



Urban Leaves

"Tree News You Can Use"

SPRING ISSUE 2020



Vol. 7 No. 2

A note to our Readers

Thank you for pulling together and supporting each other through these unprecedented and uncertain times. Courage, patience, optimism, hope and love will sustain us. Stay safe and well.

Arbor Day

Arbor Day is a national and world-wide event to celebrate the role of trees in our lives and to promote tree planting and care. The trees that are planted reflect a hope for the future and show a concern for generations yet to come.

The simple act of planting a tree represents a belief that it will grow and, some day, provide wood products, wildlife habitat, erosion control, shelter from the wind and sun, beauty, food, and inspiration for ourselves and our children.



Today, Arbor Day is celebrated in all 50 states and here in Indiana this event is held on the last Friday of April. (Our WL Tree Friends celebration may be delayed this year.) The involvement in Arbor Day is a prerequisite to qualify for the National Tree City USA designation (2020 is the 28th year for West Lafayette).



Why is it so important for us to have trees? Here are some interesting facts:

- The net cooling effect of a young, healthy tree is equivalent to 10 room-size air conditioners operating 20 hours a day
- Having large trees in yards can increase the property value.
- One acre of woods absorbs 6 tons of carbon dioxide and puts out 4 tons of oxygen, which is enough to meet the needs of 18 people for a whole year.
- In laboratory research, visual exposure to settings with trees has produced significant recovery from stress within 5 minutes, as measured by changes in blood pressure and muscle tension.

For more information about Arbor Day and Tree City USA, [click here](#).

MEET A TREE FRIEND



Ann Hunt, long time resident of West Lafayette (since 1969) and Purdue retiree, joined Tree Friends about 5 years ago, invited by her friend John MacDonald (a devoted Tree Friend who sadly passed away).

Ann immediately became the Tree Friend's "photographer extraordinaire," sharing her love of the craft, expertise, and talent with photographs and articles for Urban Leaves, WLTF's quarterly newsletter. She later joined the newsletter's editorial board. "I appreciate and enjoy the editorial teamwork as well as the many interesting and committed Tree Friend volunteers."

You may also recognize Ann as a former member of the WL City Council, where she served for 12 years (as President for several of those years). She is a Master Gardener, and worked for Bennett's Greenhouse for 8 years.

Teaching in Purdue's School of Nursing was a highlight in her busy career, which included a National Institute of Health post doc at Washington University School of Medicine in the early 90's. "I think I was the oldest post doc ever!" Ann has been a widow for ten years and has 2 amazing adult children and 4 grandchildren.

We really appreciate having Ann on our team!

HISTORY OF THE CALLERY (BRADFORD) PEAR — BAD NEWS

The Bradford Pear (infertile cultivar of the Callery Pear) – ornamental landscape trees prized for their lush floral displays every spring – are slated for removal from the West Lafayette urban forest. Why? They have begun to hybridize and now pose a real danger to our native woodlands. What can we do?

The City of West Lafayette and WL Tree Friends will begin to remove Bradford Pear trees that are planted in public right of ways over multiple planting seasons and to replace them with appropriate alternative species.

Originally bred from the Callery Pear (an Asian native plant) to be a sterile cultivar that could not reproduce, the Bradford Pear became widely prized by landscapers and homeowners for its lovely shape, floral abundance, and fast growth. However, it was soon discovered that it had an inherent weakness – its fast growth made it "weak-wooded" and readily susceptible to wind damage.

New cultivars were then developed in an effort to perfect the Bradford Pear's resistance to storm damage. But the stronger new cultivars no longer behaved like sterile trees. When planted near one another, they hybridized and created seeds with high germination rates. Birds have contributed to scattering these seeds that produce fast growing seedlings.

The once beautiful but sterile Bradford Pear has evolved into an invasive species that out-competes with and endangers native local trees. Today, we can see the impact that invasive species have had on our natural lands. In addition to endangering native trees, they displace pollinators and other wildlife that are vital to ensure a sustainable ecosystem.

Help is available for West Lafayette residents. If you have a Callery (Bradford) Pear within the right of way at your home, within West Lafayette city limits, and are interested in a replacement, contact Bryce Patz, urban forester, at bpatz@wl.in.gov or 765-775-5160.

For more information, [look at this brochure](#).

URBAN LANDSCAPE STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

The City of West Lafayette Parks and Recreation and Department of Development are partnering to launch a new program to enhance and further develop our greenspaces within our public right of ways. The Urban Landscape Stewardship program will hire two seasonal interns who are currently enrolled in a college curriculum focused on horticulture, landscape architecture, parks and recreation, land conservation, or other related fields. They will design, curate, implement, and maintain public green spaces in West Lafayette city limits, especially in Chauncey Village and the downtown area. They will also aid the WL Tree Friends with tree watering, pruning, and mulching. If you see these environmental stewards working around town, say hello!

DAVID LILlich'S GIFT



WL Tree Friends are very grateful to David Lillich who recently made a generous gift as a tribute to his mother, Helen Lillich. Helen saw a need to expand the urban forest in our city and started the organization (then called the Tree Fund) in 1981 with help from her family and friends. Her activities ranged from planting and nurturing young trees, to establishing a tree farm north of Cumberland Avenue, and her year-round campaign of picking up trash all over town. Many of us remember seeing her old black truck parked on the side of our streets and Helen hunting beer cans, empty bottles and cigarette packages to throw in the truck bed.

A favorite spot to pick up trash was the area between Wiggins and Fowler, approaching the Harrison bridge. It seemed to attract trash, as well as weeds, and did not present a welcoming gateway to the City. Over the years, several planting designs involving flowers and shrubs have been tried there, unsuccessfully. Bryce Patz has designed a new planting of trees as a tribute to Helen's 30 years of leadership in urban forestry. Tree species include our native Tulip Tree and Bald Cypress. We thank David for giving us the resources to make this project possible.

Watch for progress on this project as we celebrate Helen Lillich.

If you would like to donate to the WL Tree Friends, [click here](#).

Visit our Website

UPCOMING EVENTS

Note: Please [click HERE](#) for the City of WL website, as some of these events may be canceled, postponed, or modified because of coronavirus precautions.

Beginning May 1 2020 Spring Pruning Extravaganza
Everyone welcome! ("On the job training")

[Click HERE](#) for the schedule and updates - Schedule may change due to COVID-19. Contact the [Neighborhood Vitality Greenspace Administrator](#) for any updates.



Wednesday, May 6
WL Farmers Market, Wednesdays through
October (Pending)
Cumberland Park 3:00 - 7:00 pm

Tuesday, May 12 WL Tree Friends Monthly Meeting (Pending)
Noon
Happy Hollow Complex
1200 N. Salisbury, WL
Please join us!

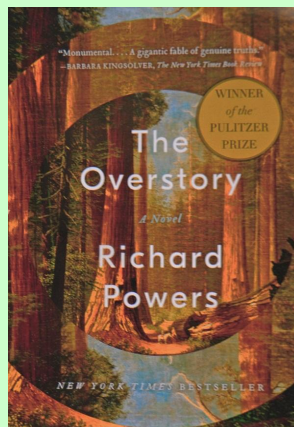
Tuesday, June 9 WL Tree Friends Monthly Meeting (Pending)
Noon
Happy Hollow Complex
1200 N. Salisbury, WL
Please join us!



Saturday, June 27
Art in Bloom 10:00 – 2:00 (Pending)
www.wl.in.gov

Tuesday, July 14 WL Tree Friends Monthly Meeting (Pending)
Noon
Happy Hollow Complex
1200 N. Salisbury, WL
Please join us!

THE OVERSTORY



In *The Overstory*, winner of the 2019 Pulitzer Prize in Fiction, Richard Powers has crafted an epic novel of humans and their relationship to trees and the natural environment. The novel is organized in four sections – “Roots,” “Trunk,” “Crown,” and “Seeds.” The first half introduces nine characters who have been deeply affected by trees in some way. Their stories are compelling and insightful. In the second half, these same characters are drawn together to fight for the cause of saving trees. Environmental activism is central in this part of the book. Trees bring the characters together in acts of love, loyalty and betrayal.

As the narrative unfolds, the trees are characters as much as the people who fight to save them. In *The Overstory* trees don’t exist for humans; they exist along side them. The forest is a vast and living community.

The Overstory is a book that will stay with you when you finish. As one character says, “The best arguments in the world won’t change a person’s mind. The only thing that can do that is a good story.” Richard Powers has written a good story that impels us to look at trees with wonder and reverence and to recognize the environmental threats they face.

Finally, a favor to ask. If you like this newsletter we send you, would you forward it to a few friends who perhaps don’t know about it?

They can sign up to receive it themselves [right here](#). Thanks.

Either way, Urban Leaves will have a new issue in July!

Find previous issues of *Urban Leaves* [here](#).

Show your appreciation for someone with a Tribute Tree, and make a contribution to the health and beauty of West Lafayette. [For more information](#)