

THE SHADE TREE

A BI-MONTHLY BULLETIN DEVOTED TO NEW JERSEY'S SHADE TREES

Volume 91 – May - June 2018 – Issues 5 & 6

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The Politics of Trees

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Press Release: NJDEP Celebrates Arbor Day

DIRECTOR'S DISCOURSE

By Donna Massa

Plans are currently underway to bring to you the NJ Shade Tree Federation's 93rd Annual Conference. The Conference will be held at The Crowne Plaza in Cherry Hill on Thursday and Friday, October 18th - October 19th. The Executive Board has decided to continue with a Thursday/Friday conference.

We are preparing to offer a dynamic program with renowned speakers who will educate, entertain, and engage you. We welcome our guest speakers Dr. Cecil Konijnendijk van den Bosch from the University of British Columbia – Vancouver, Dr. Richard Rathjens of Davey Institute, Dr. Robert Polomski of Clemson University and Dr. Kathleen Wolfe from the University of Washington, College of the Environment School of Environmental and Forest Sciences, USDA Forest Service, Pacific NW Research Station. We also welcome John Patten of PBI Gordon, Tom Chamberland of the Urban Forest Strike Team, and Rich Leopold, Grad Student from Rutgers the State University. There will certainly be a plethora of individuals with a multitude of talent to share.

Our program this year includes discussions on designing and planning your urban forest to get the most return on your investment, how to deal with roots and sidewalks, the tree growth rate of NJ street trees, the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative in New Jersey, diseases and pests that attack trees after they have been weakened or damaged by storm and the importance of trees to our health. We will also talk about urban tree diversity, the urban strike team, diagnosing soil problems, spotted lanternfly control and the science, politics and art of tree selection. Add to our program our exhibit hall filled with vendors

BULLETIN OF THE NEW JERSEY SHADE TREE FEDERATION

Editor: Richard S. Wolowicz

Executive Director: Donna Massa,

Blake Hall, 93 Lipman Drive, New Brunswick, NJ 08903

Telephone: (732) 246-3210 Fax: (732) 640-5289

e-mail: trees@NJSTF.org

www.njstf.org

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DIRECTOR'S DISCOURSE

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old and new who want to reach out, educate and help you implement your mission.

Join us this year at the Crowne Plaza in Cherry Hill on Friday evening, October 19th as the NJ Shade Tree Federation celebrates 93 years of serving you, the municipalities and tree care professionals throughout the State of New Jersey. There will be giveaways, door prizes, and entertainment as we recognize individuals who have excelled in the industry.

Look for more detail on the upcoming conference via our website at njstf.org and in upcoming issues of "The Shade Tree." Plan now to attend the entire conference. We look forward to seeing everyone there. Your time will be well spent. You'll walk away enlightened.

THE POLITICS OF TREES

By Michael Aaron Rockland

Everybody loves trees. They're beautiful, they provide shade, they can reduce energy bills and they clean the air, taking out poisonous carbon dioxide and emitting fresh oxygen for us to breathe. Everybody loves trees, right? Wrong.

Or so I've discovered serving as a member of the Shade Tree Commission in my New Jersey town. The six-member commission, appointed by our mayor, decides on the planting of street trees, which sit on that strip of grass between the sidewalk and the curb, or if there's no sidewalk, within the first four feet of a lawn.

People think they own that land. They are wrong.

An irate neighbor phoned and asked, "You on that damned Shade Tree Commission?"

I told him that I was.

"Well what right do you have planting a tree on my land?"

As courteously as I could, I told him that where we had planted the

tree was public land.

“Yeah,” he said, “then how come I have to water and seed and mow it?” I started to tell him that the same was true of his sidewalk, where he was responsible for shoveling off snow even though it was town property, but he’d hung up.

Next time I passed his house I noticed all that remained of that infant tree was a 2-inch stump. Our commission discovered that there was no ordinance making it a crime to cut down a public tree. The Town Council soon changed that, and another tree was planted in front of the man’s house. He no longer speaks to me.

The experience pales in comparison with a run-in I had with another neighbor. She appeared before the Shade Tree Commission demanding that a huge oak tree in front of her house, providing shade to everyone on her street, be taken down so she could build a driveway, thereby increasing the value of her home.

I voted no. I figured saving a great tree was more important than helping a woman make money on a driveway. This is especially true now, because all of the ash trees in our town, and across America, are under deadly attack from the emerald ash borer—a beetle introduced from Asia. For a while, we may be taking down as many trees as we plant, about 80 a year.

But back to that woman and her tree. Some months later, I had purchased a latte in a local coffee shop and, it being a lovely day, decided to enjoy it outside. Two women were seated at a single table there. I asked if I might pull aside one of their unoccupied chairs.

“No, you may not,” one woman said.

I thought she was joking—but when I reached for the chair, the woman screamed, “Don’t touch that chair! You voted against taking down the tree.” Only then did I realize she was the driveway woman.

She wasn’t finished. “All trees in town should be taken down,” she declared. “Trees fall on houses, on cars, on people. They’re a menace.”

I thought of reciting aloud to the woman the first two lines of New Jersey poet Joyce Kilmer’s “Trees.”

I think that I shall never see a poem lovely as a tree...

SPRING PLANTING SEASON: SELECT THE RIGHT TREE

Selection of trees for planting in a home landscape depends on the desired effect and the purpose the trees will satisfy in the landscape, explains Tchukki Andersen, staff arborist with the Tree Care Industry Association.

“Will they attract birds to the area?” she asks, “Shade a patio? Screen an unsightly view? Enhance the appearance of the home? Identify an entrance or exit? Trees should provide contrast and relief from surrounding buildings and create seasonal interest in areas near the home,” says Andersen.

TCIA advises homeowners to consider the following factors when selecting a tree:

- Hardiness (ability of the plant to survive extremes of winter cold and summer heat);
- Mature height and spread; • Growth rate; • Cleanliness; • Type of root system;
- Moisture and fertilizer requirements; • Space available;
- Maintenance requirements; • Availability;
- Ornamental effects, such as branching habit, texture, and color of bark, flower, fruit and foliage; and whether the tree is evergreen or deciduous.

A professional tree care company can help you determine which tree species both performs well in your local area and is suited to your desired planting site. Arborists often do a close analysis of the specific planting site to determine the susceptibility or resistance to environmental conditions, such as:

- Disease and insect problems that may limit your selections,
- The prior use of the planting site,
- Soil conditions, such as poor drainage, and high or low pH,
- The presence or absence of channelized winds,
- The location of utilities, both above and below ground, because they are site conditions that dictate plant choice and location, and
- The relationship of the plant to roads walkways and security lighting.

Is the enough space to plant a tree?

The space available at the specific site and mature tree size are important considerations and addressing these limits will go a long way toward reducing maintenance costs. Do not plant trees that will grow 25 feet or taller under or near overhead power lines. Do not forget the underground utilities. Out-of-sight does not mean that they would not have to be serviced at some point. Permanent plantings such as the trees should be spaced to allow utility service. Ground-level utility structures such as transformers and individual service connections require space to be serviced. A minimum of 10 feet clearance after the tree has grown to maturity will help avoid any possible electrical hazards.

Where to plant

Community ordinance may restrict planting of trees near power lines, parking strips, street lights, sewers, traffic control signs and signals, sidewalks and property lines. Municipalities may require planting permits for trees planted on city property. City codes often require that trees on city property be maintained by the city, so citizens planting an improper selection can cause problems for themselves and the municipality.

This information is brought to you by the NJ Board of Tree Experts and the Tree Care Industry Association.



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Instead, I improved my spirits by muttering to myself that old saying, “No good deed goes unpunished.”

Despite these incidents, I enjoy serving on the Shade Tree Commission. It’s fulfilling and even the flak I get is as amusing as it is painful. When it happens, I remember that the most engaging politics is local. And what could be more local than planting a tree?

DEP CELEBRATES ARBOR DAY WITH CEREMONY SPOTLIGHTING EFFORTS TO PROTECT TREES AND RESTORE THEM TO URBAN COMMUNITIES

The Department of Environmental Protection’s Division of Parks and Forestry celebrated Arbor Day with tree plantings and an awards ceremony in Riverton spotlighting efforts across the state to grow healthy, safe, and resilient urban and community forests.

The ceremony highlighted the Burlington County borough’s 30th year as a Tree City USA. It also recognized the commitment by numerous communities and individuals to ensure healthy populations of trees, including efforts to restore trees to the state’s urban areas.

“Arbor Day gives us an excellent opportunity to appreciate the trees that clean our water and air, cool our cities, and beautify our communities,” DEP Deputy Commissioner Debbie Mans said during the ceremony at the borough’s Memorial Park. “This celebration – and all the Earth Week events we’ve been celebrating across the state this week – remind us of the importance of trees to a healthy environment.”

Riverton was selected to host the DEP’s annual Arbor Day celebration in recognition of its participation in the New Jersey Urban Community Forestry program and the borough’s 30th year as a Tree City USA. The goal of urban forestry is to ensure that urbanized communities have healthy and sustainable forests that provide numerous environmental and quality-of-life benefits.

The Tree City USA program coordinated by the nonprofit Arbor Day Foundation recognizes efforts to conserve and enhance trees in thousands of communities across the nation. New Jersey ranks among the nation’s leaders in numbers of communities in the program.

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The fastest growing segment of the tree care industry is liquid tree fertilization and Doggett is leading the way. The spectacular growth in this field has come from the fact that the fertilizing method that helps trees the most also helps tree care companies the most.

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Students from the Riverton School's third- and fifth-grade classes participated in the ceremony. The trees were provided by the New Jersey Forest Nursery's Third Grade Tree Program.

The borough of about one square mile along the Delaware River was also selected to celebrate its accomplishments in developing a sustainable tree canopy through species diversity. The municipality boasts more than 2,600 trees of 166 different species on municipally owned property alone. The New Jersey Tree Foundation's Green Streets Program crew helped Riverton plant 15 species of trees along borough streets as well as at Riverton Memorial Park. Species included red maple, American elm, swamp white oak, sugar maple and flowering cherry.

In addition to recognizing Riverton's decades of accomplishments, this Arbor Day marks the 20th anniversary of the New Jersey Tree Foundation, a statewide nonprofit organization dedicated to planting trees in New Jersey's urban neighborhoods.

"A diverse urban community forest significantly decreases vulnerability to climate change, extreme weather, and forest diseases and pests such as the emerald ash borer, a beetle that is having devastating impacts on ash trees in New Jersey," said State Forester John Sacco. "Of Riverton's thousands of trees on municipal land, only 71 are ash. This not only makes conserving healthy ash trees more affordable, it ensures that Riverton is able to sustain an urban forest canopy."

"Over the past two decades, the New Jersey Tree Foundation has had a hand in planting more than 204,000 trees across the state, from community-based volunteer projects to those contracted through our Green Street Program," said Lisa Simms, Executive Director of the New Jersey Tree Foundation. "Through planting of trees and the fostering of volunteerism through strong partnerships, the New Jersey Tree Foundation has been an important partner in helping communities improve their environment and the quality of life for their residents."

"Arbor Day is an opportune time to recognize towns, like Riverton, that have done an exemplary job of ensuring that this community has a healthy and diverse population of trees," said Senator Troy Singleton (7th District). "We all know that trees are so very important to our air quality, our water systems, and our overall environment."

Arbor Day gives us an excellent opportunity to appreciate the trees that clean our water and air, cool our cities, and beautify our communities. This

celebration – and all the Earth Week events we’ve been celebrating across the state this week – remind us of the importance of trees to a healthy to a healthy environment.

However, they also provide a picturesque background to this already extraordinary town. When you walk, bike or even drive around Riverton, you can't help but be impressed by their beautiful tree-lined streets.”

“I am proud to support Riverton in continuing its longstanding commitment to conservation,” said Assemblywoman Carol Murphy (7th District). “Their efforts prove that towns can play a vital role in implementing environmental initiatives.”

“Our picturesque community is made even more so by the beautiful trees throughout town and at Riverton Memorial Park,” Mayor Suzanne Cairns Wells said. “Trees not only contribute to our overall wellness in producing oxygen and providing shade, but also in providing us with a sense of history and community pride, a place where memories are made and stories are told. Our trees are a critical and much-loved part of Riverton.”

During the ceremony, the DEP presented the prestigious Joyce Kilmer Award for Outstanding Contributions to Urban and Community Forests to Roni Olizi, founding board member of the New Jersey Tree Foundation and founding member of the New Jersey Community Forestry Council. In addition, Recognition of Service awards were given to Olizi, Elizabeth Lilleston and Richard Wolowicz for their many years of service on the New Jersey Community Forestry Council. During the event, the following municipalities were recognized for reaching Tree City USA milestones:

- First-year recipients: Allentown, East Greenwich, Hopewell Township (Mercer County), Manville, North Wildwood, Old Bridge and Saddle River.
- 10-year recipients: Delanco, Franklin Lakes, Marlboro, Pompton Lakes, Ridgefield and Stanhope.
- 20-year recipients: Bayonne, Caldwell, Florence, Glen Ridge, Howell, Shrewsbury, Stone Harbor and West Cape May.
- 30-year recipients: Cranbury, Interlaken, Pennington and Riverton.
- 40-year recipients: East Brunswick and Merchantville.

In addition, the Tree Line USA award was presented to Atlantic City Electric. This Arbor Day Foundation award recognizes utilities for implementing best practices in maintaining trees along power transmission lines and on campuses. Fairleigh Dickinson University was honored with the

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Celebrating Arbor Day in New Jersey dates to the late 19th century. Then in 1949, the Legislature designated the last Friday in April as the state’s official celebration of Arbor Day to promote tree planting and encourage residents to appreciate them.

In addition to Arbor Day activities to celebrate New Jersey’s trees, an ongoing tree seedling distribution campaign continues statewide through Sunday, May 6. The New Jersey Tree Recovery Campaign, a partnership between the DEP’s New Jersey Forest Service and the Arbor Day Foundation, is distributing some 90,000 free tree seedlings to New Jersey residents at more than 100 locations across the state.

To find a seedling distribution location in your community and to learn more about trees, visit the New Jersey Forest Service Facebook page and website: www.facebook.com/newjerseyforests and www.forestry.nj.gov.

For more information on the New Jersey Urban Community Forestry program and becoming a Tree City USA, visit: www.communityforestry.nj.gov.

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HELP US TO SAVE SOME MORE TREES!

By Donna Massa, Executive Director

In an effort to reduce paper (AND SAVE MORE TREES!) we are transitioning from sending a "paper/hard" copy of this bi-monthly publication to sending "The Shade Tree" electronically via email to our members.

If we have your email in our database, you can expect to receive upcoming issues by email. You will no longer receive a "paper/hard" copy of the bi-monthly publication. If we do not have an email address for you, kindly provide one when your 2018 membership renewal roster is completed and returned to our office. Alternatively, you may send an email to trees@njstf.org requesting that your email become part of our database. For those who have already elected to receive an electronic version of "The Shade Tree", THANK YOU! For those who want to continue to receive a paper/hard copy of "The Shade Tree" through regular mail, you must advise the office of such in writing. As we transition, you may receive both a paper/hard copy as well as an electronic version for a brief period. Kindly be understanding as we strive to make the transition as accurate as possible.

Thanks in advance for your cooperation and patience as we implement this transition and SAVE SOME MORE TREES!

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