

THE
leaflet

SPRING 2022



M O R E I N S I D E

- *Summer activities with trees*
- *The stink on Bradford pears*
- *The stories of TreeGifts*

TreesCharlotte is a public/private nonprofit collaboration to grow, diversify and steward the city's iconic urban forest. Trained volunteers and science-based programs teach residents about the value of trees and how to plant and care for them.

Speaking of trees, speaking for trees....

Contents

A word from our Executive Director

Trees are always on our minds here at TreesCharlotte. They have also been at the center of many conversations and concerns in the Queen City recently. Media coverage of the city's canopy loss, as well as publicity surrounding changes to Charlotte's Unified Development Ordinance have everyone in Charlotte speaking of trees. And as Executive Director of TreesCharlotte, I couldn't be happier.

Putting our tree canopy in the spotlight is the only way to keep the need for trees at the forefront of Charlotteans' minds. As we continue to grow as a city and our tree canopy ages, we need to collectively not only speak of the trees, but speak for the trees as well. And there is no one better to speak for the trees than you.

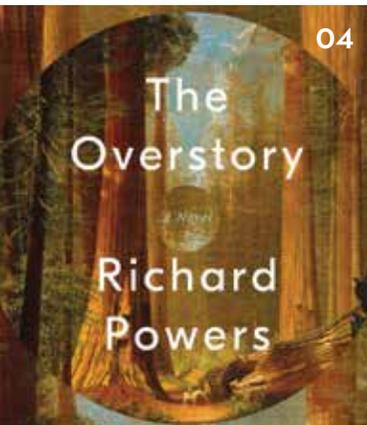
The faces above represent the dedicated team that works throughout the year to plan TreesCharlotte's ongoing endeavors to protect and grow our city's tree canopy. Yet as our planting season came to completion this spring, I was struck by how many new faces I saw; engaged citizens ready to grab a shovel, dig in, and help grow our canopy. With each tree that is growing as a result of our programs, it is my hope that we are also growing new advocates like you who will speak of and for our city's trees.



From left: City of Charlotte Liaison Frank Psaroudis, Business Director Heike Biller, Events Coordinator Zack Agerton, Executive Director Jane Singleton Myers, Development Manager Beth Brodie, Community Educator & Arborist Kate Bolkin.

Best regards,

Jane Singleton Myers
Executive Director



04 Our favorite books, podcasts, & movies

05 Summer tree care

06 The love of TreeGifts

08 Crafty tree activities for families

10 Species Focus: red buckeye

11 Why I give to TreesCharlotte

12 Changing the View at Villa Heights

14 The stink about Bradford pears

15 Board of Directors

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- instagram.com/treesclt
- youtube.com/treescharlotte
- linkedin.com/company/treescharlotte/

EXPAND YOUR

tree horizons

TreesCharlotte is not the only one who is speaking of trees. From books to podcasts to movies, there are many ways to hear a variety of voices on our favorite subject. Expand your tree horizons by checking out one of these, chosen by the TreesCharlotte staff.



FOR READERS

[our favorite books]

The Overstory
by Richard Powers

Finding the Mother Tree
by Suzanne Simard

The Hidden Life of Trees
by Peter Wohlleben

*Around the World in 80
Trees* Jonathan Drori



FOR LISTENERS

[our favorite podcasts]

Radiolab episode
"Forests on Forests"

Brand Builders
247: Kate Bolkin

Apple Podcasts episode
"Ologies: Dendrology"

Apple Podcasts Series
"My Favorite Trees"



FOR VIEWERS

[our favorite movies]

Treeline
on YouTube

Intelligent Trees
The Documentary

Judi Dench:
My Passion for Trees

Call of the Forest: The
Forgotten Wisdom of Trees

FOR CHILDREN [our favorite books & movies]

The Giving Tree by Shel Silverstein (ages 1-8)

Because of an Acorn by Lola M. Schaefer (ages 3-5)

Tree Lady by H. Joseph Hopkins (ages 5-10)

The Wisdom of Trees by Lita Judge (ages 7-12)

The Lorax

Fern Gully: The Last Rainforest



SUMMER TREE CARE

Summer is on its way. With higher temperatures, long days of sunshine, and an increase in the number of storms, trees need a little extra care during summer months. To ensure your trees are properly cared for, follow this checklist and enjoy your trees all summer long.



WATER MORE: Water your tree once a week during normal weather conditions and twice a week during dry spells. Provide 5 or so gallons, applied slowly.



INSPECT: Check trees for damage and warning signs, such as wilted foliage, yellowing leaves, infestation from insects and drought stress.



ASSESS: Invite a professional arborist to evaluate your trees and remove trees or limbs that may be unsafe.



PRUNE: Cut down branches that are dead, diseased or unsafe. Monitoring the structure of your trees can encourage healthy growth.



FERTILIZE: Fertilize trees and shrubs as part of your annual program.



PREPARE: Cable, brace or remove weak limbs before the heavy winds and rain from summer storms cause further damage.

The love of TREEGIFTS

We speak of trees often, but if you listen closely, you can hear trees speak to us through the stories they hold. One such story is embedded in a Shumard oak planted this spring during a TreeDay at Collinswood Language Academy. Among the 92 trees planted that March morning were 42 TreeGifts, one of which was a memorial tree for Mary Lou Mason, who passed away in 2020.

The tree planted in Mason's memory was a tribute by fellow Montibello Garden Club members who were looking for a way to memorialize a friend and fellow club member who, as former Club President Nancy Williams described, was "a lifelong gardener and a naturalist, who, with her husband Ernie, spent more than four decades developing a beautiful garden below a large canopy of trees."

Having previously invited TreesCharlotte to present at a club meeting, the members knew of TreesCharlotte's mission and programs, and recognized that a TreeGift would be a special way to memorialize a remarkable friend and nature enthusiast.

Our TreeGift program offers an opportunity to honor or memori-



“It was such a wonderful experience to be a part of that Saturday morning. Every one of the volunteers was excited, including many young people ready to help the environment and make a difference in the community.”

– Billie Hawkins, Montibello Garden Club member and friend of Mary Lou Mason

alize someone special while continuing to grow our city's tree canopy. Because the trees are planted at area schools, it is also a great way to give back to the community. When someone donates a TreeGift, they are invited to join TreesCharlotte staff and volunteers in the planting, making a TreeGift an engaging and active project.

To some, the thought of actually planting a tree may seem daunting, yet club member Joan Rasmussen found the experience "easier than we expected, especially since the holes were already prepped for us. The instructions were clear, and everyone was very helpful. We really enjoyed working as a team to make sure Mary Lou's oak tree was planted just right."

When asked how Mason would feel about the tree planted in her memory, Hawkins commented "She would love to be a part of planting trees all over Charlotte and supporting the good works of TreesCharlotte. We are delighted that her tree is right by the school's playground to provide shade for the children and their teachers."

From left: Montibello Garden Club members Suzanne Adams, Betty Pharr, Billie Hawkins and Joan Rasmussen. The neighborhood club, which has created a memorial garden and provided scholarships to horticulture students, will celebrate its 50th year in 2022.

Crafty

SUMMER ACTIVITIES

Summer days are fast approaching, which makes it the perfect time for engaging children in outdoor, educational, tree-based fun. Community Arborist Kate Bolkin shares ideas for DIY summer activities while exploring nature in your own backyard.

TREES ARE COOL

BACKGROUND

We all know that trees drink up water through their roots, but did you know that they release some of that water into the air through their leaves? This process is called **transpiration**. Tree transpiration is an important part of our water cycle and helps keep areas cooler during the summer (along with providing shade, of course). For this activity, we will be seeing transpiration happen in real time!



PROCEDURE

- Find a cluster of leaves on a branch in a sunny spot that you can reach.
- Take a clear, plastic bag and secure it to the end of a branch, so that the clusters of leaves are inside the bag.
- Seal the bag, doing your best to ensure it is air-tight. It may be helpful to use twist-ties, rubber bands, etc. to keep the bag secure.
- Wait a few hours for the transpiration magic to happen.
- When you return, observe the bag. There should be water starting to collect inside!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What changes did you observe to the bag as the leaves transpired?
2. What impact do you think transpiration has on air temperature?
3. What might happen to summer air temperatures if all the trees were cut down?



SCAVENGER HUNT

BACKGROUND

Plant diversity is a critical component of a healthy urban forest. We use trees' leaves, bark, flowers, fruit, shape, and even smell to tell different species apart. Explore your local park, greenway, or backyard to see if you can complete this Tree ID Scavenger Hunt.

FIND A TREE THAT...

1. is taller than a house.
2. is shorter than you.
3. has a pointy top.
4. has more than one main trunk.
5. smells good to you.

FIND A LEAF THAT...

1. looks like a needle.
2. has pointy edges.
3. has smooth edges.
4. has rounded, lobed edges.
5. is shaped like a heart.
6. is shaped like a star.
7. is bigger than your hand.
8. is not green.

FIND BARK THAT FEELS...

1. smooth.
2. bumpy.
3. scaly.

FIND A TREE THAT IS GROWING...

1. cones.
2. acorns.
3. berries.

For more ideas and activities, check out treescharlotte.org/tree-education-resources/childrens-resources

Species Focus: Red Buckeye

When you hear “buckeye” your first thought might be Ohio, but **RED BUCKEYES** (*Aesculus pavia*) are native trees to North Carolina as well. They are most known for the “buckeye” nut that is poisonous when eaten raw, but the real showstopper is their brilliant pinkish-red flower clusters that can grow up to 12 inches long! Due to their smaller size, red buckeyes can be used as a shrub or ornamental tree in gardens and smaller yards.

Category

Deciduous

Growth rate

Average

Size

10-20 feet tall and wide

Leaf shape

Palmately compound



Sunlight needs

Full or partial

Fall color

Reddish-orange

Fun fact

Buckeyes got their name because their glossy brown seeds look like deer eyes.



WHY I give

TreesCharlotte would not be possible without the generosity of devoted supporters like John Cochrane. When Cochrane made a recent donation, he shared a touching story of why trees matter to him and what motivates him to give to TreesCharlotte.

22 November, 2021

Jane S Myers
Trees Charlotte

Ms. Myers:

I enclose a donation to Trees Charlotte for the work you do. The continuing loss of our trees in Mecklenburg County has encouraged me to do something to counteract this action.

Just a small background on me is that I attended Joyce Kilmer School 69 in Indianapolis from grade K-5. We had an annual Arbor Day event where the classes assembled on the grounds and a tree was planted by selected older students and the principal and a few others with ceremonial duties as well as those with the work of digging. My class(es) as well as others memorized the then-famous poem "Trees" by Joyce Kilmer. We recited the poem en masse at the ceremony each year. That which is inculcated in youth is impossible to expunge in adulthood. Kilmer died in WWI in France with the Fighting 69th, thus the school 69 designation. I have also visited the Joyce Kilmer Forest in Western North Carolina. My roots extend deep, so to speak. Thus endeth the digression on "Trees", and the poet.

I hope this finds you well and you can continue the work of reforesting our city. Please confirm receipt with a note about the charitable element of this donation to use with my accountant.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Cochrane".

TAKE A HIKE!

A four-hour drive from Charlotte, Joyce Kilmer Memorial Forest is located about 15 miles from Robbinsville, NC in the Nantahala National Forest and boasts more than 100 tree species, many over 400-years-old and 100 feet tall. The impressive 3,800 acre forest is accessible only by foot.

DONATIONS

If you would like to make a donation to TreesCharlotte, visit <https://treescharlotte.org/make-a-donation> or scan the QR code.





SPEAKING UP

A Charlotte parent saw an opportunity for more trees at his daughter's school and decided to speak up and take action

The parking lot at Villa Heights Elementary in northeast Charlotte provided many things to the school, its students, and nearby neighbors: an entryway to the school building, a gathering point for neighbors to socialize and watch their children ride bikes, a recognizable landmark next to the school's iconic painted rock. But the one thing it did not offer was shade or beauty. When neighborhood resident and school parent Dylan McKnight looked at the lot, he not only saw an empty space, he also saw a void that could be filled with trees.

And yet, with a background in botany and urban planning, McKnight recognized that a solution would not be simple nor would it be an instant fix. Adding trees, he knew, realistically requires planning, maintenance, and dedication. So after a

“The additional trees have enhanced our curb appeal, will provide us with clean air and shade, as well as making our campus look like a welcoming place to come.”

- Principal Joyce Fullington

year of informal chats with neighbors and teachers, McKnight approached principal Joyce Fullington, who welcomed his idea with open arms.

The first task at hand required removal of two old maple trees that adorned the area. The trees caused more concern than benefit in McKnight's mind due to the fear of falling limbs from the aged trees. Having previously attended a TreeAdoption

MCKNIGHT'S ADVICE TO OTHERS

If you see a need for trees and take on a leadership role, make sure you consider the following:

- Create a planting, care, and maintenance program
- Tap into a knowledgeable person who has worked with plants to ensure the right species is planted and proper placement is chosen
- Enlist 2-3 core helpers and then open opportunities to the wider community once established
- Make it manageable and convenient for helpers



Photo top

To replace the sick maple trees at Villa Heights, McKnight chose two yellowwoods for their fragrant flowers to welcome visitors at the front of the school. McKnight's daughters stand proud with the new trees.

Left

With a background in horticulture, McKnight understood the planning and care required for the new trees. Here he stands with a redbud planted alongside the school's signature painted rock.

event where he received free trees for his home, McKnight took it upon himself to reach out to TreesCharlotte and request trees. TreesCharlotte provided Villa Heights Elementary with four trees: a redbud, a yellowwood and two witch hazel trees, which McKnight and other engaged neighbors and parents planted at the school.

While the impact of the new trees is long-lasting, McKnight feels the project is sustainable, allowing future families and residents to reap the benefit of the new trees for years to come. He is also quick to point out that while he played a role, this was not his project, but rather the result of community-driven engagement, something he feels is key to the success.

THE PLIGHT OF THE Bradford pear



Once thought to be the ultimate ornamental landscape tree, the fragile and invasive Bradford pear is under fire in the world of arboriculture. To learn why the Bradford pear has become the tree no one wants to speak of, we asked City Arborist Laurie Reid for her insight on this beautiful but unwelcome species.

Q Are Bradford pears really as bad as we are being led to believe?

Bradford pears were cultivated as a sterile plant, and it is unable to self-pollinate to produce viable seed. However, Bradford pears can successfully cross-pollinate with other non-native Callery pears or other flowering pears to produce viable fruits and seeds. Their ability to rapidly spread in the landscape allows Bradford pears to outcompete and displace native trees and plants. Furthermore, the Bradford pear is notorious for branch failure, especially following storm events, due to the weak branch structure. The branches form a tight v-angle to the main trunk creating a weak union where trunk bark and branch bark are in opposition.



Q If Bradford pears pose such a threat, why were they planted in the first place?

Bradford pears, a cultivar of Callery pear, were introduced in the United States as a landscape ornamental in the 1960s. It was once thought to be the ideal landscape tree due to its fast growth, resistance to fire blight, tolerance to heat and drought, early spring bloom, dense foliage, and long lasting fall color.

Q What should I do if I have a Bradford pear in my yard?

If you have a Bradford pear in your yard, we recommend removing and replacing it with a native tree or a tree that is not invasive. After the tree is cut, the outer edge of the stump can be sprayed with an herbicide to prevent re-sprouting, or the stump can be ground. And then, most importantly, replant a tree! We need everyone's assistance to reduce the presence of harmful invasive plants that impact our environment.

10 REPLACEMENT TREES FOR BRADFORD PEARS

Have a Bradford pear but don't know what to plant in its place? Reid suggests you consider one of these white flowering trees instead.

- 1 **Serviceberry** (*Amelanchier arborea*, *A. canadensis*, *A. laevis*), 15-30 feet tall
- 2 **Carolina silverbell** (*Halesia carolina*), 30-50 feet tall
- 3 **Sweetbay magnolia** (*Magnolia virginiana*), 10-35 feet tall
- 4 **Chokeberry** (*Aronia melanocarpa*), 20-30 feet tall
- 5 **Chickasaw plum** (*Prunus angustifolia*), 15-30 feet tall
- 6 **Alternate-leaved dogwood** (*Cornus alternifolia*), 20-35 feet tall
- 7 **Cockspur hawthorn** (*Crataegus crus-galli*)
- 8 **Redbud** (*Cercis canadensis*) 'Texas White,' 'Royal White,' 15 to 20 feet tall
- 9 **Southern arrowwood viburnum** (*Viburnum dentatum*), 5 to 10 feet tall
- 10 **Yellowwood** (*Cladrastis kentukea*), 30-50 feet tall

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JOIN THE MISSION

TreesCharlotte is a public/private nonprofit collaboration to grow, diversify and steward the city's iconic urban forest. Trained volunteers and science-based programs teach residents about the value of trees and how to plant and care for them.

TreesCharlotte's vision is 50 percent canopy coverage, city-wide acceptance of responsibility to plant and care for trees and sustained funding to continue the mission generation to generation.

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