



Alliance for Community Trees

**TREE CITY USA®
BULLETIN**

No. **80**

Editor: Dr. James R. Fazio • \$3.00



A new program was established in 2015 within the Arbor Day Foundation — the Alliance for Community Trees. As with Tree City USA and other Foundation programs, the ultimate purpose is to promote tree planting and stewardship of our nation's urban forests.

Networking, the forming and maintaining of a strong circle of contacts, has long been recognized as vital in the business community. It is just as important in the field of urban forestry, especially among tree boards and volunteer groups that do not have the professional links enjoyed by full-time arborists and city foresters. In fact, being a leader in a tree-related volunteer organization can be very isolating. That's where the Alliance for Community Trees comes in.

“For a nonprofit tree-planting organization, being part of the Alliance for Community Trees immediately expands

Networking can unite organizations and energize local programs, all in support of more trees and healthier communities.

access to experienced peers across the nation who are ready and willing to offer advice or a shoulder to lean on,” said Dan Lambe, president of the Arbor Day Foundation. “This is a unique national network of leaders in urban and community forestry. As a boost to citizen engagement, it is unmatched.”

Bulletin No. 80 provides additional information about the Alliance for Community Trees and what it has to offer your community, whether you live in a metropolitan area or a small town. Engagement in the network is sure to pay large dividends in building the capacity and expanding the activities of local citizens and gaining greater support for urban forestry.



Arbor Day Foundation®
100 Arbor Avenue • Nebraska City, NE 68410

Background and History

The Alliance for Community Trees is a new program of the Arbor Day Foundation, but it has evolved through a history of grassroots successes and enthusiasm.



2015 ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION

The Alliance for Community Trees became a program of the Arbor Day Foundation, leveraging the unique strengths of both organizations.

I BELIEVE THIS NEW ALIGNMENT IS AN **OPPORTUNITY**

— and a challenge — for us to raise the profile of urban forests across the nation. Together, we can take our shared core competencies — education, civic engagement, and expanding the tree canopy — and seriously raise them to a higher level.

— RAY TRETHERWAY, SACRAMENTO TREE FOUNDATION

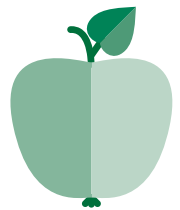


2007 ALLIANCE FOR COMMUNITY TREES DAY

The Alliance for Community Trees network moved their annual meeting to coincide with the Partners in Community Forestry Conference. This important education and peer-to-peer learning event joins municipalities, government agencies, utilities, and others who work with our nation's community forests to discuss current issues, trends, and opportunities.

2013 COMMUNITY GROVES GUIDEBOOK

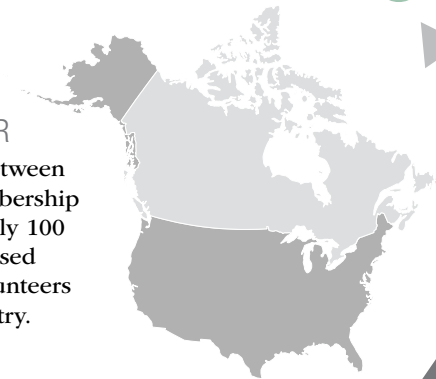
The *Community Groves Guidebook* was created to help communities plan, plant, and maintain fruit and nut tree orchards.



2005 NATIONAL NEIGHBORHOODS MONTH

Originally a partnership formed with the Home Depot Foundation, National NeighborWoods Month encouraged and showcased tree planting and care activities during the month of October. The campaign provides event resources, media, and support to expand tree-planting efforts and volunteer engagement at a local level.

2005 100 MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS Between 2000 and 2005, membership grew to approximately 100 organizations composed mostly of citizen volunteers throughout the country.



1993 LEADERS OF LOCAL TREE ORGANIZATIONS

recognized the need for a national voice representing urban and community forestry. The founders shared a vision of healthy, functioning urban ecosystems nurtured by a broad base of community stewards. As a result, the Alliance for Community Trees was incorporated as a 501c(3) nonprofit organization.



The Alliance for Community Trees at a Glance

Program emphases and details will undoubtedly change with time and the needs of communities. Regardless of direction, partners and sponsorship will always be an important part of the program and an opportunity for corporations and others to provide support that contributes to improving the environment and making life better for urban residents.

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

An important goal of the Alliance for Community Trees is to help professional, nonprofit, and volunteer group leaders become more effective in planning and managing local tree-related projects, develop into more fully recognized and appreciated partners with urban foresters and arborists, work successfully with community residents and businesses, and gain the knowledge and tools to increase financial support for urban forestry. In short, this means building capacity — and that is exactly what the Alliance for Community Trees is all about. Below are specific means toward this goal.

- Peer-to-peer sharing of ideas through networking
- Learning opportunities specific to the needs of the network, including Alliance for Community Trees Day held before the annual Partners in Community Forestry Conference
- Webcasts, an e-newsletter, and social media

RESOURCES AND TOOLS

An abundance of resource material is available to help members teach and promote all aspects of urban forestry.

- The Arbor Day Foundation's wealth of publications, including Tree City USA Bulletins, arborday.org, the Tree Board Handbook, and more
- Alliance for Community Trees publications, including Tree Fact Sheets and the *Community Groves Guidebook*
- Event kits
- Publicity material

SUPPORT

Arbor Day Foundation staff and marketing expertise are available to assist Alliance for Community Trees member organizations. Support includes nonprofit standards for excellence and accountability, volunteer centers, employment opportunities, and partnerships and collaboration.

FOR INFORMATION about engagement and sponsorship opportunities, see page 8.



National NeighborWoods Month

Like Arbor Day and the events that occur in most parts of the country in April, National NeighborWoods Month provides an opportunity to plant trees and otherwise focus public attention on the importance and care of urban and community forests.

Held in October, National NeighborWoods Month is a major focus of the Alliance for Community Trees. With the help of corporate co-sponsors and local businesses, this can be a time for spectacular fall events and the kind of positive public attention that gains support for other projects throughout the year. It is an opportunity for tree boards and hands-on volunteer groups to collaborate; it is also a time to engage elected officials and residents from all parts of the community.

Fall tree planting, pruning, cleanup, festivals, and other events are all ways to celebrate during this special month. Here are just a few recent examples:

- In Francis City, Utah, trees were planted, wood chip mulch refreshed, and understory vegetation in the city park removed.
- At the University of Louisville, a Tree Campus USA, a fall Arbor Day was celebrated with a tree planting and tree tour.
- Habitat was restored at the Citizens for a Better South Florida's historic bungalow in Miami, Florida.
- Coinciding with Make a Difference Day, Friends of Pittman Wash planted native tree species in Henderson, Nevada.
- In Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts, the Emerald Necklace Conservancy sponsored removal of trash and invasive plants from Franklin Park.

HOW THE ALLIANCE FOR COMMUNITY TREES HELPS

In addition to providing national publicity about National NeighborWoods Month and encouraging widespread participation, the Alliance for Community Trees can help by:

- ✓ Providing the kind of resource materials listed on page 3, including event kits.
- ✓ Hosting a website where communities can list their events and interested parties can obtain information.
- ✓ Making available posters, T-shirts, and PDFs on how to plant trees and the benefits of trees.
- ✓ Providing news release templates for local and regional publicity.
- ✓ Sharing information about sources of grants or other financial assistance.
- ✓ Helping with public service announcements and social media.

"Trees Make Good Neighbors" is a theme of Neighborwoods Month that resonates in cities large and small.



IMPACT FROM ONE YEAR'S NEIGHBORWOODS® MONTH

ALL **50** STATES
& CANADA




405

NONPROFIT
ORGANIZATIONS,
PUBLIC AGENCIES,
& OTHER PARTNERS

1000
EVENTS



380 COMMUNITIES
SERVED

55,000 TREES
PLANTED



plus **15,000**
TREES CARED FOR



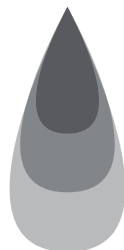
31,000+
VOLUNTEERS

93K 
VOLUNTEER HOURS

\$2M 
VALUE OF DONATED
VOLUNTEER TIME



EACH YEAR,
THESE **55,000 TREES**
ARE ESTIMATED TO:



CAPTURE
24.5 MILLION
GALLONS
OF STORMWATER RUNOFF



DISPOSE OF MORE THAN
700 TONS
OF AIR POLLUTANTS

Alliance for Community Trees Network

More than 180 organizations are currently part of the Alliance for Community Trees network, but there is potential for many more. Organizations represent a wide range of communities and sizes of volunteer groups. The following are examples from three different parts of the country.

SAVANNAH TREE FOUNDATION

The Savannah Tree Foundation serves its community of 150,000 city residents and those living in surrounding areas. Thanks to people dedicated to trees, it developed deep roots in the community and was incorporated in 1982. Throughout the past decades, it has built a legacy of planting trees, rehabilitating parkland, championing the creation of tree-protection ordinances, and saving heritage trees from destruction. In fact, the Foundation claims a number of firsts that have inspired other communities. These include:

- Securing a conservation easement to protect a single tree — the historic Candler Oak — and finding other cutting-edge actions to protect trees.
- Using satellite imaging to document canopy tree changes in an urban area.
- Producing a *State of the Trees Report* to guide urban forest policy at the municipal level.
- Developing an urban forest component in a countywide disaster management plan.

Under the direction of Karen Jenkins, the Foundation's executive director, annual programs include planting trees to increase the percentage of tree canopy cover in the city and county, sponsoring a crew of "Forest Keepers" who help plant and maintain trees, and planning Arbor Day celebrations in early spring and a Fall Frolic Fundraiser in autumn.

"An important benefit of the Alliance for Community Trees is being able to meet others in nonprofits doing similar work under similar circumstances," Jenkins said. "We can all learn from others."

CALIFORNIA URBAN FORESTS COUNCIL

This exemplary statewide organization was formed in 1968 as the first urban forest council in the nation. The Council is an umbrella organization consisting of seven regional councils and, similar to the Alliance for Community Trees on a national scale, its ultimate purpose is to expand and perpetuate sustainable urban and community forests throughout California.

Work of the Council includes training workshops, an annual conference and awards ceremony, promotion of policy decisions that prioritize trees as a way to beautify and sustain healthy cities, and public education about the benefits and care of trees. With drought and energy conservation becoming increasingly important, another model program is California EnerTrees. This is done in collaboration with the Council, local utilities, and the Arbor Day Foundation. It encourages communities to take advantage of the nationwide Energy-Saving Trees program. Assistance in getting local programs underway includes:

- Help setting up a website to market and organize the innovative shade tree program.
- Assistance with branding the program locally and developing an appropriate logo.
- Providing outreach materials to publicize the program.
- Sourcing and delivering trees, if necessary.
- Providing customer service.
- Creating a database to track trees over time.

Nancy Hughes, the executive director of the California Urban Forests Council, has been involved with the Alliance for Community Trees since it began. She is a strong supporter of the program, calling it a great way to "share, learn, and commiserate."

"In our day-to-day work, we can feel isolated," she said. "Having contacts among your peers elsewhere is a real benefit."



Volunteers are at the heart of Savannah Tree Foundation. These tools are ready to be used by the Foundation's "Forest Keepers" and "Forest Stewards." A third group, "Root Workers," helps out with office assistance.

CEDARBURG GREEN

Membership in the Alliance for Community Trees can work to the advantage of communities of all sizes. Cedarburg, Wisconsin — population 11,500 — is a great example. Cedarburg Green was founded in 2011 at the suggestion of the city forester in the Department of Parks, Recreation and Forestry. Despite being relatively new and somewhat small, it has been successful in gaining the support of local residents and businesses to fund its ambitious projects. Some of these include:

- Trees of Distinction Walking Tour. This project included a downloadable, illustrated guide to a 1.25-mile walk past 15 species, including some that predate settlement.
- A beautifully designed and useful online newsletter.
- School programs, documentary film showings, and other educational events.
- An edible forest and fruit gleanings project to help feed people in need.
- The sale of tree seedlings to help reach a goal of 100 percent stocking of streetside planting sites and a fuller, more diverse tree canopy.
- NeighborWoods group projects to control invasive buckthorn trees in the city's parks and other wooded areas.

John Norquist, pastor of Faith Lutheran Church, said that his town has a culture of service. When the idea of an organization to help give a boost to urban forestry was proposed, he attended the initial meeting along with numerous others and helped form the nonprofit. Now he is president of the board that directs its many activities.

"I've always been interested in trees," Norquist said, "and our congregation has a wooded area next to the church that adjoins city park land and an elementary school. We have done work there with church members and neighbors, and it is very fulfilling."

He also notes that membership in the Alliance for Community Trees has provided a wealth of resources.

"I've turned to this many times for strategizing, and it has made us feel part of a nation of similar organizations," he said. "It is wonderful. Very exciting — and fun!"

Please join us for our second...

CEDARBURG GREEN: NEIGHBORWOODS EVENT

Buckthorn OPEN SEASON



Saturday, October 19 • 1-4 pm
Meet at Beechwood Park

Invasive species control is a NeighborWoods event and one of the many projects sponsored by Cedarburg Green.



Engage with the Alliance for Community Trees

The Alliance for Community Trees seeks engaged network organizations along with corporate partnerships. Network members consist of nonprofit organizations, municipalities, and urban forest councils.

NETWORK BENEFITS

- Access to similar organizations working toward sustainable urban forests
- A national voice for the value of trees in our communities
- Interaction, sharing, and learning between colleagues
- Support for National NeighborWoods Month and other projects
- Continuing education and training

PARTNERS

The greatest impact of the Alliance for Community Trees is possible through the financial support of partners in business and industry, foundations, and governments. Partnerships provide public relations benefits and clearly demonstrate to the public a commitment to improving America's communities. Contributors and corporate partners are needed at national and local levels and for specific projects.

For more information about the Alliance for Community Trees, please contact the Arbor Day Foundation's programs team at info@actrees.org.



Members find the Alliance for Community Trees a valuable source of networking that builds professional friendships and organizational capacity.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ...

Please visit arborday.org/bulletins to find links to the organizations featured in this issue and other information.

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