1450 Volunteer Hours and Counting!
Thanks to our awesome volunteers!

Richmond Tree Stewards can rest assured that they make a difference. Our organization has contributed over 800 hours in direct tree care including pruning, ivy removal, watering, and staking trees after the storms. Our pruning projects can sometimes have an immediate impact; we leave the neighborhood looking much nicer than when we arrived. Projects in the Fan pocket parks and street tree pruning in Oregon Hill and the Fan are examples—see pictures on the next page. More important, we are preventing damage to trees by cars, pruning for better health and for safety. The benefits of other tree care activities (watering, developmental pruning, and staking, for example) will take some time to show, but the results will be well worth the wait.

Our first tree inventory is off to a good start in Battery Park, thanks to Greg Crews of Bartlett Tree Experts. Three groups of stewards are locating, identifying, measuring and assessing the general health of trees in the park. The goal is to provide Friends of Battery Park with information that will assist them in planning for future plantings.

Continued....
Our group is becoming better known and other organizations (schools, parks and others) are beginning to request our assistance. Recent requests for assistance have included a tree walk with Open High School students to test their tree ID skills and working with VCU as they work to obtain Tree Campus USA certification through the Arbor Day Foundation.

As the organization grows we will need stewards with a variety of skills such as grant writing and public speaking. If you have these or other skills that would benefit Tree Stewards please let us know! We also need more stewards so we can take care of even more trees! Registration for the 2012 class is now open; see the information at the bottom of this page and help us recruit more stewards!

Registration for 2012 Tree Steward classes is now open.

Please help spread the word to friends and neighbors, your neighborhood organization or “friends group of the park” group nearest you. This link will provide class schedule and registration details as well as a quick and easy registration form.

http://richmondtreestewards.wordpress.com/classes-2/
The meeting began with an excellent safety presentation by our own Jan Thomas, PhD, CSP. The presentation was designed specifically for tree stewards and brought to our attention some very simple things we can do to protect ourselves and the public during pruning or other projects. Keep these things in mind when working….

General safety considerations

- Know where you are – street and cross street; if there is a need to call 911 you will need to state your location. The best option when possible is to ask a resident to call from their home.
- Keep tools in good condition; handle and store them carefully.
- Dress for the weather; light-colored, thin clothing for the hot days and warmer layers for cold or wet days.
- Long sleeves and long pants are recommended, weather permitting.
- Stay well hydrated during hot weather.
- Use correct lifting techniques to avoid back injury.

Personal protective equipment

- Gloves are necessary for all activities.
- Eye protection is suggested for pruning activities.
- Brightly colored safety vests are required when working in a median; these are provided. Brightly colored Tree Steward T-shirts may be worn instead.

Safety during pruning or planting projects

- Where necessary, make pedestrians aware of the work area using orange tape, traffic cones or other items to bring attention to the area.
- Always leave a path that is safe for pedestrians when working on sidewalks.
- Debris left on streets or sidewalks at any point during or after the project must allow for safe and easy pedestrian access.
- Keep tools organized and located where they will not create a tripping hazard.
- Lay rakes, shovels, etc with points down.
- Do not allow more people in the work area than is necessary for the job.
- When working in medians or on busy streets, one steward should always be available to look out for traffic while others work.
- Debris piles must contain tree debris only; never put any trash in the debris pile as cans, bottles, etc. could create a hazard for city staff if the debris is put through a chipper.

Remember that we do not climb ladders or use chain saws when working. Jan also emphasized the importance of staying well away from power lines when pruning; pole pruners should never be used in a tree with any lines in the canopy. Walk all the way around the tree to check for hazards before beginning.

This safety presentation will be at the top of the agenda for the new tree stewards at their first class on January 10, 2012.

If you were not able to attend our last meeting, please consider attending this class.
Officers for 2012 elected by acclamation are:

- Louise Seals  President
- Suzette Lyon  Vice President
- Cindi Mashburn  Secretary
- Richard Minter  Treasurer

These officers, along with Kevin Walters (past President) and Norm Brown (Liaison, Urban Forestry Division, City of Richmond) will comprise the Executive Committee.

Committees Chairs for 2012 are:

- Kelly Joyce & Paul Leduc  Projects
- Judi Ellis & Kitty Hardt  Hospitality
- Louise Seals  Education
- Suzette Lyon  Communications
- Sandra Fry & Heather Holub  Membership

Members are large for 2012 are:

- Janine Lester, Marion Macdonald, Joe Terry, Jan Thomas, May Thomas, & Linda Van Tuyle

Congratulations and a big THANK YOU are in order for these folks who will be volunteering their time and talents for Richmond and it’s trees.

PLEASE NOTE:
Meetings, projects and events are now always available on our website.

From the home page, click on the calendar icon or go to the drop down menu of the Steward Tool Kit.
From National Wildlife Magazine:

**Backyard Habitat: Making Dollars and Sense In Your Yard**

“Realtors have long recognized that attractive landscaping, especially with trees, can increase property values by as much as 20 percent. In Minneapolis, according to a U.S. Forest Service study, trees increase property values by $7.1 million while saving $6.8 million in energy and $9.1 million in storm-water treatment costs annually. In fact, in 20 cities where he and his colleagues have studied costs and benefits, says Greg McPherson of the U.S. Forest Service’s Center for Urban Forest Research, “trees provide $2 to $5 in benefits for each $1 spent maintaining them.” Given these impressive numbers, it’s not surprising that the number-one green home improvement recommended by Realtors is planting native trees and flowers—the foundation of a healthy and beautiful backyard habitat.

In short, growing a green landscape is a win-win proposition. The old expression “money grows on trees” may not be literally true, but a sustainable landscape comes close.”


**U.Va. Takes Steps to Block Infestation of Ash Borer**

“The beetle is blamed for the deaths of tens of millions of ash trees in Michigan alone. While the adult beetles eat ash foliage, they cause little damage; the greater danger to the tree comes from the larvae, which feed on the inner bark and disrupt the tree's ability to transport water and nutrients.

The closest it has come – so far – is Fauquier County in Northern Virginia. But the University of Virginia isn’t taking any chances. Although only about 10 percent of U.Va.'s hardwood trees are ash, they are in very visible locations.” Read more at http://www.virginia.edu/uvatoday/newsRelease.php?id=15461

**Why Some Newly Planted Trees Die:**

**Stresses During Handling And Transport Affect Tree Health, Survival**

“Consider the cumulative stresses that transplanted trees must endure from the time they are harvested until they become established in a landscape. Multiple stress factors can mean the difference between survival and death for trees. For starters, when "balled-and-burlapped" trees are dug prior to transport, the majority of the root system is often separated from the tree. After this initial stress, trees are typically taken to a loading site and placed on trucks or trailers for shipment.”

Read more at http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2009/05/090504094443.htm

**And look at some great tree pics recommended by Steward Joe Terry**

http://www.flickr.com/photos/yahooeditorspicks/galleries/72157627553717395/
It’s pruning time!

Our deciduous trees are loosing their leaves and will be dormant soon, and so it’s the ideal time to prune. We will do clearance pruning to keep the pedestrians happy on one side and to keep the tree limbs from being damaged by vehicles on the other. Developmental pruning will help young trees develop good form and strong structure.

But don’t trees normally grow to have a strong structure? The answer is “No”, at least not when we plant them! Many trees planted in the urban environment evolved in the forest where they grew close to other trees. In the forest setting they tend to grow tall as they stretch up to reach the sunlight. Their branches are of relatively small diameter and short. As the tree grows, there is not enough sunlight for the lower branches to be productive and so these are branches shed. This results in tall, slender trees without large, weighty limbs. They can flex when the wind blows and they share the force of the wind with their neighbors.

When these same species are planted in an open space the result is quite different. The form tends to be large and round since the tree does not need to compete for sunlight. There are often two or more leaders and large branches develop which will often have included bark, making for a weak connection to the trunk. With a strong wind, snow, or ice these trees are more likely to split or loose large limbs. Developmental pruning is most important for trees that will grow to 30 feet or more. Appropriate pruning when these trees are young can help develop a structure that is less likely to fail. So structural pruning is not only good for the tree; it’s good for us.

Tree stewards can help reduce future risk to people and property by learning developmental pruning and participating in pruning projects. Review basic pruning techniques with the Tree Pruning Guide at http://www.arborday.org/trees/pruning/
Another good resource is *An Illustrated Guide to Pruning*, by Edward Gilman. This book is quite technical, but one can learn just by looking at the excellent Illustrations and reading related paragraphs. This book is one of the resources available to tree stewards.

You can check out any items on our resource list by using the contact form at [http://richmondtreestewards.wordpress.com/steward-tool-kit/](http://richmondtreestewards.wordpress.com/steward-tool-kit/)

Due date will depend on demand!

Thanks to Norm Brown for providing this book.
Contact slyon10@yahoo.com with questions.

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**Family A’s Tree**
Not Pruned When Young


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**Family B’s Tree**
Pruned When Young
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