



TREE CITY USA[®] BULLETIN 2012 ANNUAL REPORT

Dr. James R. Fazio, Editor • \$3.00

Innovators, Leaders and Collaboration



Mark Tracht

Luray, Virginia, is a good example of innovation, leadership and collaboration. The results have gone beyond urban forestry and the creation of parks to even wider community improvements and economic development.

An innovator is a person or organization that is one of the first to introduce something new or improved. Innovators push the boundaries of established ways. They present ideas that depart from the past and show promise for the future. J. Sterling Morton, the nineteenth century founder of Arbor Day, is a classic example of an innovator. His idea for promoting tree planting was certainly novel, and its impact has been felt worldwide. "Other holidays repose upon the past," he said. "Arbor Day proposes for the future."

Similarly, the founders of the Tree City USA program in 1976 introduced an idea to bring continuous, systematic tree planting and care to cities of all sizes nationwide. From the original 42 communities that earned Tree City USA awards that first year to the 3,437 that now share the honor, this innovative program has had a positive impact on the lives of millions of Americans.

Innovators are essential to progress and growth. So are leaders, who may or may not also be innovators. Leaders are the men and women who recognize a good idea, enlist the support of others in its behalf, and guide effective implementation.

In every community that flies the Tree City USA flag there are leaders who have made that achievement possible. Moreover, their influence goes far beyond the borders of their own city, county or military base. Neighboring communities often rely on the expertise of Tree City USA urban foresters and their tree boards. According to John Rosenow, chief executive of the Arbor Day Foundation, "I have noticed that Tree City USA communities are viewed as urban forestry leaders, experts and innovators in their states and regions. The core standards of the Tree City USA program encourage citizen input through tree boards, help gain financial support for a tree program, and focus on long-range planning. The successes enjoyed by these communities are evident in healthier tree canopies, an educated and supportive public, and emergency preparedness."

In this issue of the annual report, examples are presented that highlight innovations and leadership in Tree City USA communities, and what is possible when collaboration is used to gain support for good ideas.

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Communities Leading the Way

From throughout the United States, here are some examples of communities that are benefiting from innovators and motivated leadership. In all cases, collaboration and partnerships are the keys to gaining support for good ideas and transforming vision into action.

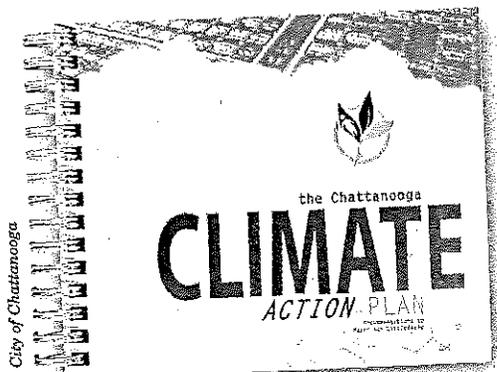
Chattanooga, Tennessee *Planning for Climate Protection*

In 2006, Chattanooga's Mayor Ron Littlefield was one of the first municipal leaders to sign the U.S. Conference of Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement. Unlike some events of this nature, this one was more than simply a photo op. Chattanooga took the challenge seriously. The mayor promptly appointed a committee of citizens to find ways that his city – once called by Walter Cronkite "the most polluted city in America" – could become a leader in sustainability. Toward that end, the Chattanooga Green Committee, chaired by city forester Gene Hyde, produced a comprehensive *Climate Action Plan*.

The 123-page document was created through a combination of data-based studies such as an analysis of the city's carbon footprint; research into what other communities were doing; advice from subject matter experts; and ideas and opinions expressed by citizens throughout the process. The result was a series of recommended action items in 47 categories under four broad headings: Energy Efficiency, Healthy Communities, Natural Resources, and Education & Policy. Trees stood out as a prominent part of the plan under every heading. Here are some examples (with explanations of 'why' for each one included in the plan but not shown here):

Green Infrastructure

- Objective K1:** Expand the network of effective green infrastructure through the city and region.
- How:** Identify and map existing open space and opportunities for future acquisition. Establish incentives for developers to dedicate new land as public open space.
- Objective K2:** Provide green infrastructure within walking distance of homes and businesses...

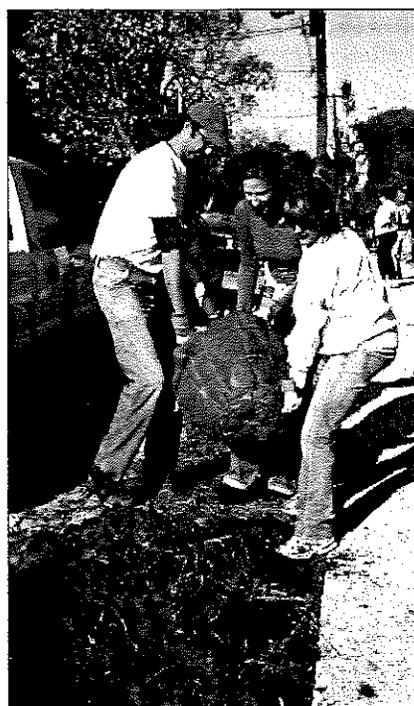


Urban and Regional Forests

- Objective L:** Expand and maintain healthy urban and regional forests.
- How:** Expand the 'Take Root Initiative' [a tree-planting and tree-care partnership between the urban forester, volunteers and the University of Tennessee] to new areas of the community. Analyze the Landscape Ordinance to increase the number of trees in new developments, renovations and parking lots...

Water Quality and Quantity

- Objective M:** Improve current water quality and protect water quality.
- How:** ... Establish Low Impact Development as the best management practice to reduce runoff volume... Preserve the 100-year flood zone and riparian zones in a naturally healthy state.



Chattanooga's plan resulted in a new Office of Sustainability within city government to help carry out recommendations for a greener, healthier living environment. Through leadership of the urban forester and other dedicated city officials, bridges of cooperation were built to enlist the support and assistance of volunteers, including the work of the community's 'Take Root' organization.

Santa Monica, California

Partnerships Help Clear the Air

Like the leadership in Chattanooga, Santa Monica's urban forester, Walt Warriner, sees air quality as a crucial issue today. He also sees that trees have the potential to remove particulate matter, soak up toxic chemicals and sequester carbon. When U.S. Forest Service researchers asked for help in their pioneering studies to quantify the amount of carbon removed and stored by trees, Santa Monica offered cooperation and planted 1,000 native trees that will be monitored and measured for years to come. Species were selected following guidelines in the city's management plan to provide biodiversity and plant only trees that have low ratings for the production of biogenic volatile organic compound emissions (a contributor to air pollution in hot climates). The resulting data will help perfect calculations used in other cities with the same climatic conditions.

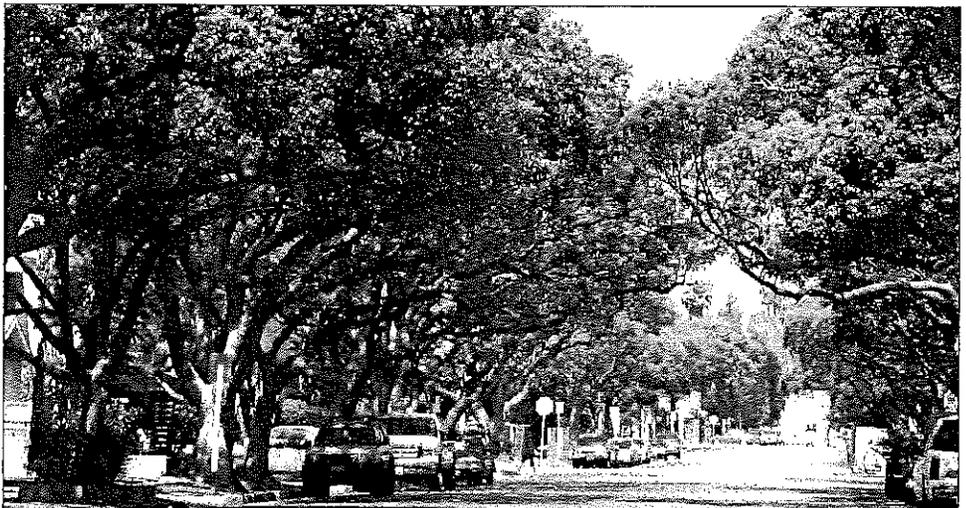
After receiving a grant from the South Coast Air Quality Management District to purchase the new trees, Walt recruited planting assistance from a large number of volunteers. This partnership provides a multiple-win situation for all the partners, and especially for the residents of Santa Monica.

Boy Scout Josh Lappen organized part of Santa Monica's planting effort. As reported in the Santa Monica Daily Press, "The trees represent the intersection of national policy and local achievement as part of both a federal pilot project to study the carbon sequestering potential of the urban forest and the culmination of one Santa Monica's journey to attain the highest title available to him - Eagle Scout."



Professionals with West Coast Arborists teamed up with youngsters to plant trees on Arbor Day.

Walt Warriner, Community Forester, City of Santa Monica



Santa Monica's forest management plan includes planting trees to enhance the environmental benefits provided by the established canopy.

Walt Warriner, Community Forester, City of Santa Monica



Photo by Brandon Wise

Rochester, Minnesota

RNeighbors Help Get it Done

"We are very blessed in Rochester to have an amazing city forester and a strong partnership between (him and) RNeighbors," says Rene Jones Lafflam, executive director of the local volunteer group.

As we investigated innovation and leadership in Tree City USA communities nationwide, the common thread in progressive cities was urban foresters working in partnership with others. RNeighbors in Rochester is an excellent example of the ideal relationship and what can be accomplished. RNeighbors is a parent organization that works in close association with City Forester Jacob Ryg. Together, their goals include action on a neighborhood by neighborhood basis "to plan, plant, and manage trees, in order to catalyze city-wide improvement of the urban forest." Here are some of the results:

① A 'Citizen Foresters' class each spring and fall is conducted to teach new volunteers about proper planting and tree care. More than 115 volunteers have been trained and trees costing \$150,000 have been added to Rochester. The mature value of the trees has been estimated to be \$1.5 million. The value of pruning, mulching and other tree care practices conducted by RNeighbors – priceless!

② In addition to the above, each spring and fall a large community tree planting is sponsored. In 2012, more than 500 volunteers were mobilized to plant 1,200 boulevard trees. Funding comes from various sources, including street renovation project budgets.

③ Each spring and fall two neighborhood grants of 25 trees are given out. To qualify, the neighborhoods must meet listed criteria, including having Citizen Foresters and neighbors assist with the planting.



Courtesy of RNeighbors

The support and assistance of volunteers is the common thread evidenced in communities with active, progressive tree programs. Residents in Rochester, Minnesota, can become Citizen Foresters or just help out for a day of planting.

"We're very blessed in Rochester to have an amazing city forester and a strong partnership between (him and) RNeighbors."

– Rene Jones Lafflam, executive director of RNeighbors

④ A program has been initiated to recognize outstanding volunteers through annual presentations of the Mayor's Urban Forestry Volunteer Awards.

Value Added

According to statistics by ACTrees, for every \$1 a city invests in trees, it receives benefits of up to \$3.47. For more information about ACTrees, visit actrees.org.

Seattle, Washington

Keeping the Emerald City Green

Seattle, along with its nearby communities, is one of the most vibrant cities in the nation. Its urban forestry program is very much in keeping with Seattle's reputation for innovation, youthful energy and futuristic thinking. Urban Forester Mark Mead is proud of his city's accomplishments and they stand as a model for action through collaboration.

The Green Seattle Partnership

This public/private partnership includes the city's Parks and Recreation Department, Office of Sustainability and Environment, Seattle Public Utilities, and Forterra (formerly Cascade Land Conservancy). Governed by a 9-member executive council appointed by the mayor, and supported by businesses, nonprofits and thousands of community volunteers, its goal is to create a sustainable network of healthy forested parklands that are supported by an aware, engaged community. Last year, the first 'Green Seattle Partnership Shareholders Meeting' was held to celebrate accomplishments and brainstorm for the future. The record showed that in one year 86,000 volunteers were devoted

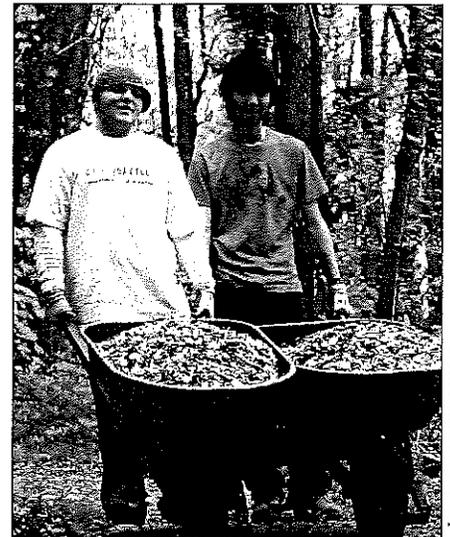
to: removing invasive plants; planting over 60,000 native trees and shrubs; maintaining 730 acres of restored land while adding an additional 120 acres of native forest parcels and other urban open spaces; and creating ever-widening circles of educated, dedicated stewards.

The catalyst for Green Seattle Partnerships was the result of Forterra's Green City Partnerships program. Creating partnerships for forest and open space stewardship is its primary goal and to date the idea has spread to the cities of Tacoma, Kirkland, Redmond, Kent and Everett.

Tree Ambassadors

This new program is a joint venture between Seattle's Utility, Transportation, Parks and Sustainability Departments. The focus of Tree Ambassadors is at the neighborhood level. Residents are empowered as stewards of the urban forest and are trained in the basics of urban forestry, leadership and community organizing. These volunteers develop projects such as tree planting, tree walks, and invasive species removal work days. In a related program, Trees for Neighbor-

hoods, 1,000 trees were distributed for planting in yards and along streets. Distribution was based on the city's Urban Forest Management Plan goal of increasing overall canopy to 30 percent by maintaining or restoring canopy cover. This effort was accompanied by educational outreach about planting, watering and pruning.



Green Seattle Partnership

In many of Seattle's projects, youth provide muscle power and in return gain exposure to nature and an understanding of tree stewardship.

Luray, Virginia

Doing, then Sharing with Others

Luray could be the poster child for effective urban forestry and action on behalf of trees and greenspace. With a population of only 5,000, Luray can claim more than 300 acres of award-winning parks and has received a Growth Award for 6 of the 12 years it has been a Tree City USA. Moreover, the success of this community in transforming a town eyesore and polluted creek into a clean, popular greenway has attracted a steady stream of observers from other communities

and even Washington, DC. "The most frequently asked questions have been 'how did we get it completed so quickly and how did we fund it,'" says D. Patrick O'Brien, director of parks and recreation.

For the full story of how Luray cleaned up its waterway and provided an outstanding recreational resource that led to numerous other community improvements, please visit arborday.org/luray.

Following a Plan

Seattle's urban forestry activities are carefully planned and monitored annually. A published progress report shows goals, accompanying objectives and lead department, and accomplishments. It also includes a scoreboard for achieving the city's policy of planting 2 trees for each one removed. For 2011, the count was:

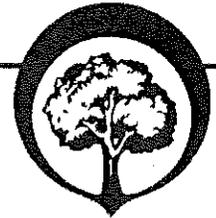
City-wide tree planting total: 2,634
City-wide tree removals total: 734
New gain or loss: 1,900 gain

Tree City USA Awards – and Beyond

Tree City USA is a key component in the Arbor Day Foundation's mission – 'to inspire people to plant, nurture, and celebrate trees.' The Tree City USA program helps by providing guidance and recognition for municipalities, counties and military bases to not only plant more trees, but to work toward safer, healthier urban forests. Four time-tested requirements form the foundation for this program: (1) A tree board or department, (2) A tree care ordinance, (3) A community forestry program with an annual budget of at least \$2 per capita, and (4) An Arbor Day observance and proclamation.

Tree City Growth Awards

The nation's 444 communities that display this award have gone beyond the four basic requirements of Tree City USA. They have enhanced their local program by completing activities in four categories: (1) Education and Public Relations, (2) Partnerships, (3) Planning and Management, and (4) Tree Planting and Maintenance. Points are assigned to potential activities and a community must show evidence of obtaining at least ten points in the previous year to receive this award.



TREE CITY USA®

Sterling Communities

Sterling Communities are those that achieve the Tree City USA Growth Award ten years in a row. Receiving this award demonstrates extraordinary determination for improvement and innovation. This year, for the first time, 11 of these special communities have doubled the goal and received the Growth Award for 20 years in a row.

| | | | | | |
|---------------------------|----|------------------------------|----|----------------------------|----|
| Daphne, Alabama | 20 | Urbana, Illinois | 20 | Gering, Nebraska | 20 |
| Mountain Brook, Alabama | | Palos Hills, Illinois | | Paramus, New Jersey | 20 |
| Scottsdale, Arizona | 20 | Country Club Hills, Illinois | | Stafford, New Jersey | 20 |
| Lake Havasu City, Arizona | | Wheeling, Illinois | | Roswell, New Mexico | |
| Windsor, Colorado | 20 | Westmont, Illinois | | New Bern, North Carolina | |
| Durango, Colorado | 20 | Clinton, Iowa | 20 | Ardmore, Oklahoma | |
| Fort Carson, Colorado | | Centerville, Iowa | | La Grande, Oregon | 20 |
| Hollywood, Florida | | Story City, Iowa | | Allen, Texas | |
| St. Augustine, Florida | 20 | Lawrence, Kansas | 20 | Luray, Virginia | |
| Deland, Florida | | Wellesley, Massachusetts | | Algoma, Wisconsin | |
| Mount Prospect, Illinois | | Chesterfield, Missouri | | Parkersburg, West Virginia | |

Tree Campus USA

This relatively new member of the Tree City USA family saw its numbers more than double from last year. There are now 152 institutions of higher learning that have earned a Tree Campus USA award. The purpose of this category is to improve tree planting and care on college and university campuses and to create awareness about trees and tree care in tomorrow's leaders.

Tree Line USA

Public and private utilities are recognized with the Tree Line USA award when they meet guidelines for community tree care both above and below ground. This year, 146 utilities met the requirements that fall under three categories:

- ① Quality Tree Care
- ② Annual Worker Training
- ③ Tree Planting and Public Education

For more information...

To find out if your community is the recipient of any of the awards for which lists are too lengthy to include here, and to obtain details or applications, please visit arborday.org.

Triple Crown Communities

The following communities have attained the highest level of award possible through the Arbor Day Foundation. Triple Crown communities have met the standards for a Tree City USA award and are also served by a Tree Line USA utility and are home to a college or university that has attained a Tree Campus USA award! Listed below, in alphabetic order by state, are the Tree City USA communities along with their Tree Line USA utility and Tree Campus USA partners.

Tree City USA

Anchorage, AK
 Washington, DC
 Ocala, Florida
 Orlando, Florida
 Tampa, Florida
 Atlanta, Georgia
 Cedar Rapids, Iowa
 Des Moines, Iowa
 Chicago, Illinois
 Bowling Green, Kentucky
 New Orleans, Louisiana
 St. Louis, Missouri
 Lincoln, Nebraska
 Omaha, Nebraska
 Syracuse, New York
 Cleveland, Tennessee
 Austin, Texas
 Dallas, Texas
 Houston, Texas
 Tacoma, Washington
 Vancouver, Washington

Tree Line USA

Chugach Electric Association, Inc.
 PEPCO
 Ocala Utility Service
 Orlando Utilities Commission
 Tampa Electric
 Georgia Power Company
 ITC Midwest
 MidAmerican Energy Company
 ComEd (An Exelon Co.)
 Bowling Green Municipal Utilities
 Entergy Corp
 Ameren
 LES
 OPPD
 National Grid USA
 Cleveland Utilities
 Austin Energy
 Oncor Electric Delivery
 Center Point Energy
 Tacoma Power
 Tacoma Power/Clark Public Utilities

Tree Campus USA

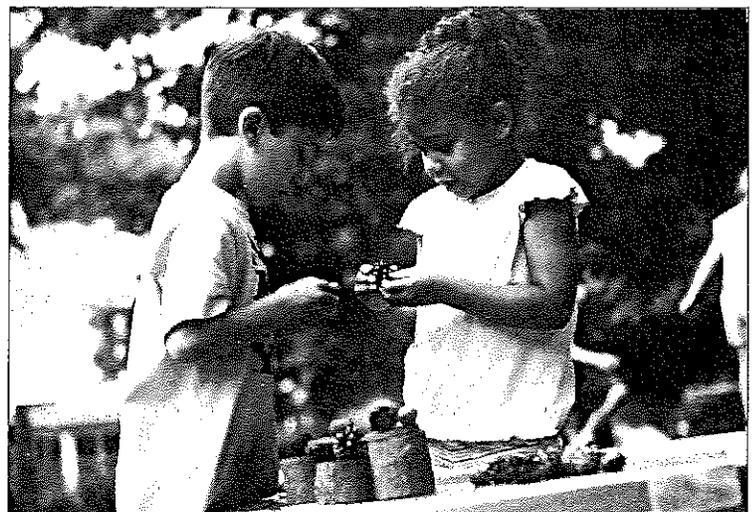
University of Alaska Anchorage
 American University & The Catholic University of America
 College of Central Florida
 Valencia College & University of Central Florida
 University of South Florida
 Emory University & Georgia Tech
 Kirkwood Community College
 Drake University
 Chicago State University, Wilbur Wright College, Univ. of Illinois at Chicago
 Western Kentucky University
 Tulane University
 Washington University at St. Louis
 Nebraska Wesleyan University & University of Nebraska – Lincoln
 Creighton University & University of Nebraska – Omaha
 State Univ. of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry
 Cleveland State Community College
 University of Texas – Austin
 Dallas Baptist University
 Rice University & Texas Southern University
 Pacific Lutheran University
 Clark College



A Collaborative Project of
 Arbor Day Foundation and
 Dimensions Educational Research Foundation

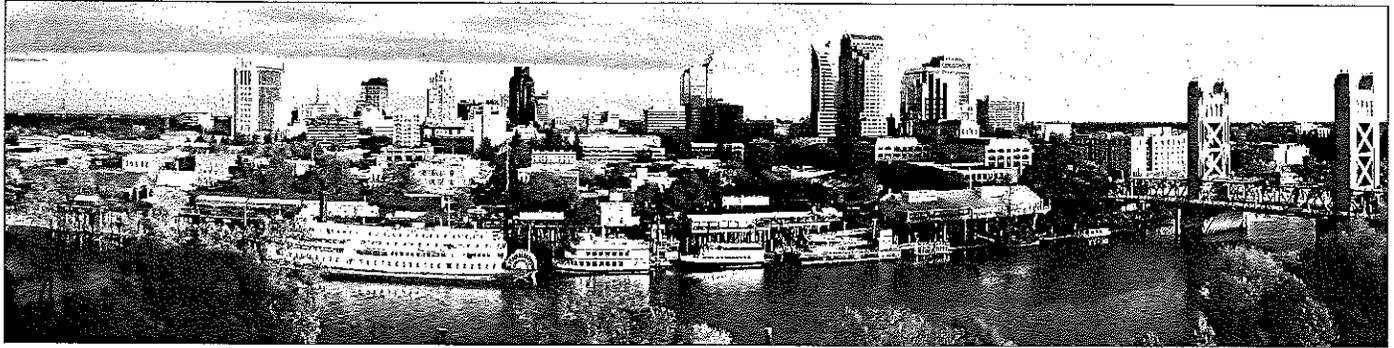
Nature Explore Classrooms

Although not a Tree City USA related program, Nature Explore is a collaboration between the Arbor Day Foundation and Dimensions Educational Research Foundation to introduce the next generation to nature. Through this first step may come stewardship of our urban forests and other natural resources in the future. An important component of this program is certification of research-based, field-tested Nature Explore Classrooms. There are now 128 of these special places. Helping to create certified Classrooms in our communities is an excellent project for tree boards and an activity that merits points toward the Tree City USA Growth Award. Details about this program can be found at natureexplore.org.



Environmental stewards of tomorrow must be introduced to nature today.

Join Your Colleagues in Sacramento



Michael Pich

The Sacramento Convention Center in beautiful Sacramento will be headquarters for the 2012 Partners in Community Forestry National Conference. Sacramento has been a Tree City USA community for 35 years and is home to innovative organizations such as the Sacramento Municipal Utility District and the Sacramento Tree Foundation.

If you have not yet registered for the 2012 Partners in Community Forestry National Conference, now is the time to do it. Professional and lay leadership from around the nation will gather November 14 – 16 in California's capital city to share experiences and hear from many of urban forestry's top innovators and leaders. This annual conference is an excellent opportunity for personal growth, networking and earning credits toward arborist certification continuing education. Exhibits and local field tours will also be part of this important event. Those who should not miss this opportunity are:

- Urban foresters
- State and federal urban forestry leaders
- Municipal and commercial arborists
- Utility arborists and vegetation managers
- Tree board members
- Nonprofit environmental and tree planting groups
- Planners and landscape architects
- Consultants
- Educators and students
- Elected officials and community advocates
- Wildlife, watershed and public health specialists

For more information and to register, please visit arborday.org/pcf.



TREE CITY USA

Did You Know?

Despite our stagnant economy and other widespread distractions, communities still care about their trees. Once again, the number of Tree City USA communities rose during the past year and included several counties and military bases as well as cities of all sizes. The smallest is a military unit, Surface Combat Systems Center, Virginia, with a population of 49. The largest is New York City with 8,175,130 residents.

Number of Tree City USA communities in 2011.....3,447
 Number of new Tree City USA communities.....96
 Number of Growth Award recipients.....444
 People living in Tree City USA communities...137,769,875

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| Add New Dimensions to Learning (DVD) | \$19.99 | <input type="text"/> |
| Complete Bulletin Set (in 3-ring binders) | \$99.00 | <input type="text"/> |
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| Tree City USA Recertification Application | Free | <input type="text"/> |
| Nature Explore Resource Guide | Free | <input type="text"/> |
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