

The Acorn

SOUTH CAROLINA URBAN &
COMMUNITY FORESTRY COUNCIL



The Community Value of Street Trees By Danny Burbage

It has been said that public streets are the greatest of all democratic spaces. You don't have to buy a ticket to go there and, as long as you obey the laws, you have every right to be there. The street is where life is carried out. Commerce occurs on the street. People eat, drink and recreate on the street. The public street has been the hub of human social interaction for thousands of years. Testament to this is the beautiful architecture that has traditionally been built along the streets of the world's great cities.

If the street is where the life of a community pulses and if the street is so important that we place our most beautiful buildings there, should we not also have the public's trees there? Science now details for us, the health and environmental benefits of trees. Trees trap air pollution, affect temperature extremes, reduce energy costs and reduce stormwater runoff. If all of this is true, should not the trees be where the people are; where the life of the community is - on the street? And shouldn't these trees that exist for the good of the public be cared for by the public? Recent studies show that public trees return real dollar dividends on the investments communities make in them. They should be considered infrastructure as much as the sidewalks and roadways.

Street trees provide great psychological benefits too. They draw down the enormity of our built environment to a more human and psychologically digestible scale. They soften the starkness of building materials such as concrete, asphalt and steel. Properly planted and maintained trees can offer a comforting sense to shopping districts, enticing customers to visit and linger. Outdoor dining in the shade of public trees is a sought after addition to commercial areas. People seem to migrate to spaces where trees are featured.

Streets and sidewalks are designed to move us from one place, through another place and deliver us to a destination place. But those places neither have to be ugly nor unhealthy. The appropriate species of trees planted in the appropriate spaces along a street can safeguard the physical and mental health of the public users. Trees can complement the aesthetics of our great public and commercial buildings while simultaneously shading us and cleaning the air.

Streets serve a distinct function but that function does not have to be without form or personality. As much as splendid architecture, the public greens can attest to the nature and character of a citizenry. They can say who we are as a people and what things we hold dear. Public spaces are where we carry out our lives. How we view our public spaces can mirror how we view our lives.

SPRING 2009

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President's Letter



Education, Advocacy and Networking is how our organization says it will accomplish its mission, “**To Foster the Stewardship of Community Trees.**” This issue’s column will focus on education, the first ingredient in the triad.

We can cast a very wide net when we set out to educate people about tree stewardship. Our Council hosts an annual conference, the Carolina Arborist Workshop and other formal learning opportunities throughout the year. This publication, *The Acorn*, is a great resource for spreading the word about the technical, sociological and community aspects of urban forestry. Our awards program, the Heritage Tree and Golden Acorn, recognize trees and people who have worked together in a mutually beneficial way. By recognizing special trees and special people, we let others know how important trees are to many South Carolinians.

Another educational vehicle is simple, direct and quite cost-effective. Appoint yourself as a messenger. Be a friendly, personal tutor to your friends, your neighbors, and your community. Most folks are happy and eager to learn from someone they know and respect. If you are able to simply offer some proper pruning or planting tips, you may open the door for more in-depth conversations that deal with the need for trees in the community. At some point in the future, the person you speak with will probably share the information with someone else and that person with another. We are a communicative breed who likes to share information with others.

Volunteer to speak at an HOA or other neighborhood meeting. Your topic can be as simple or as complicated as you are comfortable presenting, and if speaking in front of a group is not for you, you can arrange for a speaker. Most local government or commercial arborists are pleased to share the right information with groups. It’s good for their community, their profession and their business. Many electric utility companies would jump at the chance to present their side of the story on utility line pruning. Many communities get “up in arms” without understanding all that’s involved with utility pruning. You can also contact Karen Hauck, our executive director, who will try to find a Council member in your area to speak to your group. After all, **education** is one of the means we have agreed to foster stewardship of community trees.

I am not a scientist and, probably, never will be. My mind is just not geared that way. But I love learning about how the natural world works (in this instance trees) and sharing that information with others. I have found that most folks are as amazed at the natural processes of trees as I am and are happy to learn about them. That knowledge empowers them and fosters a sense of stewardship. Learn all that you can, take that knowledge to others and “...go forth and multiply”.

From the Executive Director

Since the last time I wrote, I have learned even more about the Council, urban forestry, and the role trees play throughout our state. Needless to say it has been a busy, productive few weeks, and I’ve enjoyed every minute of it.

The board has been busy too. Our annual conference committee has a great event planned later in October that I know all of you will want to attend. Details will follow, but here’s a glimpse at the agenda: presentations on tree litigation, insects, community beautification projects, and Dr. Kim Coder will conduct two presentations - one on tree biology and the other on hazardous trees. It is going to be a day full of informative sessions so mark you calendar for October 29, 2009!



We’re also working hard on our annual Carolina Arborist Workshop, scheduled September 17th in Columbia. Topics include climbing and rigging techniques, chipper safety and maintenance, young tree pruning, and so much more. And don’t forget our Heritage Tree and Golden Acorn Awards. Be sure to nominate those trees, programs or people who make a difference in your community. For more information, send me an email or visit our website.

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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 1679, Ladson, SC 29456 or scucfc@gmail.com.

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Letters to the Editor

Letters to the Editor is a new addition to *The Acorn* and is an opportunity for members to ask questions, discuss a specific concern, highlight an existing program, or just share news. Please send your submissions to scucfc@gmail.com.

Dear Editor,

I confess that I am not, personally, a member of the South Carolina Urban and Community Forestry Council, but my department within the City of Charleston has a "Government" membership. I read *The Acorn* and keep up with urban forestry happenings and trends across S.C. through it and by talking with our departmental staff who are members of the organization.

I commend every member of your organization for the strong commitment each of you has made to being stewards of community forests. It seems a truism that "you don't know what you got till it's gone." You have been pre-emptive and proactive in your advocacy for trees and the progress made over the last twenty years is testament to your thoughtful activism.

The City of Charleston's Department of Parks is pleased that it has three members of the South Carolina Urban & Community Forestry Council and several more who regularly attend your conferences and workshops. We encourage our staff to actively participate in organizations such as yours. Certainly, employees gain the obvious benefits of learning the latest thoughts and cutting-edge techniques in urban forestry by participating in the educational sessions, but active participation can go much deeper than that. We believe that when our employees are active participants in SCUCFC, they are making the path smoother for future arborists, urban foresters, planners, landscape architects and others concerned with the eco systems of our towns and cities.

Perhaps as importantly, yours is a state-wide effort. You serve notice that all South Carolinians care about community forests and that unified notice is heard by policy makers. Please continue your strong message of "advocacy, education and networking."

Matthew M. Compton, A.S.L.A.

Deputy Director of Parks, City of Charleston



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Name: Connie Anderson

Occupation: Urban Forestry Coordinator for the City of Charleston

Education/Training: Trident Technical College, ISA Certified Arborist

What the Council means to me: I especially appreciate the conferences, workshops and other educational opportunities. It is really great to network with other professionals who share my passion for trees.

Interested in being in the spotlight? Please send your information to scucfc@gmail.com.

The McClellanville Tree Committee: A Volunteer Group Committed to Trees

By David Stoney

You will be surprised to learn what a tree committee comprised entirely of (mostly retired) volunteers can do for a small town's public trees.

Gabe Purvis, Chair of the Assessment Subcommittee and current leader of the watering crew called yesterday to say that the watering bag for one of the 10 Memorial Trees we planted this winter had sprung a large leak and needed to be replaced. We've had excellent planting success by watering all first-year trees (usually the 15 gallon size, 5-8 feet tall) every 7-10 days if there has not been at least 1 inch of rain. Gabe, Ed Farnworth (Chairman), and Billy McClellan were out watering when the leak was discovered. Our "Water Wagon" is shown in the attached picture. (Warning: Trailers with such a high center of gravity are subject to tipping over. Believe it, we know!). Next week, Gabe, Ed, and David will be meeting Frances Waite, Coastal Urban Forester, to survey a dozen mature red cedar trees that have suddenly died in and around McClellanville.



Our Memorial Tree Program, in place since shortly after the Committee was first formed in the late 1990's, has been an outstanding success. Townspeople donate \$100 for a tree to be planted in a public space in honor of or as a memorial for a loved one. Eighty trees have been planted without a single fatality to either the trees or any Committee members. Trees are selected and plantings are done following SCUCFC guidelines. Because of the time and money spent on tree planting and maintenance, as well as a modest monetary contribution from the town for tree maintenance, McClellanville has just been awarded its eighth consecutive Tree City USA by the National Arbor Day Foundation.

One of the highlights of 2008 was our celebration of the Deerhead Oak as SCUCFC's 2007 Heritage Tree. The Committee raised over \$2,000 in donations to fund the event and we had a good turn out of townspeople and guests. Everyone on the Committee worked hard to make it happen, especially Virginia Prevost (Secretary) and Marylou High, who made all the arrangements for guest comforts and refreshments.

At our Committee meeting night before last (we meet every two or three months), Walt Bonner (Past Chair, Chairman of the Publicity Subcommittee) and Marylou High described their efforts toward getting a Tree Committee page on the Town Website. David Stoney (Past Chair and Treasurer) outlined the status of our budget, including the disposition of grant funds, cash and in-kind matching funds. We've been very pleased to have received two grants from the SC Urban Forestry Grant Program. They have helped fund educational workshops for Committee members, a tree pruning demonstration, an update of our tree inventory, and a tour of (unusual) trees in McClellanville. We've relied heavily on volunteer work to generate our in-kind match for the grants and last year posted over 436 hours of volunteer time devoted to maintaining and improving our public trees.

We've been blessed with active, dedicated volunteers, all willing to work. Last fall we scrounged two truck loads of wood chips during some power line pruning. Next week the whole Committee (Ed Farnworth, Gabe Purvis, Virginia Prevost, Marylou High, Walt Bonner, Alston Leland, Billy McClellan, Eddie Stroman, Tom Kephart, and David Stoney) will form two teams with trailers to use those chips to mulch our memorial trees and any other public trees that appear to be struggling.

We may not ever be quite so busy again; that will depend on when we get grant funds for public education demonstrations! We're proud to have helped McClellanville maintain its strikingly beautiful trees, all the while helping to fight global warming. We hope that every small town in South Carolina will consider forming a tree committee and get to work planting and helping their trees.

One Thousand Trees: A Community Planting in Greenville



As this issue of *The Acorn* suggests, community plays an important role in the protection of our urban forests. This concept is evident in Greenville where the community came together to plant 1,000 trees.

“Making Greenville Greener” is this year’s theme for the Greenville Garden Club. In an effort to make Greenville greener, club president Deb Peabody decided on a seemingly impossible project—planting 1,000 trees! After meeting with representatives from Trees Greenville, Greenville County’s Planning Commission, and Paris Mountain State Park, Ms. Peabody and the garden club determined that the best location for this massive planting was Paris Mountain State Park.

Specific care went into planning this project. Due to its great attention to historical preservation, all newly planted trees within the state park had to be native to the area back in the 17th century. Funding was anonymously donated by club members and with the help of tree experts, appropriate trees were purchased from a nursery in Trenton, SC.

The garden club was involved in every step of the planning process. Ms. Peabody and other club members met with the park manager to review the proposed layout of the 1,000 trees. Recognizing the difficulty of planting this many trees, the club turned to the Spartanburg Composite Squadron of the Civil Air Patrol for assistance. This group of volunteers were successful in planting 1,000 trees in just one day!

The Greenville Garden Club is an example of how a group of passionate, dedicated and committed individuals can successfully enhance our state’s forest. We encourage everyone to work with community groups to plant thousands of more trees throughout the state.



Each year, the South Carolina Urban and Community Forestry Council recognizes individuals, organizations and municipalities for their contribution to the urban forests in South Carolina. The Council has two annual awards: the Golden Acorn Awards and the Heritage Tree Award.

The Heritage Tree Award recognizes a special community tree or group of trees. Nominees can be trees with special historical or cultural significance or, simply, a tree that is of special significance to the community. All nominees must be trees located on public property within South Carolina. *Past award winners include the White Oak (Irmo), the Deerhead Oak (McClellanville), Wade Hampton Oak (Conway), Boundary Street Oak Allee (Aiken), Horseshoe (USC), and the Angel Oak (Charleston).*

We are now accepting nominations for the 2009 Heritage Tree Award. For more information or to submit a nomination, please contact Karen Hauck at scucfc@gmail.com or visit our website at www.scurbanforestry.org to review the full awards package.

A Day In The Life Of ...

An Owner of a Tree Care Company

By Karl Pokorny, TreeSouth, LLC

Two and one half years ago, my wife, Rebecca, and I moved back to upstate South Carolina. Knowing that the life of a small business owner is always utopia, we decided to take the plunge into the relaxing world of self-employment and open up TreeSouth, LLC.

Any owner of a small tree company that has crews working independently will likely relate with what our daily routine looks like at times:

8:00 – 8:30	Issue work orders to crew leaders while crews PM equipment
8:30	Crews out the door (providing everyone has made it in on time/at all)
8:45	Receive first of many calls asking: 1) Where did you say the job was? Oh, we went the other way. 2) We are out of gas, what do you want us to do? 3) We left “blank” at the shop. Fill in blank with lunch, saws, climbing gear, work order, etc.
9:00	Hopefully we have crews at their job sites
9:05	Phone calls from crews asking “What did you say we were doing here?” Explain job again.
9:30 – 4:30	Meet with customers, write estimates, inspect work sites, arrange for maintenance on equipment, call “good” competitors to commiserate, etc.
5:00 - ?	Crews come back in an we take stock of what was completed (or not), and the condition of the equipment
10:00 – Midnight	Lie in bed and worry about: 1) How are we going to get all this work done? 2) Oh my goodness, we might run out of work! 3) Keeping our good employees 4) Needing to hire more good employees 5) Having to fire employees that sounded good when we hired them 6) Workers comp is going up AGAIN! 7) Losing too many jobs to competition

Yes, relaxation and peace-of-mind best describe the state of the self employed. So if you are on the fence trying to decide if self-employment in the tree care industry is for you, take the plunge.

Karl & Rebecca Pokorny own and operate TreeSouth, LLC out of Seneca, SC.

A Day In the Life Of... is a recent addition to The Acorn. We would love to hear your story. If you are interested in highlighting your personal profession and skills, please contact us at scucfc@gmail.com or by mail at PO Box 1679, Ladson, SC 29456.

Help Us Go GREEN!!

In an effort to be more “green,” the South Carolina Urban & Community Forestry Council is now offering *The Acorn* electronically. If you are interested in receiving an electronic version of our quarterly newsletter, please send us an email at scucfc@gmail.com and simply put “electronic Acorn” in the subject line. We’ll take care of the rest.



ACORN PARTNER

SCUCFC acknowledges the generous support of this newsletter by Bartlett Tree Experts.

If you or your company would like to become an Acorn Partner, contact Karen Hauck at scucfc@gmail.com.

Choosing the Right Tree for the Right Place

South Carolina Urban and Community Forestry Council

White oak

Latin name: <i>Quercus alba</i>	Texture: medium
Common name: White oak	Growth rate: slow
Zones: 4-9	Light: part sun/full sun
Height & Width: 80'-100' h x 60'-80' w	Moisture: medium, medium drought tolerance
Type: deciduous	Soil: deep, rich, well-drained soils
Habit: round; mainly an upright crown if in the woods	Origin: Eastern North America

Features: A magnificent long-lived, round-headed deciduous tree. Bark is light gray with broad scaly plates, often loose and flaky. Leaves are simple, alternate, with 7-10 rounded lobes and turning red to purplish in autumn. Acorns are about ¾" long with a bowl-like cup enclosing only ¼ of the nut.

Siting: White oak is common throughout the State in a variety of habitats. It most frequently occurs in deep, rich, well-drained soils in association with other oaks and hickories.

Care: Prune in winter or early spring; however, dead or damaged wood can be removed anytime. Be sure to maintain adequate soil conditions. White oak can adapt to coarse, fine or medium soils with a preferred pH range of 4.5-6.8. It has medium drought tolerance and medium moisture use.

Pests: The White oak is more resistant to disease than other oak trees but may be susceptible to oak scale. The white oak borer attacks young trees 2"-8" in diameter. Niches about .25" in diameter are cut in the bark followed by oozing sap. Woodpeckers and sap-ooze are the most important natural controls of the white oak borer.

Uses: White oak is one of the most important woods of North America. The wood is hard and strong and is utilized for furniture, flooring and interior finishing and numerous specialty products. The wood has also been utilized for whiskey and wine barrels.



Contact the SC Urban & Community Forestry Council at www.scurbanforestry.org for membership and additional information.

*Soil pH is determined using a professional soil test. Contact your Clemson University County Extension service for assistance www.clemson.edu/extension/. Click on "local offices".

Tree selected from the *Urban Tree Species Guide: Choosing the Right Tree for the Right Place*.

Author: Paul Tuten, Natural Directions, LLC

Reviewer: Mike Russell, Natural Directions, LLC





PO Box 1679
Ladson, SC 29456

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

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|---------------------------|---|
| June 4-6, 2009 | South Carolina Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects Annual Conference, Aiken, South Carolina. For more information, please visit www.scasla.org. |
| July 3, 2009 | Nominations for Golden Acorn Awards and Heritage Tree are due |
| September 17, 2009 | Carolina Arborist Workshop, Harbison State Forest's Environmental Education Center, Columbia, SC. For more information, please visit www.scurbanforestry.org. |
| October 1, 2009 | SCNLA/SCLTA Joint Fall Field Day, Columbia, South Carolina. For more information, please visit www.scnla.com. |
| October 29, 2009 | SCUCFC Annual Conference, Columbia, SC. For more information, please visit www.scurbanforestry.org. |
| December 4, 2009 | South Carolina Arbor Day |

Visit www.scurbanforestry.org for more information