



# RITree Sentinel

“Dedicated to Sustaining and Improving Rhode Island’s Tree Resources”

## TREE ACTION: ARBOR DAY APRIL 27, 2007

### Arbor Day 2007

Arbor Day is celebrated in Rhode Island on the last Friday in April. This year that date falls on Friday, April 27. By the time this newsletter reaches you, RITree will be in the last stages of planning for this annual “tree holiday.” We’re proud to announce that this year’s festivities should be as fun-filled, entertaining, and socially satisfying as those held in the past. We hope you’ll join us at one or more of these events. Here’s a brief review of some of the things you can do to help us celebrate.

Our Arbor Day season actually kicks off with the children’s Arbor Day Poster Contest. The contest has been expanded this year beyond grade 5, to also include grades 6,7& 8. (See page 4 for details) Our congratulations to the winners! You can view the winning posters on RITree Web page [www.RITree.org](http://www.RITree.org). Keep checking back throughout April, for notices of events in your community as well.

Two educational lectures, featuring RITree’s Technical Advisor, John Campanini were planned. On Saturday, John participated in the Master Gardener’s Spring Seminar held at the URI, Kingston Campus. ‘Selecting and Caring For Urban Trees’ was the subject of the talk.

On Tuesday evening, April 26 at 7:30pm, he’ll be at the Barrington Public Library giving a talk entitled, ‘Community Trees: An Invaluable Yet Diminishing Resource.’ The public is invited to attend. For more information on how to register please contact Lauri Burke of the Barrington Public Library at 401-247-1920 ext 316.

Last, but not least, will be the Arbor Day tree planting ceremonies. As of this writing, there



are 58 groups (garden clubs, cities and towns, non-profits, etc.), scheduled to hold one or more planting events across Rhode Island and Southeastern Massachusetts. A total of 82 trees will be distributed by RITree to be used for the ceremonial plantings. Most events will take place on Friday, April 27th, but others will occur on either the Saturday before or after this date. Group applica-

tions show that schools, public parks, community centers, and even historic buildings/sites will benefit from the Arbor Day plantings. They also show that at least one Arbor Day event will take place in at least 30 of the 39 cities and towns in Rhode Island. So there’s a good chance one is being held near you.

Call Jeanne Current at RITree 401-861-1995 for the time, date and location of an Arbor Day planting ceremony either in your community or close by.

Finally, The **Mihailides Family Trust** is once again sponsoring RITree’s Arbor Day Program in 2007. This is the 4<sup>th</sup> year in a row they have done so. Very little of the above would have been possible without their help. We thank the **Mihailides Family** for their generous support and look forward to continuing this very successful partnership in the future.

Director of the Arbor Day Program is Steven Pilz, ASLA

Happy Arbor Day Everyone!

### POINTS OF INTEREST

**CHANGE OF DATE:** for RITree Annual Conference (*see p. 3*)

**RITree Arbor Day Poster Contest Winners** (*see p. 4*)

**Tree Care Tips** (*see p. 4*)

**Newport Tree Commission A Profile** (*see p. 2*)

**Tree Steward Education Course** (*see p. 7*)

**RI State Arbor Day Ceremony**  
To Be held April 27 at Roger Williams National Monument in Providence. “A liberty Tree Will Be Planted”. See our Website for Final Details.

# NEWPORT TREE COMMISSION— A Profile

by Margie Flanders



One of the oldest and most active municipal Tree Commissions in the state, the Newport Tree Commission was formed in the early 1990s. Newport also passed a Tree Ordinance at that time and created the position of Tree Warden for the city, all thanks to the hard work and successful lobbying by leaders and members of the Newport Tree Society.

The nine Commission members are appointed by City Council and serve up to two three-year terms. They meet every other month, usually at City Hall, with Trees and Parks Supervisor (and Tree Warden) Scott Wheeler. Interested citizens are invited to attend. In fact, increasing public awareness of the value of trees and their role in defining Newport continues to be a high priority of the Tree Commission and the Tree Society. The commission often stays in touch with Commission alumni who continue to push for good treescapes. The current Newport Tree Society includes some of those members.



A scanning of minutes from past meetings shows the variety and scope of issues that come before the Commission. Among many other topics, the group deals with the care of elderly Specimen Trees for which Newport is famous, as well as the need to replace 200 trees a year to keep a healthy and vibrant urban forest. There is always the challenge of how to subsidize spring and fall street tree planting programs, and how to work with property owners to minimize the hazards created by trees and shrubs growing low over sidewalks, streets and traffic signs. The group faces concern about how road and curb construction threatens trees, and they use their collective voice to ask City and State officials to intervene and to think about trees when planning such projects.

Longtime member and past Chair, David Brown says, "Looking ahead, we are exploring ways to have more influence on protection and management of private trees, especially when major properties are being redeveloped. Maybe a stronger Tree Ordinance or a Landscape Ordinance will help. At the same time, we face resistance against encroaching too much on private rights." Addressing many of the same issues as RITree, the Newport Tree Commission takes the long view, as well as tackling the day-to-day issues of tree management.

Newport is known for her regal trees.

Despite ongoing concerns about City funding, and grants becoming scarcer, the Commission is in good hands, as it continues its work in the 21st century. The current Chair, Susan Ruf, says "I have been awed by Newport's natural and historic beauty since my first visit here in the 1980s and I believe its trees are a major factor in that beauty. I want to help protect and enhance Newport's treescape, and I believe the Tree Commission has an important role to play in doing that." She also echoes what many of us on the RITree Council, and many folks in Newport, have known for years: that Scott Wheeler is one of Newport's great resources, and she is excited to be in a position to reinforce the great work he is doing.

Vice Chairman James Sullivan brings a variety of perspectives to his work for the trees of Newport. As a Commission member, he has combined his interest in public service, his love of trees, and his work in the field of psychology to create a program called "Bridging The Ages." The program brings together elderly and young residents from the same low income housing developments, to plant trees, giving them a sense of pride in their neighborhood and fostering a mentor relationship between them. This program



and Arbor Day celebrations represent the other side of their work: building community through trees.

This is the work that was started by a determined and enthusiastic tree society, whose members should be very proud of what they have accomplished. The two groups, working together, provide us with an excellent model of how a city or town can accomplish what we all know is needed in our state: communities where tree resources are valued, well maintained, and where the principles of good urban forestry are implemented.

## TREE CITY USA AWARDS

"Life is just better when you're surrounded by trees. " A quote from the National Arbor Day Foundation, and a concept 11 communities have taken to heart. On behalf of the Rhode Island Division of Forest Environment and the National Arbor Day Foundation we are pleased to congratulate our 10 returning communities which are: Bristol, East Providence, Jamestown, Newport, North Providence, Pawtucket, Providence, Warren, Warwick, and West Warwick. Also we would like to welcome Portsmouth to the Tree City USA family. In Rhode Island 28% of the communities representing over 50% of the population are involved in the program. How do I get my community involved? There are four standards: 1. A Tree Board or department 2. A City Tree Ordinance 3. A Community Forestry Program with an Annual Budget of at least \$2 Per Capita and 4. An Arbor Day Observance and Proclamation. If you would like to receive further information, contact Paul Dolan at 401-647-3367.

# RITree In The News

## RITree Annual Conference Date Changed To October 12, 2007



RITree has moved its Annual Conference from spring to fall, and from Newport to Warwick. We are planning a great day of speakers, awards, a shorter RITree General Meeting, and a superb buffet luncheon. The new venue is the Aldrich Mansion, a private 70 acre estate on Warwick Neck. The grounds and view of the Bay are lovely, and we hope to organize a Tree Walk. The estate has a rich history, which you can read about at [www.aldrichmansion.com](http://www.aldrichmansion.com).

We were treated to a fascinating lecture on the use of trees in "Traffic Calming" one year, a novel concept at the time that is now widely used. We learned how urban trees can reduce crime and promote community. We've been introduced to the newest technologies used in tree management plans and inventories, before most municipalities.

Experts have addressed us on the threat of various pests and diseases, and advised us on early preventative measures that may have prevented epidemics.

Presenters in the field of Urban Planning have offered cutting edge lectures on the benefits of underground utilities, the need for tree ordinances, and news about cities that have

formed partnerships with developers to effectively regulate trees on private property, with a win/win outcome.

Our reputation as a respected and productive Tree Council has enabled us to attract the best and the brightest in the field of Urban Forestry and related areas of interest. This year will be no different. We are now in the process of pulling together another dynamic and informative program. The theme may deal with both the Ancient History of Trees, and the Future of Rhode Island's Urban Forests.

Check our Website for more details in the months to come. And be sure to mark your calendar now, and look forward to a great day of learning and fellowship, in a beautiful setting.

## **Champion Tree—Champion Tree Update**

It's been six months since RITree began the **Helen Walker Raleigh Champion Tree Program**. The program's goal is to find and profile the biggest trees by species in Rhode Island. Later, we plan to work with the owners of these champion trees to preserve and protect them. We already have state of the art software up and running and a database with approximately 350 tree records.

Public participation is paramount if this project is to prove successful. We need your help to bring these big trees to our attention! Either download our Champion Tree Form from the RITree Web site [www.RITree.org](http://www.RITree.org) or email us with the information at [ritree@ritree.org](mailto:ritree@ritree.org) According to information supplied by program partner, The Natural History Survey, there are about 273 native and introduced species in Rhode Island waiting to be discovered and crowned as champions. A tree with the highest point total by species using the scoring system developed by the American Forestry Association is declared the species champion. As of March 1, the five biggest trees, based on total points, in Rhode Island are:

| <u>Species</u>      | <u>Location</u> | <u>Total Points</u> |
|---------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| European Beech      | Newport         | 431                 |
| European Plane-tree | Newport         | 387                 |
| Silver Maple        | Glocester       | 371                 |
| Copper Beech        | Newport         | 370                 |
| White Oak           | Smithfield      | 343                 |



*The Helen Walker Raleigh Champion Tree Program is generously supported with a grant from the Helen Walker Raleigh Tree Care Trust managed by The Rhode Island Foundation.*

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## Trees And Art: The Arbor Day Poster Contest

Under the direction of Pauline Smith, with help from Matt Sweet and Jeanne Current, the National Arbor Day Foundation Poster Contest reached out this year to more 5th graders from more schools, and the posters started coming in February. The theme this year was "Trees Are Terrific, and so are forests", and it was fascinating and inspiring to see how the youngsters interpreted the theme through their artwork.

This year we also invited posters from 6,7 & 8th grades, from community groups as well as schools. RITree's volunteer judges had chosen the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners by early March. The winners were announced at an Awards Reception held on March 14, in the Governor's Chamber Room on the 2nd Floor of the Rhode Island State Capitol. The reception was for all poster participants, their families and teachers, and RITree members. The winning posters were on display along the staircase in the State Capitol during the last two weeks of March, and can be viewed on the RITree Website after March 21st.

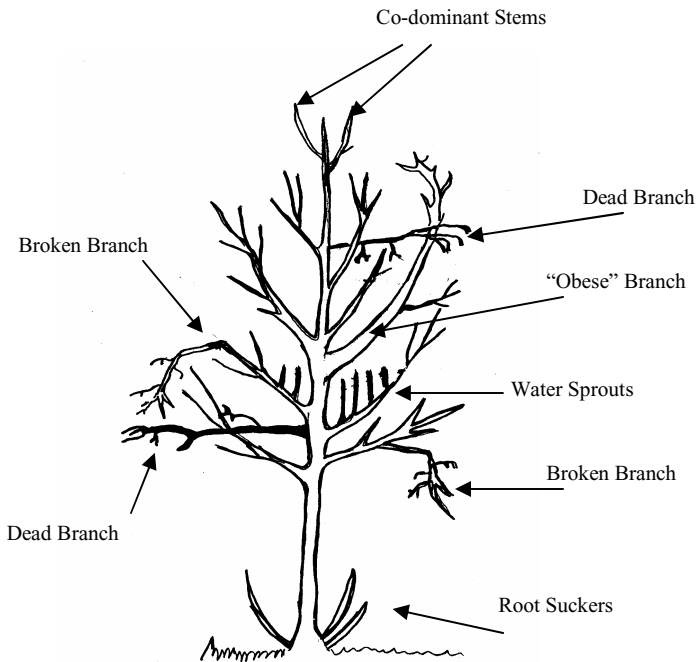
The enthusiasm and appreciation these young people have for trees is cause for celebration, and gives us hope for the future of Rhode Island's trees. Thanks to all who participated, and congratulations to the winners.

2007  
National Arbor Day Foundation  
Poster Contest Winners  
5<sup>th</sup> Grade

First Place  
Caroline Roughneen...  
Judith Fitzgerald, Teacher  
St Philmena School  
Second Place  
Hollis Hanna  
Miss Gallagher, Teacher  
Lincoln Central Elementary  
Third Place  
Stephanie Jackvony  
Patrice Beverly/Martha Scholes, Teachers  
Cranston/Johnston Catholic Regional

2007  
RITree Arbor Day Poster  
Contest Winners  
6-8 Grades

First Place  
Matthew Henry Smith  
St Pius V School  
Second Place  
Chelsea Brennan  
Good Sheperd School  
Third Place  
Kweyono Kaine  
Sophia Academy



Tree Flaws Figure 1

## Tree Selection Checklist

Spring is a good time to plant a tree. Soil moisture is in ample supply and hot, drying winds not yet a concern. So don't delay.

Replace that long-dead tree or simply plant a new one to commemorate a family birthday, Mother's Day, or even Arbor Day. As every Tree Stewards' Class graduate knows, planting success starts with proper tree selection. Good plant structure is a must. Follow the 4 steps outlined below. They will help you to choose only the healthiest tree with the best form.

1. Choose a plant with a single leading terminal shoot located at the top of the tree (i.e. No co-dominant stems).
2. Select a plant with good branch spacing with U-shaped crotches as opposed to one with tight, vertical, crowded branches with V-shaped crotches.
3. Choose only plants with a straight, solid trunk free of bark wounds and/or improper pruning cuts.
4. Select a specimen with a visible flare at the base of the trunk (i.e. avoid trees with poorly tapered, pole-like formed trunks).

## Tree Steward's Tree Care Tip

Late winter—early spring is the best time of year to train developing trees for good branch structure. So get out your hand-pruners, loppers, and saw and follow these simple pruning practices.

First, sanitize the tree of any dead, dying or broken branches. Next, eliminate water-sprouts (small, upright shoots) growing along the trunk, or any suckering shoots arising from near the root crown (see figure 1).

Now, inspect the upper crown of the tree. Does it have a single dominant leader to guide the future development of the tree canopy?

If the answer is no, do the following:

1. Choose the stem that will make the best leader.
2. Either remove or shorten the other competing branches.
3. In step #2 remove a branch with a narrow-angled crotch (V-shaped); shorten those with wide-angled crotches (U-shaped).

Last, but not least, look for any limb whose stem size is greater than half the diameter of the parent branch to which it is attached. These "obese" branches are growing too fast and need to be slowed. This can be done by reducing their length.

In this instance, make the final cut above a lateral shoot at least 1/3 the diameter of the stem being cut.

Finally, use only sharp cutting tools. Also, remember to cut outside of branch collars and branch bark ridges. This will help to encourage the formation of wound-wood and prevent the likelihood of wood decay. Repeat these steps each year as needed.

This tree care tip and more are taught in the Tree Stewards Education Program. For details on this program, contact RITree at 401-861-1995 or by e-mailing at [RITree@RITree.org](mailto:RITree@RITree.org)



# Around the State

## CITY OF PROVIDENCE TO IMPLEMENT NEW TREE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

## Providence/Cranston

The City of Providence will soon be implementing a new tree management program called **TreeKeeper**. Created by the Davey Resource Group, this software is designed for municipalities looking to better track and manage their urban forests and forestry programs. Once operational, TreeKeeper will track constituent calls, inspection reports, and work orders. The source of the system's baseline data is from the 2006 Providence Tree Tally, which will constantly be updated through daily use and routine work. TreeKeeper also has GIS mapping capabilities, allowing for efficient routing of inspections and tree crews. More information is available at: <http://www.treekeeperonline.com/treekeeper.shtm>

Speaking of the tree inventory, City Forester Doug Still will be hosting a public talk to share and display the recently completed tree inventory results. Providence residents and inventory volunteers will have a chance to see the results of the inventory and to discuss the big picture with regard to Providence urban forest. Date and location to be announced.

-Tom Morra



Children of the Silver Lake Community Center participated with Mary Kincaid (shown in picture) of the RITree Council in a program about the importance of trees in their community. They learned about the trees at the center and the seeds that fell from their branches. They played the "Tree Need" game to show what is needed for a tree to grow. Everyone had fun and our future tree stewards are off to an early start.

## Burrillville

Paul Roselli recently gave a presentation to Burrillville land owners explaining the new tax incentives for donating conservation easements. Although aimed mainly at working farms, owners of tree farms and wood lots who receive income from their farm or wood lot also stand to benefit.

In short, the new tax law:

Raises the maximum deduction a landowner can take for donating a conservation easement from 30% of their adjusted gross income to 50%; allows farmers to deduct 100% of their income if the majority of their income comes from farming or forestry; and extends the carry-forward period for a donor to take tax deductions for a voluntary conservation easement donations from 5 to 15 years.

The downside is that, as currently enacted, these breaks apply only to donations of conservation easements created during 2006 and 2007. Time is short.

For more information, contact Paul Roselli, president of the Burrillville Land Trust at [proselli@cox.net](mailto:proselli@cox.net) or contact your estate planning professional, tax advisor or the Council on Foundations, [www.cof.org](http://www.cof.org)

## WHAT'S UP IN YOUR COMMUNITY?

RITree would love to hear from any Tree Stewards, Tree Wardens, Conservation Commissions or Tree Boards, or RITree members, etc. who can report on tree-related events, plantings, programs, or tree policy issues in their city or town. Send any news to:

[ritree@ritree.org](mailto:ritree@ritree.org)

### Please take time to renew your council membership!

Please take time to renew by responding to your renewal letter or by filling out the membership box provided in this newsletter. Help support the council — it's an ongoing work!

Leaf \$35.00                      Trunk \$100.00

Branch \$50.00                      Forest \$250.00

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ ST \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Tel: H \_\_\_\_\_ W \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card# VC or MC \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Quick Tree Announcements

## Land Trusts E-News

Interested in environmental issues that affect all of RI? Want information on RI's land protection community? Consider subscribing to the RI Land Trusts E-news, the Newsletter of the RI Land Trusts Council. Their listings of events, lectures and conferences are extensive, and cover a variety of interests. Send an e-mail request to [rfriday@tnc.org](mailto:rfriday@tnc.org).

## JAYCEES of Kent County

The JAYCEES are always searching for fun-loving people who enjoy the outdoors, and they will have several Spring, Summer and Fall events going on for anyone's planting/blossoming interest.

Visit their Web site for information on Earth Day activities, Ecology Day (May 5), Corporate Cares Community Day, and more.

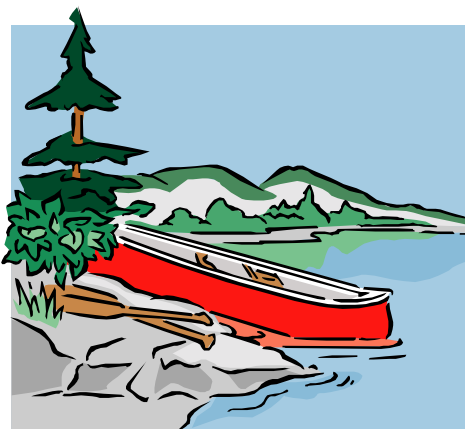
[www.kentcountyjaycees.org](http://www.kentcountyjaycees.org)

## WEB SITE

[www.RITree.org](http://www.RITree.org)

Be sure to check out our new look! Lisa Beaulieu, our web master has been having fun creating a new format. If you have any comments or ideas be sure to send them to us.

## Living on a Lake



A community's concern for Burrillville's water resources brought a discussion about Wallum Lake. The seminar co-sponsored by Burrillville Conservation Commission, Northern RI Conservation District, URI Master Gardener Program had a wonderful presentation and panel discussion on Wallum Lake's water quality issues. It was held at the Burrillville High School Auditorium on March 29th, 2007.

The program included *Living on a Lake—Healthy Landscapes*, presented by Cindy Gianfrancesco, URI Master Gardener. Her talk included identifying non-point source pollution and how to actively protect your drinking water well. **Panel Discussion – Use Impacts at Wallum Lake** Moderated by Scott P. Rabideau. Representatives from National Park Service, RI Dept of Health, & the Douglas Conservation Commission were also present.

For more information about living on a lake please call the Northern RI Conservation District at 401-949-1480, or visit [www.landwaterconnection.org](http://www.landwaterconnection.org)  
Northern RI Conservation District-URI Master Gardeners-Burrillville Conservation Commission

Jump start your home garden by enrolling in  
Roger Williams Park Botanical Center's

### **Spring Gardening School**

Presented in partnership with the URI College of the Environment and  
Life Sciences Extension and Outreach Center

Monday afternoons- 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm  
April 2<sup>nd</sup> through May 21<sup>st</sup>  
at the RWP Botanical Center-Mediterranean Room

Class fee is \$150 and includes all class materials. Enrollment is limited to 75 people to ensure adequate seating and accessibility to the instructors. Registration forms may be obtained at Roger Williams Park or at the URI CELS Extension and Outreach Center (3 East Alumni Avenue, on the URI Kingston Campus).

For more information, contact the URI CELS Extension and Outreach Center at 401-874-2900, or by e-mail at [ceec@etal.uri.edu](mailto:ceec@etal.uri.edu).

## **BECOME A RHODE ISLAND TREE STEWARD!**

*Would you like to learn more about:*

- Tree biology
- Tree identification
- Tree planting & pruning
  - Tree health
  - Urban forestry
    - Soils
- Untold benefits of trees
- 

Tree Stewardship combines learning about and caring for trees, as well as understanding how people and trees can best grow together! The classes this spring are to be held at the Smithfield Senior Center Deerfield Park, 1 William J Hawkins, Jr. Trail. There is a map on the town Web site: [www.smithfieldri.com/deerfield.htm](http://www.smithfieldri.com/deerfield.htm)

SIX EVENING CLASSES: 6:30 TO 9:00 PM  
Tuesdays April 17 -May 22

See application on back page.



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Please register me for the upcoming **Spring 2007 Tree Stewards Education Course** in Smithfield, RI  
 (please print)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ ST \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Tel: H \_\_\_\_\_ W \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card# VC or MC \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

*Please return with **\$55.00** check  
 or credit card # and exp. date to*

RITREE COUNCIL  
 P O BOX 6144  
 PROVIDENCE, RI 02940

*For immediate and secure registration  
 by credit card or for more information,  
 call or e-mail: Jeanne / office systems*

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