

THE leaflet

WINTER 2023



THE VALUE OF ONE

ONE GIFT *\$1 million endowment gift honors Rolfe Neill*

ONE NEIGHBORHOOD *Burtonwood's quest for an involved tree community*

ONE VOICE *How being a tree advocate can make a difference*

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.

The Power of One

Dear valued TreesCharlotte supporters,

As the end of 2022 drew near, TreesCharlotte hit a big milestone—50,000 trees planted and distributed. We are extremely proud and excited to cross that threshold, yet the number represents so much more than just the trees added to our city's canopy. It reflects the dedicated volunteers, the countless hours, the communal effort of sponsors and donors, and the work of many to accomplish such a feat. It also serves as a reminder of the power of ONE. How did we get to 50,000? ONE tree at a time. ONE volunteer, ONE neighborhood, ONE donation, ONE new face at a Saturday planting. Each one of those singular moments collectively turn into a movement that will lead us to build the tree canopy of Charlotte.



And we can't wait for the next 50,000 trees!

How are we going to get there? ONE step at a time. Our programming team is gearing up for a busy winter season with 5 TreeAdoptions, 9 TreeDays, 7 CommunityWoods, and 24 TreeCare events. Our outreach team will be working directly with community groups, educational programs, and individual neighborhoods while we pilot new approaches to reaching underserved and under-canopied areas of Charlotte. Our development team will make connections with new corporate partners and foundations. And we will do what we do best – focus on growing, diversifying, and planting the tree canopy of Charlotte, ONE tree, ONE person, ONE community at a time, all for ONE goal – making a difference in the lives of all Charlotteans through the power of ONE.

Cheers to a great 2023,

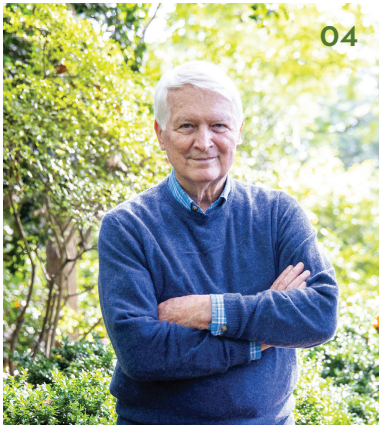
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jane Singleton Myers".

Jane Singleton Myers
Executive Director

TreeGifts are a remarkable way to recognize special people, pets, and occasions while sharing your love of trees with our community. Visit **treescharlotte.org/donate/treegift** to learn more about your TreeGift today!



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\$1M ENDOWMENT GIFT HONORS

Rolfe Neill

The gift came as a surprise, but the man
the gift honored was shocking to no one.



In December 2022, the C.D. Spangler Foundation gave a \$1 million endowment gift to TreesCharlotte in honor of Rolfe Neill, former TreesCharlotte board member and co-founder of our endowment. Neill has been a part of TreesCharlotte since our inception and has tirelessly championed for our city's tree canopy.

Neill, widely known throughout Charlotte as a community activist, served as publisher of *The Charlotte Observer* from 1975-1997, during which time he was an integral part of shaping the city of Charlotte. He was a member of the TreesCharlotte Board of Directors from 2012-2021 and an early advocate for Charlotte's tree canopy, working alongside other notable Charlotteans who embraced the vision and mission of TreesCharlotte.

As a spokesperson for our organization, Neill actively raises donations and advocates for our city's urban forest while cultivating partnerships with businesses and citizens of the city. Neill and current Board Chair Thrus Morton started the TreesCharlotte endowment in 2016 by securing a \$2 million gift from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. Additionally in that first year, the entire board, led by Neill, raised \$1M to contribute towards the launch of the en-

dowment. Later that year, Neill partnered with TreesCharlotte co-founder Dave Cable and former Board Members and Co-Chairs,

Marcia Simon and Johnny Harris to establish an Honorary Garden at Freedom Park. TreesCharlotte Executive Director Jane Singleton Myers acknowledges the gift honoring Neill comes as both a welcome contribution for TreesCharlotte and an ideal honorarium for a man who has committed his time and energy focused on an often-overlooked part of Charlotte's cityscape. "Rolfe's dedication to our city, the canopy, and TreesCharlotte has been unwavering since the inception of our organization, and we are thrilled that others in the community recognize and appreciate his efforts as much as we do." Singleton Myers added that other donations in Neill's honor, including a recent \$100,000 gift from Susan and Loy McKeithen, are meaningful to the realization of Neill's vision for TreesCharlotte. With the recent gifts from the C.D. Spangler Foundation and the McKeithens, the endowment fund has surpassed its halfway mark of its \$15 million goal bringing the current total endowment to \$8.7M.

Neill shared his reason for taking on the task of saving our city's canopy stating, "Most of the things we value or enjoy, we take for granted. Often, they've been here when we arrived; we assume 'somebody' is taking care. Actually, only a very small number of people are involved in taking care of our trees."

Continued on next page



LEARN MORE

Interested in learning more about the TreesCharlotte Endowment? Please contact Executive Director Jane Myers at jane@treescharlotte.org or 704-999-0671.

“ This gift is in honor of Rolfe Neill who has devoted a lifetime to serving and strengthening our community.”

– Anna Nelson,
C.D. Spangler Foundation

“ Rolfe has been a devoted champion of TreesCharlotte from day one! He participated in every event, every meeting and especially loved to watch volunteers plant. Because of his willingness to assist, donate, lead and speak for the trees, he has been essential to our organization’s success. No one will ever take his place.”

– Marcia Simon,
Former TreesCharlotte Board Member

“ Rolfe has been instrumental in the formation and direction of TreesCharlotte since the beginning. Our mission would not be realized without his vision and leadership and it has been a pleasure to work with him, particularly on the founding of the TreesCharlotte Endowment Fund. His dedication to TreesCharlotte will have a lasting impact on our city’s urban forest.”

– Thrus Morton, *TreesCharlotte Chairman of the Board*



Peter Taylor Photography

“ Rolfe’s leadership and unyielding commitment were absolutely critical to TreesCharlotte’s successes. He was deeply involved from day one, and was a hands-on, all-in leader who fully understood the importance of an endowment to support the permanent stewardship and replenishment needs of our urban forest.”

– Dave Cable, *TreesCharlotte Founding Executive Director and Executive Director, Davidson Lands conservancy*



Species Focus: Flowering dogwood

ONE
beautiful
tree

By Kate Bolkin
Community Arborist

FLOWERING DOGWOODS (*Cornus florida*) are one of the most sought-after trees that we offer, and we certainly understand why. This native tree has a unique, tiered branching structure, scarlet fall color, and famous white or pink blooms in early spring. Flowering dogwoods are an understory tree that have adapted to grow best in a partial shade. They burst with red berries in late summer, which feeds a variety of wildlife from songbirds to black bears. This tree is susceptible to a harmful, nonnative fungus called dogwood anthracnose, so be sure to keep these trees healthy by pruning off diseased branches.

Category

Deciduous

Growth rate

Average

Size

15-30 feet

Sunlight needs

Prefers partial sunlight

Fall color

Dark red

Leaf shape

Opposite leaf arrangement, leaves are simple and round with smooth edges and a pointed tip.



Fun fact

The flowering dogwood is North Carolina's state flower! But it's not our state tree (the pine tree is!).



Saving

ONE TREE
AT A TIME

By Krysten Reilly
TreesCharlotte Director of Programs

You often hear when it comes to saving a tree that just one tree doesn't make a difference. Statements like that can make us feel small and powerless, as though we as individuals cannot change our city's tree canopy for the better. Yet there are many things that each of us, as tree advocates, can do to positively affect our tree canopy and move the dial from a net negative to net neutral – or dare I say, even net positive.

A tree advocate first and foremost is the one to speak for the trees. But what does speaking for the trees look like in reality? Here's how to get started:

Join your local neighborhood association.

Or if your neighborhood doesn't have one, start one. This is your chance to advocate for tree preservation and tree canopy growth. A great start for your neighborhood association is by applying for a CommunityWoods event with TreesCharlotte.

Follow local rezonings and new development. Work with your neighbors and local developers to educate others on the benefits of trees and to use your voice to keep as much of the healthy tree canopy as possible.

Do you know your City Council representative or their stance on tree preservation? If you don't, this is an opportunity to start following now and support their tree canopy efforts.

Educate your neighbors, family members,

and friends. Use your voice to educate others on the significance of trees.

You can do this by organizing local tree focused events in your community and by becoming a TreeAmbassador with TreesCharlotte.

Advocate for the use of ISA Certified

Arborists. All developments in your community can benefit from the exclusive use of ISA Certified Arborists.

Insist on tree fences! Installing a tree fence provides a "no construction zone" for the tree and protects its critical root system from compacted soil, crushed and damaged roots, and major roots being severed.

And while you're at it, insist on deep root fertilization. Along with a proper tree fence, all trees that are preserved during the construction process would benefit from the application of deep root fertilization.

But what if a tree needs to be removed?

Advocate for the right kind of tree replacement. If a tree in a savable location is deemed unhealthy or a hazard and is recommended for removal by the site's ISA Certified Arborist, advocate that this tree is replaced with a tree of similar stature.

Do you have ideas to add to our tree advocacy steps? Please send them our way and thank you for being a local tree advocate!

ONE
*can make a
difference*





SCENES FROM A *TreeAdoption*

This fall, we hosted 9 TreeAdoptions, giving more than 1600 trees to Charlotte residents, who learned how to plant and care for their new adoptees. See just how easy it is to adopt a tree!

ONE



Check in with our staff

TWO



Join a TreeMaster for training

THREE



Learn about the species from the arborist

FOUR



Pick up mulch

FIVE



Load tree into your car

SIX



Head home and plant your tree!



Burtonwood

Led by former TreeMaster and current tree advocate Dave Molinaro, the Burtonwood neighborhood has a tree-forward approach to their community. Over the years, Burtonwood has exemplified how one neighborhood can transform its own part of Charlotte's urban forest. Highlights of what Burtonwood has done include:

- Banded neighborhood trees against cankerworms from 2014 to 2019 utilizing a matching grant from the City of Charlotte.
- Hosted a TreeDay in October of 2014, where they planted 100 trees throughout the neighborhood.
- Combined efforts with other nearby neighborhoods in 2018 to host a TreeDay at East Baptist Church.
- Planted 20 trees in Mason Wallace Park in cooperation with Mecklenburg County Park & recreation Department and the Mason Wallace Park Advocates in 2020.
- Created the first of three native garden plots in Mason Wallace Park featuring 100 native plants through a grant from the H.G. Wells Foundation in 2022.
- Utilized a Tree Canopy Care grant from the City of Charlotte to have 115 trees plotted and assessed by Arborscapes Tree Specialists in 2022. This same grant will facilitate ivy removal, training in ivy removal, and tree pruning, as well as an Arbor Day celebration that will include a Tree Walk session by TreesCharlotte in 2023.
- Invited the City of Charlotte's Landscape Management arborist to identify spots where the city can plant trees under the city's Street Tree program.
- Coordinated a plan for each neighbor to agree that if they must remove a tree, they will replace that tree.



Top from left: TreesCharlotte staff members Zack Agerton and Kate Bolkin, and Burtonwood neighbors Dave Molinaro, Will Kershner, and Emily Haberen.

Bottom: Burtonwood Native Plants - Burtonwood neighbors added 100 native plants to Mason Wallace Park in November 2022.



GATHERING AT THE garden

On a warm and breezy evening in September, the TreesCharlotte staff, Board members, and invited guests gathered at the TreesCharlotte Honorary Garden in Freedom Park. The “Gathering at the Garden” featured an evening of community to kick off our 11th planting season and to honor our newest green leaf donors – those who have given TreesCharlotte a gift of \$5,000 or more. Their names are engraved on decorative leaves on the trees on large stone slabs at the center of the garden. The addition of the newest donors brings our total to 234 leaves.

The Honorary Garden features a ginkgo tree, surrounded by garden pavers that mimic tree rings and a circu-

lar-shaped seating area. The garden was created in 2016 as a gift of the John W. and Deborah H. Harris Family Foundation, to honor “donors whose generosity assures our blessed urban forest will forever shelter and benefit every Queen City neighborhood.” Marcia Simon and Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation Department also made the Honorary Garden possible.

While speaking to guests, Executive Director Jane Singleton Myers and Board Member Chris Thomas shared their vision for the future of TreesCharlotte, including building a movement for all Charlotteans to understand the tree loss we face, while developing relational engagement

in the underserved and under-canopied communities in our city by growing our educational component to reach more of our community members.

For more information about being a green leaf donor, contact Development Manager Beth Brodie at beth@treescharlotte.org or 704-293-4462.

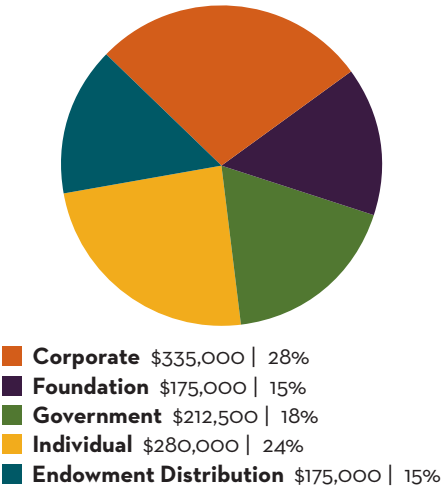


Financials

TreesCharlotte strives to be the voice of Charlotte’s tree canopy. We are grateful for the money entrusted to us that enables the execution of our programs as we fulfill our mission of growing, diversifying, stewarding, and teaching. Below are the income and expense budgets for fiscal year 2023 as well as fiscal year 2022 actuals.

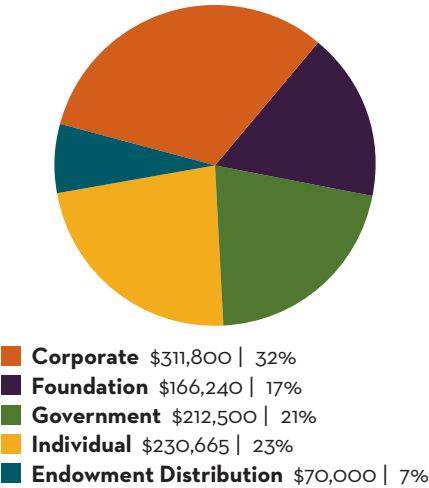
FY23 INCOME BUDGET

\$1,177,500



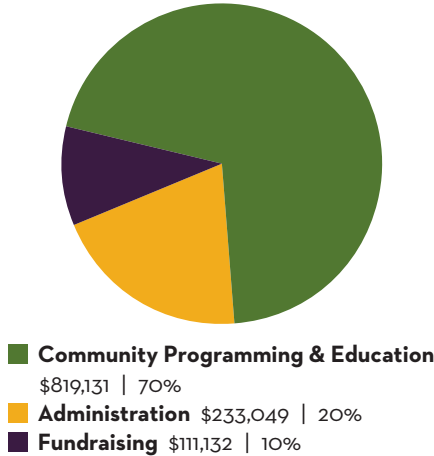
FY22 INCOME

\$991,205



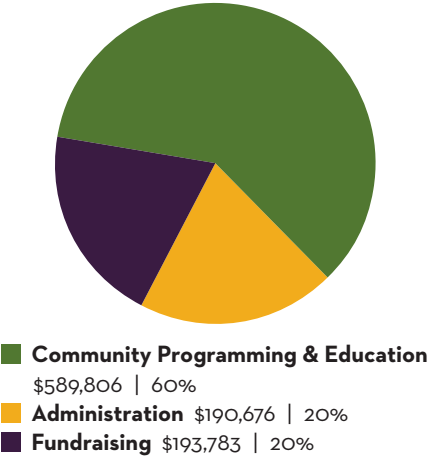
FY23 EXPENSE BUDGET

\$1,163,312



FY22 EXPENSES

\$974,265





1



5



2

Fall recap in photos

1. 45 trees planted at Selwyn Village neighborhood CommunityWoods

2. 230 trees planted at Southbridge Forest neighborhood Community Woods

3. 252 trees distributed to first-time adopters throughout the city

4. 106 trees planted at David Cox Road Elementary, including TreeGifts

5. 578 trees distributed to residents throughout Charlotte

6. TreeCare provided to previously planted trees at Reid Park Academy

7. 287 trees distributed to residents in East Charlotte ZIP codes

8. 24 Trees planted at Selwyn Elementary and Alexander Graham Middle Schools



3



4



6



7



8

TreesCharlotte Board of Directors

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Global Endowment
Management

Robert A. Bartlett, Jr.

Bartlett Tree Experts

Evan Bass

Moore & Van Allen

Sam Bowles

New Republic Capital

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Row

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Strategic Advisory Services
& Civic Engager

Susan McKeithen

Civic Leader

John Petrone

SouthWood Corporation

Jen Reilly

Honeywell

Stoney Sellars

StoneLaurel

Chris Thomas

Childress Klein Properties

Calendar

Jan 14 Crescent ZIP
Code TreeAdoption

Jan 21 Oaklawn
Cemetery TreeDay
Planting

Jan 21 Stevens Creek
Seedling Planting

Jan 28 Oakhurst
CommunityWoods

Jan 28 Independence
Regional Library

Feb 4 South ZIP Code
TreeAdoption

Feb 4 Raeburn
CommunityWoods

Feb 11 James Martin
Middle School TreeDay

Feb 11 Davis Ridge
CommunityWoods

Feb 25 First-Timers
Citywide TreeAdoption

Feb 25 Copper Ridge
CommunityWoods

Mar 4 West ZIP Code
TreeAdoption

Mar 11 Nations Ford
Elementary TreeDay &
TreeGift Planting

Mar 17 Revolution Park
TreeDay

Mar 18 End of Season
Citywide TreeAdoption

Mar 25 Marlborough
Woods TreeDay

Join us for
ONE day
(or more!)



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704-336-8141

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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