

ETF News

www.eugenetreefoundation.org

NEWSLETTER OF THE EUGENE TREE FOUNDATION

Big Leaf Award Honors Masonic Cemetery

by Lisa Theobald

If you're eager to experience some of the Willamette Valley's finest big old trees, you need travel no further than the Masonic Cemetery at East 25th Avenue and University, where 10 acres of oaks, Douglas-fir, bigleaf maple, madrone, and other magnificent flora flank two miles of trails.

ETF welcomes the Eugene Masonic Cemetery Association as the latest recipient of the Big Leaf Award that honors individuals and organizations who demonstrate excellence in stewardship of the urban forest.

The association has maintained much of the landscape's native vegetation and has implemented a conscientious forest management plan to ensure that this community forest remains a haven for future generations. Informative site literature describes the history, unusual features, and trees within the area. The landscape is managed, according to site literature, with "an eye toward

the future," as "every effort is made to maintain the existing variety of habitats rather than let the cemetery become all woodland or dominated by non-native trees." More than 65 native plants have been identified at the site.

Though nearly 5000 Eugeneans are buried



View of the Masonic Cemetery on a rare snowy day in Eugene.

there, Association President John Bredesen refers to the cemetery as being "full of life" because of the wildflowers, the lush tree canopy, and the oak savanna that come alive in spring and summer.

Visitors are welcome every day, from dawn to dusk, to

meander the trails and visit the many historic gravesites of such luminaries as city founders Eugene and Mary Skinner. An open house occurs the last Sunday of each month from 1 to 4 p.m.

For more information, visit <http://www.eugenemasoniccemetery.org>.

March, 2006, Vol. 9, No.1

ETF Board of Directors

Alby Thoumsin

President (education)

Lisa Theobald Secretary

Erik Burke

Phillip Carroll

Jim Gent

Jeff Lanza (planting)

Jane Renfro Smith

Newsletter Editor: Whitey Lueck

Newsletter Layout: Helen Liu

Bookkeeper: Jennifer Salvatore

Mission Statement:

To enhance community livability for present and future generations through the collaborative stewardship of Eugene's diverse and vibrant natural landscape

ETF Celebrates a Successful Year

For many of us, with the new year come new commitments, new responsibilities, and an evaluation of what has been accomplished in the past 12 months. The Eugene Tree Foundation board took a look back at the organization's accomplishments for the year 2005 and presented this information in our annual meeting, the Celebration of Trees, on January 26th.

With the help of many volunteers, ETF and the city's NeighborWoods program celebrated another successful planting year, with 140 new trees planted throughout Eugene. Many thanks go to the landscape maintenance staff of the G Group, the staff of the Red Lion Inn, StreamTeam volunteers,

and the many local children and neighborhood volunteers for their hard work. Since 1997, ETF has sponsored more than 36 planting projects with more than 1000 trees planted!

In 2005, ETF sponsored five tree walks, with scores of interested folks gathering to enjoy the rich diversity of city trees. Our web site and quarterly newsletter help keep the public informed about such opportunities and activities.

The ETF/city-sponsored tree steward program trained 10 new stewards to care for street trees. Volunteers learned everything from pruning techniques to tree biology at three Saturday sessions,

Continued on page 2



EUGENE TREE FOUNDATION

P.O. Box 12265

Eugene, Oregon 97440

Voice Mail: (541) 284-9854

www.eugenetreefoundation.org

President's Column

During our very wet January, as I was walking through Eugene's older neighborhoods, surrounded by mature trees, the excessive amount of rainfall did not appear so gloomy after all. The conifers of our Emerald City reminded me that the famous Northwest rain forests are close by. For a nearly "100% pure rainforest" experience, all one needs to do is visit some of the trails in Eugene's south hills and, after a few minutes, the impression of being far away settles in quickly.

It is important to remember that our urban forest includes public land and trails, not just the trees that grow in the right-of-way or in parks. The ETF Board of Directors recently learned of the City's proposal to acquire an additional 120 acres between 30th Avenue and Moon Mountain. This acquisition would create a link with the

Ridgeline Trail and expand our resources of direct outdoors enjoyment.

The only problem is that there is a limited amount of money allocated for park maintenance, and the 120 acres would further burden City staff who are already stretched thin.

The citizens of Eugene have the responsibility to become stewards of these natural areas for future generations. Once again, the need for volunteers becomes crucial if we want to keep our beautiful surroundings.

If this proposal becomes reality, ETF will likely be taking an active role in assisting in the maintenance and stewardship of natural areas under public ownership within the City of Eugene.



Alby Thoumsin, President

ETF's **Report to the Community** was presented at the Celebration of Trees. This 12-page document provides an overview of ETF's accomplishments during the past year in the areas of Planting, Education, and Advocacy and outlines ETF's goals and strategic plans for the future. It also includes a financial report and many photos of 2005 plantings.

If you would like a copy of the **Report to the Community**, please send us a message via our website.

Continued from page 1 **ETF Celebrates a Successful Year**

and then spent several weekends in the field, pruning and maintaining young trees planted in recent years.

The Legacy Tree Program, in its second year, honored a pair of white oaks, one of the oldest and grandest giant sequoias in the area, a row of signature street trees, a stunning northern red oak, and a beautiful Turkish hazel.

In 2005, ETF effectively advocated for land use planning and urban forestry practices that promise improved protection and consideration of our city's trees. Part of our ongoing mission is to encourage more thoughtful city ordinances that protect trees, and to help educate the community about the importance of protecting valuable trees in our urban forest.

This past year was also a time of reflection about ways ETF can improve its organizational structure, strategy, and mission. The board has been working closely with Paul Ries and Kristin Ramstad of the Oregon Department of Urban and Community Forestry to amplify our strengths and address our weaknesses. Two major themes have emerged so far from our collaborative efforts: ETF has accomplished much with modest resources, and our mission of protecting the urban forest and promoting livability is a statement about relationships and partnerships. Community is key.



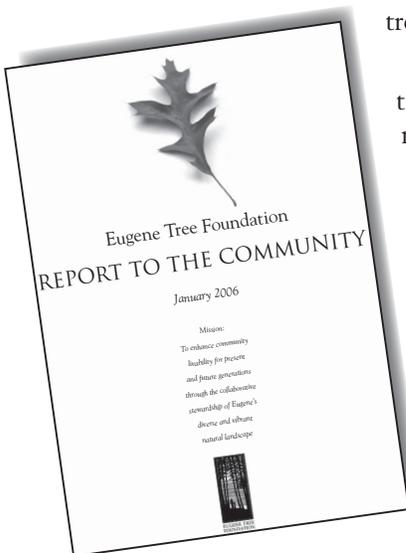
Paul Ries mingles with attendees at the Celebration of Trees after his informative talk.

sentation, "Investing in the Forest Where We Live," answered the question, How much is the urban forest worth? According to statistics from a University of Illinois study, for every dollar cities invest in trees, \$2.70 worth of benefits are returned.

Other statistics Paul mentioned in his talk are worthy of consideration:

- Buildings with high levels of greenery had 52 percent fewer crimes than those without.
- People prefer to shop in areas with trees and are willing to spend 12 percent more as well as pay more for parking in business districts with trees.
- One large shade tree in the Pacific Northwest can intercept 1122 gallons of rainfall. By intercepting rainfall, tree crowns slow down and reduce the amount of runoff.

It's uplifting to realize that something we all inherently know can be backed up by research: urban trees are extremely valuable contributions to our community!



An All Too Common Problem

It all began last October when Jeff Lanza (our planting coordinator) and I attended a seminar in Lake Oswego. The subject was “New Planting Techniques” and Jeff and I were having a little fun just talking about it on our way there. “What do you think could be so new about it... a new kind of shovel? After all, the subject has been debated over and over; what else is there to say?”

Little did I know how much this seminar would become an eye-opener for me! The part of the technique that was so new did not have anything to do with planting hole depth or width, or soil or watering, but with the nature of the roots. It appears that trees grown in the field have, in many cases, between six and eight inches of dirt pushed up against their trunks to weigh against their bases and help prevent them from blowing over on windy days. That is cheaper, of course, than staking each tree but it is also the source of big problems later on.

The amount of soil pushed up around the base of the tree causes the tree to form new or “adventitious” roots. This confuses the person planting the tree, who thinks he’s planting at the right depth: not deeper than the top of the root ball. So, what we did at the seminar was this: we temporarily ignored everything we knew about the care of the rootball prior to planting and we ripped open the burlap and dipped the whole rootball in a large tub to wash the dirt off the roots. The result was astonishing. In about 80%

of the cases, we found the trees had lost 40 % or more of their original root systems and/or had created a large amount of adventitious roots, some of them likely to eventually girdle (or encircle) the trunk. The consequences of this problem were also discussed and studied through field work and root crown excavation showing mature trees dying prematurely, snapping at their base, or uprooting, all because of the formation of girdling roots and poor overall root development.

During the past few months, in my daily work, I have paid a lot more attention to this potential problem and found multiple cases of girdling roots. I was able to fix some of them by cutting; but others I couldn’t fix because the tree had already failed. The rain we had in December and January did not help; trees with girdling roots were the first to fall in the saturated soils.

My tip this time? Take the time to examine the tree or plant when you buy it. If you see surface roots circling around the edge of the container, don’t buy it no matter how cheap it is! If the tree is B&B (balled and burlapped) or in a container, don’t hesitate to remove the dirt from the base of the trunk until you find a decent root growing away from the trunk; any circling roots should be cut.

Until next time,



Alby Thoumsin is a certified arborist.



Licorice Fern

Willamette Plaza to Get Trees: It’s the Law!

by Whitey Lueck

For many years, one of the top contenders in Eugene’s Ugliest Parking Lot Contest has been the barren expanse at Willamette Plaza (near 29th and Willamette). But we are happy to announce that change is underway, and it is change for the better.

As part of the shopping center’s redevelopment over the next couple of years—and its rebirth as the trendy Woodfield Station—the Eugene land use code requires that the parking lot “landscape” be brought up to modern standards. That means the construction of planting beds at least six feet in width; the installation of automatic irrigation; and the planting of large-canopy trees as well as extensive understory plantings of shrubs and herbaceous plants such as ornamental grasses and flowers.

This site is an especially difficult one for tree growth because of the dense and poorly drained



Greenery always improve the scenery!

soil that underlies the existing parking lot. Compared to parking lots that sit atop deep, well drained river loam (e.g., the Costco lot at Beltline and Coburg Road), where most trees grow vigorously and eventually should attain substantial

Continued on page 4

Sign Up for e-Newsletter

In hopes of saving trees (paper) and mailing and printing expenses, ETF encourages you to sign up to receive this newsletter in electronic format.

If you would like to receive the e-Newsletter, please contact us via our website.

Thank you!



EUGENE TREE FOUNDATION

P.O. Box 12265
Eugene, Oregon 97440

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

NONPROFIT ORG.
US POSTAGE
PAID
EUGENE, OR
PERMIT NO. 335



At this Pearl Street project, landscape maintenance staff of the G Group assisted in the planting of three silver linden trees as well as understory plants.

Tree Planting

Three planting projects are yet to be completed in this planting season. All projects start at 9 am on Saturdays, rain or shine. Dress appropriately with work shoes or boots. Tools and safety equipment are provided. Look for the ETF/NeighborWoods canopy shelter at project sites. For more information, call Jeff Lanza at 284-9854. ETF tree planting projects are in partnership with the City of Eugene's NeighborWoods program.

March 11 East 12th Avenue (near the University of Oregon)

Tree Walks

Join ETF board members on these walks through various Eugene neighborhoods and learn about the trees in our city. All walks are from 1-3pm and led by Alby Thoumsin and Erik Burke unless otherwise noted.

April 2 Arbor Day Walk. Phil Carroll and Erik Burke will lead a climb to the top of Skinner Butte to see Legacy Tree No. 9, two Oregon white oaks estimated to be over 200 years old, and explore east Skinner Butte neighborhood. Meet at Lamb

Meet in mid-block parking lot on south side of East 12th Avenue between Kincaid and Alder (5 new street trees, plus 10-15 replacement trees in the surrounding area)

March 25 Amazon Parkway—Phase I

Meet in parking lot at East 24th Avenue and Amazon Parkway (15-25 new street trees)

April 8 (Arbor Day) Franklin Blvd. and Orchard St.—Phase II

A Trees-for-Concrete Project

Meet at parking lot of the former auto dealership, across from PC Market of Choice (4-6 new street trees)

Cottage on the north side of the park. 2-4pm.

May 6 Chase Neighborhood. Meet at the NW corner of Marche Chase park, at Chevy Chase Street and Regent Street.

July 8 Masonic Cemetery. Meet at the corner of Potter and East 25th Avenue.

October 7 University of Oregon Campus. Meet in front of Lillis Building on East 13th Avenue, just east of Kincaid.

October 14 Skinner Butte. Meet at Lamb Cottage on the north side of the park. Climb the butte and enjoy the vibrant fall colors.

Continued from page 3 **ETF Celebrates a Successful Year** size, the prognosis for the new trees at Woodfield Station is not good. Even though most of the tree species selected by the project's landscape architect are suited to poorly drained soils (red maples, ashes, European hornbeams), it is unlikely that they will ever develop into a magnificent leafy canopy covering the entire parking area, which is the goal of the city code.

One way that future site managers might help the new trees is by implementing a regular fertil-

ization program that would provide the necessary nutrients for tree growth to supplement those available inside the planting area "pot" that most of the trees' roots will be confined to.

The new plantings will nonetheless be an enormous improvement over the desolate asphalt desert that has "welcomed" customers to the Wilamette Plaza site for many decades. Hurray for the City planning staff who included these landscaping standards in the most recent update of Eugene's land use code!

Sugar Maple