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SOUTH CAROLINA URBAN & COMMUNITY FORESTRY COUNCIL

The Acorn

Live Oak Rescue Mission In the Wake of Hurricane Katrina

A letter from Ed Macie, Regional Urban Forester, USDA FS Southern

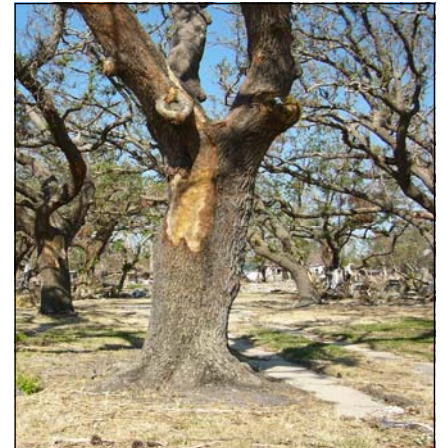
The 30 foot storm surge and 145 mph winds destroyed everything within reach of the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Everything built by man was reduced to rubble, left as debris, tossed like a child's toy, or left as a foundation scar in the sand. Everything is gone... except for the live oak trees. These stately trees stood firm against the wind and the surge, stubbornly representing their natural heritage and the MS Gulf culture. They did their best to protect people and structures. They survived to tell us a story about man versus nature. And, people are now telling stories about how these trees saved their lives.



Unfortunately, Katrina left the live oaks standing like beached whales. The surge and debris scoured their trunks, and as the surge receded it took their soil and left deposits of salt. There has barely been a drop of rain since the storm. Now the Home Depot Foundation is helping save the lives of these trees.

The Home Depot Foundation is granting funds to the

Land Trust for the Mississippi Coastal Plain (representing the entire coastal region) for a Live Oak Rescue Mission. Funding for this rescue will enable the Trust to hire local contractors to replace lost soil, water the trees to leach out the salt, apply layers of mulch, and surround them with protective tree fencing. This gift is providing tremendous hope to locals, who see these trees as "all they have left". Some of these trees have been there long before the coast was developed, and many of them have seen many hurricanes. Thanks to the Home Depot Foundation, Katrina won't be their last!



Please help me in thanking the Home Depot Foundation for supporting this rescue effort. They will see your replies to Urbrnnet.

With sincere gratitude,

Ed Macie

Thank you South Carolina Certified Arborists for participating in our online survey. Your comments are guiding our educational programs.

from the Chair's Corner

As winter rolls back and spring unfolds, so does the Council reflect on 2005 and announce its intentions for 2006. The process of learning from the past and creating the future took place at the Council annual winter retreat for the Board of Directors at Santee State Park in late January.

The Education Committee hosted an outstanding urban and community forestry conference in October featuring local and national celebrity speakers. The program was filled to capacity and we apologize to late registrants who were turned away. Evaluations from the audience resounded with support and accolades for the program as well as important tips to enhance future events.

We begin 2006 by welcoming Kristen Colvin, our new Executive Coordinator. Her outstanding energy, attitude, and organizational skills have already been acknowledged as a great asset to the Council. She has assumed all administrative duties and is ready to answer your questions and to welcome new members.

We also welcome our newly elected members to the Board of Directors. We are honored to have Dave Marren, Vice President of Safety and Regulation for Bartlett Tree Experts; Luther Marchant, representing Schneider Tree Care; and Jimmy Painter, Horticulture Department Head for Spartanburg Technical College join the SC Urban and Community Forestry Board of Directors. Sally Krebs, Natural Resources Administrator for Hilton Head Island, and Eddie Bernard, Landscape Architect for the Town of Mount Pleasant are returning members who have committed to serving another three years on the Board of Directors.

Our 2006 Ex-officio board talent is outstanding. We welcome Donna London, Research Associate with Clemson University's Strom Thurmond Institute; Tom Knowles, Director of Landscaping and Environmental Services with University of South Carolina; Jeff Lane, Utility Forester for Santee-Cooper Power; Debbie Price, Training and Safety Program Coordinator for SC Forestry Commission; Danny Burbage, Superintendent of Urban Forestry for the City of Charleston; Bob Vecchio, Zoning and Codes Administrator for the City of Clemson; and Don Ham, Principal for the Laurus Group. The Ex-officio board members provide valuable advice, serve on committees or projects, and help move the organization into productive directions.

Our work for 2006 is simple. Our mission: *To foster the stewardship of urban and community forests*, withstands the test of time and stays the same. Our methods of educating, advocating, and celebrating also remain intact. The Executive Committee will be exploring organizational sustainability, advocacy, and marketing. The Education Committee is planning a spectacular conference that will be held in Spartanburg November 9-10. They are also planning to partner with ISA Southern Chapter to provide a workshop for certified arborists during mid-summer. Heritage Tree Committee will increase publicity efforts, as will Golden Acorn Committee.

If you would like to become a leader in urban and community forestry and add your skills to a Council Committee, please contact us. You will meet vibrant, energetic people with similar interests. You will have the pleasure of working on committees that actively educate, advocate, and celebrate the stewardship of our urban forests.

I invite you to contact our Executive Coordinator, Kristen Colvin at info@scurbanforestry.org or 864-639-9942 to volunteer or get more information. There is a place for you on a Council Committee.

On behalf of the SC Urban and Community Forestry Council, we thank you for your support of this organization, of urban and community forestry, and of all the people who energetically work to enhance the urban forest. Enjoy this issue of the Acorn and thank you for being a valuable steward of South Carolina's urban forest.

Cheers,
Ellen Vincent
2006 Chair



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The Acorn is a quarterly newsletter produced by the SCUCFC. We welcome your articles, news items, and photographs that may be of interest to our readers. Items may be sent to SCUCFC, PO Box 21707, Columbia, SC 29221 or info@scurbanforestry.org.

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New website lifts the lid on urban tree roots



Each year, hundreds of scientific papers are published on tree root biology, but this information is rarely made available to tree care professionals in a summarized format. Now, researchers at Clemson University have received funding from the South Carolina Urban and Community Forestry Grants Program to develop a website bridges the gap between researchers and arborists.

Urban tree decline often results from root problems that begin many years before aboveground symptoms are visible. New research techniques, including belowground video cameras and ground-penetrating radar, are providing scientists with better methods for studying the urban tree roots. At the same time, products such as root barriers, mycorrhizal fungi, and soil amendments are being heavily marketed within the industry to improve root health. An unbiased source of

information on root research and product performance will help arborists sort through this wealth of data.

The new website, www.urbanforestroots.com, provides arboriculturally-oriented summaries of root research articles, as well as original papers by Clemson researchers and students. Also included are links, slide shows, and books where readers can go for more information.



Golden Acorn Award Winners

The 2005 Golden Acorn Awards were presented on October 14 at the SCU&CF Council Annual Conference. Congratulations to Jack Walker, Planner from Myrtle Beach; as the winner for Distinguished Service and the City of Dillon, winner of the Outstanding Urban Forestry Program Award. Thank you for your significant contribution to the stewardship of South Carolina's urban forests. For more information about how to nominate someone for the 2006 Golden Acorn Award visit www.scurbanforestry.org.



Clark Beavens and Jack Walker



Clark Beavens and representatives from the City of Dillon

Partnerships in education are growing. The Council is co-sponsoring the Hazard Tree Workshop on May 16 and Tree Planting and Establishment on May 17 Workshop with the National Arbor Day Foundation in May 2006. For more information visit www.scurbanforestry.org

Trees and Electric Wires ... A Problem of Proximity

By Jeff Lane

Ice storms and hurricanes serve as not-so-subtle reminders of how trees and tree branches can play havoc with the uninterrupted supply of power that we all need and want. But we don't need a brittle freeze or a catastrophic wind to understand that the trees that adorn our communities and improve our lives can also cause problems. Besides the inconveniences caused by power outages, trees that are too close to electric lines create serious risks. When high voltage wires are obscured by tree branches and leaves, there is an increased risk that someone could come into contact with them and suffer serious injury or death. This is not a theoretical scenario. Unfortunately, it happens far too often.

In an effort to improve power system reliability and protect public safety, utility companies have, for decades, spent considerable time and resources trimming and removing trees that conflict with the electric wires. By doing so, an incalculable number of power outages have been prevented, and many electrical accidents have been thwarted. But, just as the act of pruning scars our trees, the work of utility companies has also left scars on the communities we serve.

In every community, there seems to be an innate fear and mistrust of utility companies when it comes to the trimming of trees. Part of the reason could be the fact that for many years utility companies did what they knew they had to do, with little regard for the effect it

would have on the customers and communities that they were proud to serve. Furthermore, few companies employed personnel with the expertise that was necessary to balance the objectives of the utility company with the health of trees and the values of customers.

Another part of the reason people mistrust utility companies has to do with a fundamental misunderstanding of the nature of the problem on the part of the customer. Simply put, the closer a tree is to a power line, the more difficult it is



for the utility to obtain adequate clearance, preserve the health of the tree, and leave the tree with an aesthetic appearance that will be acceptable to the customer.

It is a problem of proximity. A tree that grows a comfortable distance from the electric wires can be lightly pruned as its growing tips enter the wire zone. In this case, the objectives of the utility are met, the tree's natural shape is maintained, and the owner of the tree is usually satisfied. But, a large-maturing tree that is

underneath or only several feet away from the electric lines presents a problem that often cannot be remedied to everyone's liking. At some point, the tree has to be pruned, and if ANSI A-300 pruning standards are followed, they will be pruned to a lateral branch or back to the main stem. For trees that are in close proximity to the wires, the results are always drastic.

Fortunately, in recent decades, most utility companies have employed foresters and arborists to run the operations that were previously relegated to engineers or line technicians. The result has been a focus on integrating various management techniques to control trees and other vegetation that threaten to interrupt the delivery of power. This represents advancement in the evolution of utility vegetation management, but it doesn't mean that all of our problems have been solved.

As long as trees grow into the wires and as long as utilities continue to prune them, the potential for conflict will always be there. Conflict arises most often when communication channels are not working properly. Customers need to know what their utility is up against, and utilities need to understand the expectations of the communities they serve. We may not always agree with each other, but if we can maintain open dialogues and open minds, then progress will follow.

Jeff Lane is a SC Registered Forester and ISA Certified Arborist with Santee Cooper in Conway, SC

South Carolina's HERITAGE TREES

SOUTH CAROLINA URBAN & COMMUNITY FORESTRY COUNCIL

2005 Heritage Tree Award Winners

By Danny Burbage



The Wade Hampton Oak in Conway, SC

The Wade Hampton Oak in Conway and the alley of oaks along South Boundary St. in Aiken have been selected as South Carolina Heritage Trees for 2005. Selections were made after reviewing several nominations and making site visits to each nominee. The South Carolina Urban and Community Forestry Council will present a bronze plaque to each city. The plaque will honor the tree and the community and will be displayed near the honored trees.

The Wade Hampton Oak is a live oak (*Quercus virginiana*) that resides in front of the Horry County Museum. The tree is named for Governor Wade Hampton, the first S.C. governor following Reconstruction. Wade Hampton held a political rally under the oak during his gubernatorial campaign. The tree is featured in a brochure of the city's Live Oaks titled "A Guide to Some of our Oldest Citizens: The Live Oaks of Conway, S.C.".

Aiken's nominee was almost a mile of oaks on the public right of way along South Boundary Street. Primarily Live Oaks, these 122 trees form a picturesque alley along this residential street. The oaks were planted around 1877 and have been enjoyed and protected by generations of Aiken citizens. Featured in art and brochures, these stately trees have also become a tourist destination.

Both cities will host ceremonies to honor the trees and receive their plaques from The South Carolina Urban and Community Forestry Council. Dates for the ceremonies will be announced at a later date. The bronze plaques are sponsored by The Bartlett Tree Expert Company.

Nominations for 2006 Heritage Trees will be received from June 1 – October 1. Nominations are judged on the tree(s) significance to the community, demonstrated community appreciation of the tree(s) and landscape maintenance of the tree(s). Each category holds equal sway in the judging. Selections will be announced on South Carolina Arbor Day, the first Friday in December each year.

A single tree or group of trees may be nominated for historical, cultural or other special community significance. Honor your community trees and your community's stewardship of those trees by nominating them as a South Carolina Heritage Tree.

For more information about how to nominate a tree in your community visit www.scurbanforestry.org



The Alley of Oaks in Aiken, SC



From the Forestry Commission

I am pleased to announce that the Community Forestry Program foresters have met the re-certification criteria under the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) Certified Arborist program. *Certified Arborist* status is a professional accreditation awarded by ISA and has been in place since the early 1990's.

This level of certification covers every aspect of tree care and individuals must have an acceptable level of knowledge in all areas of arboriculture. The SC Forestry Commission Community Forestry staff uses this knowledge to provide quality technical assistance to various groups – from Master Gardeners to public tree managers and decision makers to green industry organizations throughout the state.



Certified Arborist recognition is given to those who (1) meet the eligibility requirements, (2) successfully complete the exam that was developed by an international panel of experts, (3) maintain 30 hours of continuing education credits to recertify after three years, and (4) pay the necessary recertification fees every three years.

The Community Forestry Program foresters have been Certified Arborists since the mid-90s. Pictured (L to R): Lois Edwards, Pee Dee Region Urban Forester, Jimmy Walters, Piedmont Region Urban Forester and Liz Gilland, Urban Forestry Program Manager.

Other ISA Certified Arborists within the SC Forestry Commission include Joel Felder, Forest Management Section Chef, Andy Boone, I&D Section Chef and Debbie Price, Training & Safety Program Manager.

Liz Gilland, SC Forestry Commission Urban Forestry Program Coordinator

The Landrum Street Tree Program

By Jimmy Walters, SC Forestry Commission Piedmont Region Urban Forester



Photo by Jerry Burrell

The Town of Landrum recently completed the streetscape project in its business district. With assistance of the Commission's Urban and Community Forestry staff, the town decided to remove the declining, poorly pruned 'White House' flowering pears and replace them with a more suitable species. The pears were planted in sidewalk cutouts and were interfering with pedestrian traffic, auto traffic, and merchants' storefronts. The tree replacement coincided with the removal of overhead utility lines and replacement of the street lights on Main Street.

Rather than repeat earlier mistakes, the town sought input from the Forestry Commission regarding suitable species and planting methods. As a result, 'Princeton' elms were planted in "bumpouts," instead of sidewalk cutouts. The plantings took up a minimal number of parking spaces, and provided the trees with considerably more useful root area than cutouts would have. The SCDOT reviewed the plan and approved the plantings, and the trees were installed last December. The canopies of this upright variety of elm should provide shade and beauty without interfering with traffic or obscuring buildings. Congratulations to Landrum for completing this project and enhancing both the environment and the appearance of their business district.

Sassafras albidum

by Sandra Korbelik

Mom has just reached her 88th birthday and spends much of her time reminiscing. One of the youthful pastimes she shared with her brother was making root beer out of the roots of the Sassafras tree. This is definitely not an activity I would encourage today; safrole, a principal component of sassafras oil, has been shown to cause abortions in pregnant women and liver cancer in mice. But there are so many other worthwhile



qualities to this native tree that it should have a place in our gardens simply due to beauty, habitat value and ease of care.

Sassafras albidum is a deciduous, typically small tree with very peculiar bright green leaves that come in a variety of shapes including elliptical, oval, and lobed with one (mitten-shaped), two or three lobes. All parts of the Sassafras have a root-beer scent and the leaves are especially fun to crush and smell. Fall leaf color is gorgeous with shades of yellow-red, orange-pink and scarlet-purple sometimes all on the same tree. These colors are brilliant on trees planted in full sun, though the trees also tol-



erate light shade. Do not plant this tree in heavy shade.

Spring brings greenish-yellow flowers appearing before the leaves emerge. These blossoms of one to two-inch panicles have a light sweet scent and are a particular favorite of bees and other insect pollinators. Sassafras is one of the three plants that host the larvae of the Spicebush Swallowtail butterfly. The Spicebush Swallowtail, a woodland butterfly, mimics the color and pattern of the less-than-tasty Pipevine Swallowtail to deter hungry predators. Closely following the springtime blossoms are dark blue drupes (fruit) on red stalks eaten by many

birds including the eastern kingbird and phoebe, two birds that customarily just eat insects. If you desire drupes then plant a male and female tree near each other.

Sassafras wood was used for building boats during the 1920's and 1930's and

has also been used for fence posts and home-made fishing rods. The inner bark, especially that from roots, was one of the first products exported from the Colonies to Europe and was used as a food flavoring. Oil was used in perfume. Fil'e powder, made from the ground, dried leaves of sassafras, is still used as a condiment and soup thickener in gumbo and other Cajun dishes. Apparently fil'e powder does not contain enough safrole to be dangerous and it is available commercially.



Native Americans used sassafras extensively in the treatment of parasitic worms, syphilis, colds, measles, and as a tea and a spice.

The tree form starts with a slender pyramidal shape with orange brown bark and matures into a tree with an attractive horizontal branching pattern in distinct tiers and a deeply furrowed trunk. Root suckers can often

form in a ring around the tree (especially if roots are cut during cultivation) or create a multi-trunk plant. A multi-trunk or a single-trunk form can be established by early pruning. Sassafras is easy to grow in dry sandy soils and is moderately drought tolerant when established.

The tree is difficult to transplant and propagate but it does naturalize readily. This is a fast grower; it can grow several feet a year until it reaches about 25 feet, then the rate of growth slows considerably. A mature height of 60 feet can be achieved. Japanese beetles can be a problem in the mountainous areas.



Sassafras albidum is a native tree with many desirable characteristics but is often overlooked

when we design our home gardens. Using native plants in our landscape establishes the uniqueness of our southern environment, creates a sense of place that cannot be obtained by using the common plants that are merchandized throughout the United States. We have many wonderful native plants here in the south; let's use them.

Sandra Korbelik is a Senior Planner with the City of Aiken



PO Box 21707
Columbia, SC 29221

Mark Your Calendar

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| March 21-22, 2006 | i-Tree Training Workshop
Clemson University, Clemson |
| May 16-17, 2006 | National Arbor Day Foundation Workshop Series
Riverbanks Zoo, Columbia |
| November 9-10, 2006 | SCUCFC Annual Conference
Marriott Spartanburg at Renaissance Park |

Visit www.scurbanforestry.org for more information

Mark your Calendar Now !



The 2006 Annual
Conference will be
held November
9-10 in
Spartanburg, SC.



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The SCUCFC gratefully acknowledges the generous support of this newsletter by Bartlett Tree Experts. If you or your company would like to become an Acorn Partner, contact Kristen Colvin at 864-639-9942 or khill2@clemson.edu