

Richmond Tree Steward News

July
2011



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June was a busy month, primarily because of our community outreach efforts. Here are some of our accomplishments...

- Links to posts on our website on many neighborhood blogs
- Tree steward Louise Seals on Channel 8 News
- Article on Richmond.com
- Arborist Mike Mather on Channel 12 News followed by Tree Stewards on Call 12
- Several stewards are delivered flyers to homes where there is a new tree. (This is continuing in July.)
- “Three Ways to Water Trees” video was produced by Dave McMahon. The link is on our website .
- And we have had over 1,800 views on our website in June alone.
- Also, some of our stewards with water truck training are taking care of the trees planted with our Arbor Day funds and other trees in parks.

Our contacts in the community have resulted in some inspiring stories from citizens who have been trying to help. There are folks hauling water in buckets and pregnant women pulling garden hoses down the sidewalk to see if they can reach the next tree!

So what do we do now? Talk to your neighbors, speak at your neighborhood organization, deliver flyers where there are trees in need. More media exposure would be wonderful. Many citizens seem willing to help, but they are sometimes not aware of the need or they need some instruction on how to water. Thanks for all you’ve done so far and please keep up the good work.



**This page and the next are from the June newsletter,
but this information is well worth repeating!
Getting water to new trees may be even more critical in the coming months.
Remember that trees planted last year need water too.**

How to Water 2,000 Trees

Richmond has about 2,000 new trees on public property and the only way to water 2,000 trees is with lots of help! That is why we are beginning a project to encourage citizens to water the tree in front of their home, business or church.

**Every Steward can take part in this project simply by helping to spread the word.
This is what you need to do to make our project a success:**

- Read these two pages on our website - "Save a Tree" and "Summer Tree Care"
- Also read "Talking Points for Tree Stewards" on page two of this newsletter and posted in the Steward Tool Kit on the website.
- Be familiar with all this information so that you can talk to others.
- Help spread the word in your neighborhood, at work, at church or anywhere near a new tree.
- Check the Steward Tool Kit page to download our flyer.
- Subscribe to our website so that you will receive updates on watering throughout the summer. You may want to share these with friends.
- Questions...contact slyon10@yahoo.com

Project: How To Water 2,000 Trees
Tagline: Only YOU Can Save a Tree

Talking points for tree stewards

The city planted 2,000 trees this last year, 500 of those through the Adopt A Tree program.

Adopt a Tree Program Basics – Citizens pay \$50 for a tree and agree to water & take care of the tree for 2 years. There is a link on our website for those that want more information.

The other 1,500 trees do not have someone committed to care for them.

The City of Richmond may have funds to water trees, but there will not be enough funding to water trees at anywhere near ideal levels (this would cost more than the tree plantings themselves did). The watering that is done by the city will concentrate on locations where volunteers cannot safely water such as in medians and also on some major streets where many trees are planted.

For individual citizens to take on watering large numbers of trees is a very big commitment. This is frequently a much larger undertaking than people assume it will be. Therefore, it may be more realistic to find ways to have a large number of citizens commit to watering one or two trees.

To have a good watering program, citizen assistance is critical.

Tree stewards are starting a “How to Water 2,000 Trees” project to inform and encourage citizens to water the new street tree in front of their home, church or business. This would include trees planted this year and last.

Information on our website includes how to water tree, how often to water and other tips on summer tree care. Look for “Summer Tree Care” on the menu under “Save A Tree”

We will also issue “Metro Tree Watering Alerts” on our website and to community blogs. Our alerts will remind citizens to water trees. The frequency of the alerts and content will change as the summer grows hotter and dryer.

Citizens in Richmond and surrounding counties can also use this information to better understand and care for trees on their property. We hope that this will, not only improve the survival and health of the new trees, but will encourage citizens to care for the environment and their community in other ways as well.

Gator bags have been placed on most Adopt A Trees and the Enrichmond Foundation purchased 500 ooze tubes that have been installed by the city.

To use a gator bag or ooze tube, just insert a hose and fill. For trees without watering devices you can use 5 gallon buckets with several small holes drilled in the bottom or just water with slow flow from a garden hose. Directions for all on our website.

When watering apply at least 15 gallons. (15 gallons is less than half the amount used for the average morning shower.)

Watering frequency:

- Water from May – October for the first two years after planting
- Ideal – water once a week
- Minimum – water once a month. This will reduce mortality, but may not produce the healthiest tree.
- Realistic – if you cannot water once a week all season, water once a week when the weather is very hot and dry.

Volunteer Hours

Please remember to report your volunteer hours. There are two ways to do this:

1. Sign in at a tree steward meeting or project.
The person responsible for the meeting or the project leader should report these hours.
2. Report the hours worked on your own.
(Anything you do that is not on a sign in sheet.)

For either of the above you may:

- Use the project volunteer log available on the website or a plain piece of paper. Give to Suzette or scan/attach and send to richmondtreestewards@gmail.com
- send an E-mail to richmondtreestewards@gmail.com
- Use the contact form on the website—**Preferred**

Required information:

- Name(s)
- Date
- Project
- Hours worked

Make it easy:

Details are not always necessary. For example, if you are watering trees this summer, keep track of your hours and report at the end of the watering season. The date would be June—September.

Please remember that, except for meetings or long lists, the contact form is preferred and it is very easy to use. You can find it in the Tool Kit on the website.

Hours report so far in 2011 = 527.



Save the date!

Tuesday September 13

Tree Steward Picnic—Details to follow

PERMACULTURE and EDIBLE FOREST GARDENS

As tree stewards, we are eager to point out the many virtues of trees. For instance, they add beauty to our landscape, they provide shade to cool us in the summer, they serve as a windbreak in the winter, they provide food and habitat for wildlife, and they mitigate stormwater run-off. From the perspective of Permaculture however, we often overlook some of the most beneficial qualities of trees. Trees provide food for people and they do naturally what farmers go to great effort and expense to do: they build healthy soil.

Permaculture is often described as a system for designing systems - where the ultimate goal of those systems is the creation of a 'permanent culture' or 'permanent agriculture' that supports human life. Human civilizations have the unfortunate habit of turning rich, diverse, forest ecologies into desert ecologies that no longer support human life. Consider the once 'fertile' crescent. Permaculture aims to create self-perpetuating systems that will make our environment more hospitable to human life - not less. Some of the principles that inform those systems are: eliminating waste, establishing beneficial relationships, and building in resiliency. The concept of Edible Forest Gardens comes from an appreciation of the patterns inherent to forests. Forests naturally provide food, replenish the soil, don't need to be replanted every year, and their diversity makes them resilient to disease and other environmental stressors. Unlike an orchard, they are not monocultures but include diverse species of canopy and understory trees, shrubs, herbaceous plants, and ground covers. An edible forest garden might contain a mix of fruit and nut trees, as well as an undergrowth of berry bushes and herbs. One such garden was designed by permaculturist Jonathan Brown and was planted in the City of Asheville, North Carolina. Visitors to the garden are welcome to enjoy a walk through the forest garden and whatever is ripe!

Fruit and nut trees and their respective litter aren't appropriate in every urban tree planting situation, but where the opportunity exists it should be most welcome. What could make anyone, young or old, appreciate trees more than picking and eating a delicious fig right off the tree?

By Steward Heather Holub

Permaculture is a broad-based and holistic approach that has many applications to all aspects of life. At the heart of permaculture design and practice is a fundamental set of '**core values**' or ethics which remain constant whatever a person's situation, whether they are creating systems for town planning or trade; whether the land they care for is only a window box or an entire forest. These 'ethics' are often summarized as;

- **Earthcare** – recognizing that Earth is the source of all life, that Earth is our valuable home, and that we are a part of Earth, not *apart from it*.
- **Peoplecare** – supporting and helping each other to change to ways of living that do not harm our selves or the planet, and to develop healthy societies.
- **Fairshare** – ensuring that Earth's resources are used in ways that are equitable and wise.

From <http://trikonahealthworks.wordpress.com/going-pastoral/permaculture/>

What happens with the new trees that do not survive?

Many folks (tree stewards and citizens) have questions about what actions are taken when a newly planted street tree dies. These trees are under warranty and will be replaced. Arborist Luke McCall has provided us with answers to commonly asked questions so that we understand the process and will be able to provide answers when we are asked.

Why aren't the new trees that have died removed right away?

The dead trees remain until the contractor replaces them, to serve as verification to both parties that they were indeed dead and so the city does not expend resources digging them up and disposing of them. I admit it is unsightly, but we are still developing alternatives.

Does the vendor actually replace the tree or refund the money?

Trees are replaced.

Is the tree replaced in the same location?

Yes.

Does that include both adopt a trees and the others planted by Urban Forestry?

Yes. Both are replaced in the same location

In general, how do you manage replacement trees?

The arborists field check their list of planted trees at the end of the growing season (late summer/early fall) and submit to operations manager for compilation and forwarding to contractor. Contractor replaces during planting season (ideally early on, before main planting effort).

**If you have suggestions for Q & A items in the next newsletter
please E-mail slyon10@yahoo.com**

It's time to Adopt a Tree

Adopt a tree applications are being accepted from July 1 until September 1

The planting season is from November 2011 through April 2012.

More information and an application are available at
www.richmondgov.com/PublicWorks/UrbanForestry.aspx

If you would like to help advertise this at a community meeting or in your neighborhood where there are spaces for trees, you may download a flyer from our website at

<http://richmondtreestewards.wordpress.com/steward-tool-kit/> *

Thanks to Steward John Caldwell for the Adopt a Tree flyer idea.

* Check out all the things available to you on the Tool Kit page of the website.

One special item is the book *An Illustrated Guide to Pruning* by Edward F Gilman . This is an excellent study guide for those interested in developmental pruning and it may be checked out by contacting Suzette at slyon10@yahoo.com.

Thanks go to Norm for providing this book.

Richmond Tree Stewards

The mission of Richmond's trained, volunteer Tree Stewards is to promote and improve the health of city trees to assure the city's forest will survive and thrive. This is accomplished by increasing public awareness through community education, planning and planting for the future, and providing maintenance and care for young trees on streets and in parks. Tree Stewards work closely with Urban Forestry and with other organizations interested in the health of our community forest.

Visit our website at richmondtreestewards.wordpress.com

Contact us at richmond_treesap@yahoo.com