

NEWS

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Forestry awards recognize Oregonians committed to community tree care

Ambitious tree planting efforts and innovative approaches to community development are among the success stories that will be recognized at this year's Urban and Community Forestry conference.

Now in their 17th year, the awards, jointly hosted by Oregon Community Trees (OCT) and the Oregon Department of Forestry, recognize the accomplishments of individuals, groups and businesses who go the extra mile to enhance and maintain healthy community forests.

This year's recipients are slated to be recognized at the annual Oregon Urban and Community Forestry Conference Thursday June 3rd, at the Oregon Garden Resort in Silverton. State Senator Richard Devlin will present two of the awards.

Award categories and recipients –

Citizen Volunteer and Civic Organization: Roberta Schwarz and the White Oak Committee

Roberta Schwarz of West Linn is being recognized in the volunteer category for her work with the White Oak Committee over four years, raising over a million dollars to purchase and preserve part of a rare Oregon white oak savanna property ripe for development. The committee itself is also being honored as an award recipient in the 'Civic Organization' category. Senator Richard Devlin and Representative Scott Brunn both sent letters of nomination and support for this project.

Professional: Nancy Buley

Nancy Buley, Marketing and Communications Director for J. Frank Schmidt & Son Co., one of Oregon's, and the nation's premier nurseries, will be honored with a Professional category award for her years of tireless advocacy for trees. She recently completed a visit to all of Oregon's congressional and senate offices in Washington, D.C., lobbying for tree planting legislation with the Alliance for Community Trees and Portland's Friends of Trees.

Development: Pringle Creek Community, Salem

The Pringle Creek Community of Salem is recipient of an urban forestry award in the Development category. The community successfully preserved more than eighty percent of the site's existing trees during development. The community is being recognized for its innovative approaches to trees, landscaping and homebuilding. James Santana, Director of Development, will accept the award.

Government: Clean Water Services – Randy Lawrence

Randy Lawrence and Clean Water Services earned an urban forestry award in the government category for their strong track record in tree planting in the Tualatin River Watershed. Lawrence's "Tree for All" program set an unusual goal to plant 2 million trees in 20 years in the Tualatin River watershed, and they are currently ahead of schedule.

President's Award: Ed Jensen

Ed Jensen, who serves as Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at Oregon State University's College of Forestry, is receiving the President's Award for his long record of accomplishment in the fields of education, outreach and advocacy. Jensen advises and educates students, and is a co-author of the popular color-illustrated handbook "Trees to Know in Oregon." Jensen also develops, conducts and evaluates natural resource education programs for various audiences at the college. OSU dean Hal Salwasser calls Jensen "an exceptional teacher and mentor who makes trees the focus of his talents."

Professional category: Jennifer Wilson and the Wetlands Conservancy

Jennifer Wilson of Tualatin is the recipient of a 2010 Oregon Urban and Community Forestry award in the professional category. The Wetlands Conservancy planted more than 10,000 bare root native wetland species, shrubs and plants – as well as 5,000 willow and dogwood cuttings this past spring. "Jennifer has a passion for opening the eyes of children to the natural world around them," adds Rick Zenn, president of Oregon Community Trees.

Business category: Ascending the Giants

Ascending the Giants is an ongoing series of expeditions lead by two arborists, Brian French and Will Koomjian, to measure the largest tree of each species. The team is able to capture some of the first and only footage inside the canopies of these remarkable trees. For its cutting edge photographic and video work at sharing the stories of the ecological importance of champion trees, Ascending the Giants will receive OCT's Business category award.

Oregon Tree City of the Year: McMinnville

OCT's efforts to advocate for planting and caring for trees in the state extends to wanting to give special recognition to those cities who take extra steps to assure trees are planted, protected and maintained in their communities.

McMinnville, host of OCT's March quarterly board meeting, is the 2010 winner of the Oregon Tree City of the Year award. Mayor Rick Olson and Planning Director Doug Montgomery both work hard to assure that this historic community keeps its charm and attractive livability by caring for its tree resources.

Better communities through tree care

"Oregon Citizens are indeed fortunate to have such an effective group of citizens leading the way to improved lives and better communities through tree planting and care," says OCT President Rick Zenn.

"These recipients are to be commended for their efforts to improve the livability of our cities," said Paul Ries, manager of ODF's urban forestry program. "Their actions are notable for showing creativity, initiative and leadership in community tree care programs that all cities can aspire to and achieve."

Anyone can make nominations for the awards, which are given annually for leadership in community and urban forestry.

For information on how to make a nomination for next year's awards, contact Oregon Community Trees at www.oregoncommunitytrees.org or the Oregon Department of Forestry's urban and community forests program.

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