

# ETF News

www.eugenetreefoundation.org

NEWSLETTER OF THE EUGENE TREE FOUNDATION

## Downtown Open Space Planning

by Phillip Carroll

The fascinating mosaic of downtown's planted trees, private spaces and public ways is the product of forethought, whim and chance. This last component, chance, is as important as the others. Part of the joy and surprise of cities is that no one entity has made nor can make all the choices about what goes where. It is also part of the frustration. Without the occasional comprehensive look, important opportunities may be missed.

ETF has been monitoring efforts on the part of various City agencies to link downtown thoroughfares and destinations with intentional green space that encourages the enjoyment of downtown by people—especially those on foot. Specific schemes include distinctive and welcoming Great and Civic Streets, a revised vision for the Park Blocks, linkages between Skinner Butte and Willamette Street, connections to the Willamette River, and potential acquisition of space for urban plazas.

These ideas are variously shepherded by the Parks and Open Space Division, Facilities Management, Planning and Development, or combinations thereof. And in the case of recent talk of a new park related to the proposed re-development of Broadway, even City Council could decide on the appropriate provision of open space. ETF supports carefully designed green space downtown, including any that would be created as part of re-development that may occur, but given this fragmented planning, it is not clear that we are making the most of the wonderful opportunities our uniquely situated downtown offers. In the absence of better forethought we may feel regret instead of the joy of whim and chance.

Here are a few ideas to improve downtown open space planning:

- Identify locations for the development of small plazas situated to maximize connectivity between downtown destinations such as the library, river, City Hall, Skinner Butte, and Broadway. Develop these sites ahead of any particular building proposals.

- Commit to the widespread use of plant species native to the Willamette Valley as identifiers of local character, and to design elements that promote pedestrian enjoyment and interest.

- Recognize that urban green space does not exclude intensive use, but facilitates it by providing room for interaction and commerce, while raising adjacent property values.

- Assign the overall planning task to Parks and Open Space. They are versed in the design and maintenance of urban landscapes, have exhibited excellence in recent park development, already manage Skinner Butte and riverside parks, and house the Urban Forestry section which can assist with ensuring the establishment of large, long-lived trees where we most need them.

ETF has made great progress in the past ten years in populating downtown with street trees. But we cannot expect that street trees and random private plantings alone will suffice to provide the meaningful and vital urban landscape we want and ought to have. Future residents and visitors should be surprised by our commitment and ingenuity, not by the degree to which we left things to chance.

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## TREE WALKS

**Oct. 20**, from 1-3 pm. Meet at the entrance of the Citizens Building at the northeast corner of East 10th and Oak. We'll look at the details of the building's new landscape, and we will discover the "green treasures" of our downtown urban forest while enjoying its dazzling fall colors.

**Oct. 27**, from 1-3:30ish. Meet at the Spencer Butte parking lot along south Willamette Street. We will inspect some old landslides, look at magnificent old trees on the way up and, finally, explore the arid top of this favorite local hiking destination that affords a fine view of Eugene from the south. Please wear good hiking shoes, bring a snack, water and raingear. A pair of binoculars will be a plus.

## President's Column



Greetings, everyone!

As autumn sets in, I always look back and wonder why summer passes by so quickly! Of all the seasons, summer

seems to be the shortest and it's probably linked to the old saying, "time flies when you're having fun" ... or maybe because you have been busy, which we, as a Board, have been.

In the process of improving and expanding our organization, two things have happened: First, Doris Wimber—one of our newer Board members—

has taken the responsibility of being our Volunteer Coordinator. Doris will be contacting those of you who in the past expressed an interest in helping us. We used to rely on our website or the newsletter to spread the word on our activities; now we also have Doris's wonderful energy to reach you.

Second, we have created a Fund-raising Committee. Jennifer Salvatore (our bookkeeper), Jane Renfro-Smith, Erik Burke and Nick Martinelli have met already to focus on the best way to improve our financial situation, as well as to complete the final draft of a job description in order to hire a part-time Executive Assistant.

The last part involved the creation of a committee responsible for re-editing our Policies and Procedures. Indeed, a few items needed to be updated and Jane (she's busy!!), Phil Carroll, Jason Blair and I have been

working on the latest edition. It will, include, among other things, a position that was lacking in the past: a vice-president.

Some projects have seen Jeff Lanza working even harder this summer to be ready for our first planting project that happened on October 6th along the re-designed part of East 18th Avenue. With the help of the City of Eugene, Jeff's wonderful energy, and plenty of volunteers, 41 new trees were planted in an area where trees used to be on only one side of the street.

So, here we are, zooming along in our second decade full of optimism and energy to help ensure the protection and enhancement of our beloved urban forest.

Happy Fall!

Alby Thoumsin, President

## Never A Boring Autumn

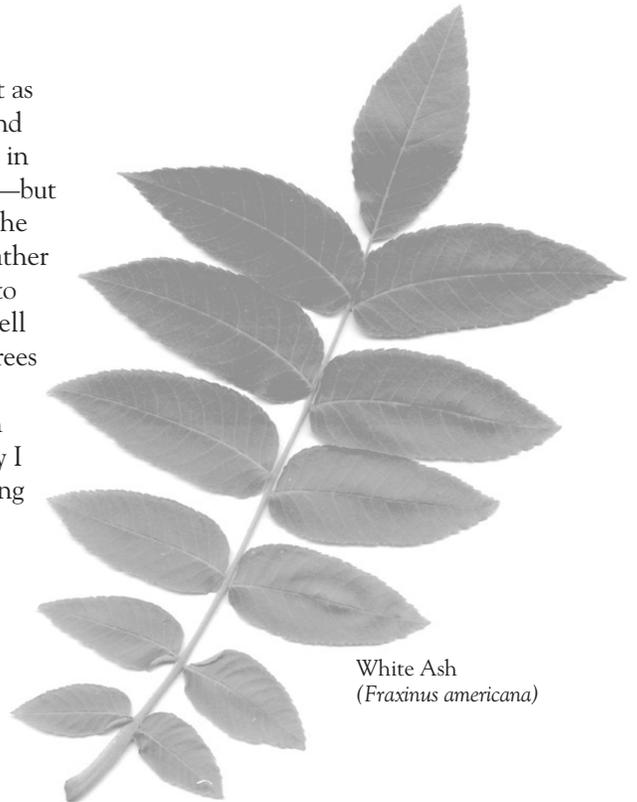
by Whitey Lueck

It's that season again when much of the arborescent greenery of summer turns orange or purple or gold or brown (remember, brown is a color, too) just before dropping. Fall color begins in our area already in late September and continues until well after Thanksgiving most years, thanks to our mild, ocean-influenced climate that greatly extends our springs and falls.

The first trees to change color and then lose their leaves are the katsuras (*Cercidiphyllum japonicum*) from Japan, followed closely by the ashes. By the time you receive this newsletter, most of the ashes may already be leafless, but fall will still be just starting! There are maples and lindens and oaks and many other kinds of trees whose leaves will be changing color in the last half of October or later, so if you were out of town the first half, you'll still have plenty of color to enjoy.

Phenology is the study of how periodic biological phenomena such as flowering, peak fall color and leaf drop

are related to weather. Just as different species of trees and other plants always bloom in the same order every year—but slightly earlier or later in the season due to variable weather conditions from one year to the next—the native as well as non-native deciduous trees whose leaves turn color here in fall always do so in the same order. That's why I can tell you without looking out the window that it's Ash Time now, as I write this, and that Oak Time will come later. It always does. While it's true that predictability can in some cases lead to boredom, I've never yet met a boring autumn!



White Ash  
(*Fraxinus americana*)

### Mushroom Show at Mt. Pisgah Arboretum

October 28, from 9am-5pm. ETF will have a booth among other non-profit organizations. Come and say "Hi!" between listening to folk music and enjoying delicious chanterelle soup!

# Planting on East 18th Avenue



by Jeff Lanza

Volunteers planted 41 new streetside trees along the north side of East 18th Avenue between Agate and Harris Streets as part of a nearly completed City of Eugene bicycle and pedestrian enhancement project. Native tree species of Oregon ash and cascara were planted with black tupelo (*Nyssa sylvatica*) in the parkstrips. Native white alder and swamp white oak (*Quercus micolor*) were planted within several larger stormwater treatment areas.

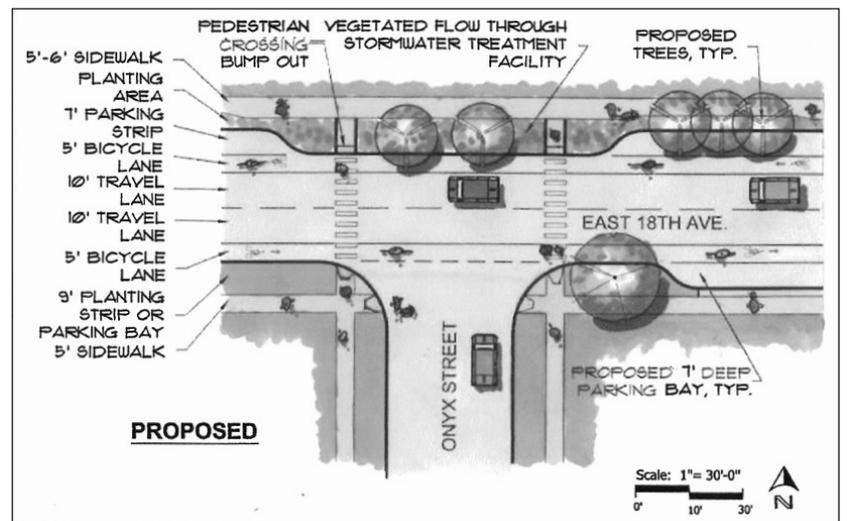
Fulfilling the City of Eugene's TransPlan goals, this enhancement project was to include new street trees and other landscape features to improve the environment for walking and bicycling along this busy section of 18th Avenue. Eighteen months before construction began, community workshops were conducted. Workshop participants included local residents, the University of Oregon, and ETF. In addition to increasing tree canopy, existing vehicle lanes were reduced in width; bike lanes were created on both sides of the street; and wider sidewalks along with vegetated storm water treatment areas were incorporated with improved pedestrian crossings where East 18th Avenue intersects Emerald, Onyx, and Harris Streets.

ETF hopes to encourage more fall tree planting projects in the future as the conditions are ideal with workable soils that are still warm and winter rains have not yet saturated the ground. Fall planting also gives the new trees more time to establish root systems before the demands of the heat and drought of the summer growing season.

Photos on this page by Mark Snyder, Rick Olkowski, and Jeff Lanza.



Above left, view of East 18th Avenue just south of Hayward Field during planting on October 6. Above right, understory plants complement the newly planted trees and add color to the parkstrips.



This drawing by the Engineering Division of the City of Eugene's Public Works Department shows a typical section of the proposed project at East 18th Avenue and Onyx Street.



There is never a lack of enthusiastic volunteers, big or little, at ETF plantings!



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# ETF Programs for Volunteers

by Doris Wimber

After 10 years of hard work, much success and over 1500 trees planted, ETF is looking for more help with our expanding program. The board members listed below are carrying very heavy loads for ETF and have the most urgent needs for help.

**Jeff Lanza**, the Planting Chairman, has an excellent and loyal group of planters who work on Saturday mornings from October to April. This group has a good time, rain or shine, and families are welcome. As Jeff says "...they are our future and it is an excellent learning experience for them to participate in the planting of new trees that they will get to see grow over the years. Almost all of our projects in the past years have had children of various ages involved." Call Jeff at 342-2183 or e-mail [jwlanza1@yahoo.com](mailto:jwlanza1@yahoo.com).

**Tree Tagging:** About half of our trees need labels attached that indicate species and show the ETF logo. This would mean carefully following a map to the locations and placing the labels on the trees. Working in one area or in many would be welcome.

**Tree Monitor:** This may be our simplest job. We would like to have people from various parts of town keep an eye on ETF's plantings by reporting storm damage, water stress, etc. This job could be upgraded to include a

little weeding, pruning (with training), and watering if needed. These actions would help the survival of our young trees. Call Doris for these two jobs, at 345-4262 or e-mail [dorisrw@efn.org](mailto:dorisrw@efn.org).

**Tree Steward:** This program was developed by ETF and the City of Eugene. The city provides funding for the program which gives 20 hours of training in tree care and awards a title at completion of the program. These new talents are then welcomed at our completed tree projects. Call Alby at 988-0318 or e-mail [belgianwolf@earthlink.net](mailto:belgianwolf@earthlink.net).

**Alby Thoumsin**, President and Education Chairman, would like to have a list of people to call on for help with our booth at special events such as Mt. Pisgah's spring and fall festivals, Eugene Celebration, LCC Garden Tour and others. Volunteers usually work two-hour shifts to take names of prospective members, hand out literature, sell T-shirts, and answer questions. This is a good place to learn about the ETF program since board members are usually present to handle the more detailed questions. Volunteering sometimes means free admission to the event. We would also welcome help with our annual meeting in winter, "The Celebration of Trees." Call Doris at 345-4262 or e-mail [dorisrw@efn.org](mailto:dorisrw@efn.org).

**Phil Carroll**, our past President, was formerly in charge of advocacy and continues to provide assistance to citizens concerned about tree issues. He will train people interested in learning to gather information and presenting it to various agencies and meetings as they come up, sometimes rapidly. We often hear about issues affecting trees just days before action is planned. These volunteers need to attend occasional board meetings (including ETF board meetings) to keep up with the action. This is exciting, challenging work and very important to the community. Call Phil at 343-0998 or e-mail [phil\\_tami\\_sf@yahoo.com](mailto:phil_tami_sf@yahoo.com).

**Erik Burke**, a long-time board member and our current Treasurer, does just about everything else. He would do even more if he could share the labor with others. He could use help on our website, maintaining the data base, helping write articles for ETF's newsletter, general office work, and fund raising. Call Erik at 338-9743 or e-mail [erikburke@gmail.com](mailto:erikburke@gmail.com).

As the saying goes, many hands make light work. We have short- and long-term jobs available and every little bit helps. Many thanks for your past support and for a more beautiful Eugene.