscape architects.

They come by that sense of conservationism honestly; in 1981, their mother, Frances Montgomery Williams, donated 72 farm acres to create one of the state's first land trusts, the Connemara Conservancy Meadow Preserve.



*photography courtesy of
Montgomery Farm*



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Montgomery Farm is the residential development that surrounds Connemara, with three distinct neighborhoods, each one a wildly different drummer from standard tract housing. "No more cookie-cutter homes," is Amy's mantra. Bethany Road, the main highway through the area, was designed by a collaboration of artists, architects, and engineers.

Liz and Bill Jackson moved from a three-bedroom Tudor in Hollywood Heights to Montgomery Farms last year. They now have a 3,500-square-foot house with four bedrooms and a media room. "Our home was getting too small," says Liz, who has two small children. "And our son was about to enter public school."

Conventional new construction did not appeal to the Jacksons. They loved Darling's Craftsman designs, Frank Lloyd Wright-inspired leaded glass doors, and front porches. "We met all of our neighbors the very first day," Liz says. "Coming from Hollywood Heights, where we had such a strong sense of community, that was very important to us."



LOCAL HAUNTS: Watters Creek at Montgomery Farm opened in May and is within biking distance. It has water features, terraced rock waterfalls, art, outdoor dining, green spaces, and shopping and dining opportunities typically found south of LBJ, such as Swoozies, Woodlands, Celebrity Bakery & Café, Borders, and Sephora.

photography (left) courtesy of Montgomery Farms

Established: 2000

Population: 1,200 homes (planned)

Old Story: You might as well drive to Oklahoma.

New Story: Allen isn't actually all that far. And if you're going to live in the suburbs, this is where you should be.

Average Home Price: \$300,000-\$1 million+

Average Home Size: 3,500-6,000 square feet

Lot Value: \$500,000

Lot Size: 50 by 115 feet-.5-acre parcels

Who's Buying: Young bankers, attorneys, techies, even empty nesters and transplants from Lakewood/Little Forest Hills who are bullish on Allen public schools.