

VCE Loudoun County Advanced Master Gardener Tree Stewards - 2014

LCMG Tree Steward Training

This past year the Loudoun Tree Stewards completed their second “homegrown” Tree Steward training course for the Loudoun County Master Gardeners (LCMG). Within the Master Gardener organization, Tree Steward is an advanced level of education and training, supported by Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE). The Tree Stewards concentrate on educating not only their fellow Master Gardeners, but the larger Loudoun community on tree-related issues. We actively promote the social, economic, and mental health benefits of trees, choosing projects that serve the residents of the county.

We currently have 25 active members in our group that are partnering with local towns and non-profit organizations (highlighted in green) on multiple projects around the county:

Town of Leesburg Canopy Enhancement Project

The project was to find ways to increase Leesburg’s tree canopy by surveying four residential neighborhoods for areas in which new tree placement might be possible. The suggestions include plantings on public and private properties and indicate generally the type of tree needed (i.e. evergreen/deciduous, desired maximum height, etc.). The data, compiled using the town’s GIS mapping and visual survey, has been turned over to the Town. In November the data will be analyzed and a meeting will be set up with the LCMG Tree Stewards to discuss and plan for test planting to begin next spring. More neighborhoods are slated for future surveying in the spring. www.leesburgva.org



The Chapman DeMary Trail Project

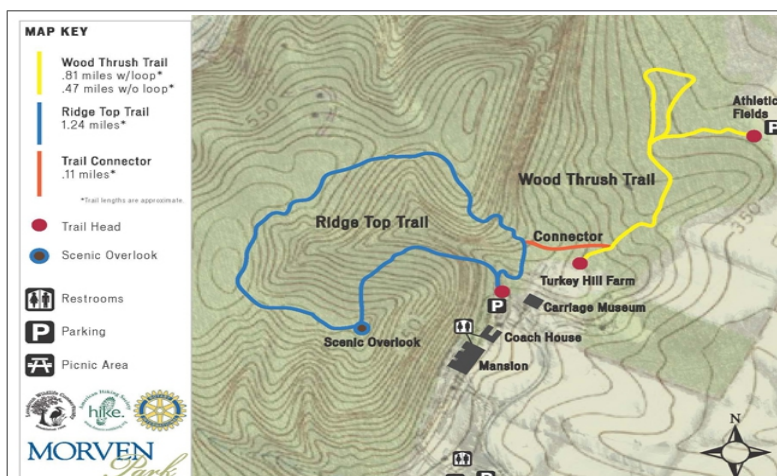
This team completed a tree and shrub identification project for **The Nature Generation**, a stewardship non-profit organization for youth. The team provided species information in spreadsheet form, including distinguishing characteristics, historical uses, interesting facts, and ecological function/wildlife uses. NatGen has used the information to make signage for some of the trees and woody plants located next to the trail in Purcellville. A tree information table and a guided tree walk on Oct. 25th were provided to help them celebrate the 5th anniversary of the nature trail’s establishment. The day was very well attended, including *TWO local mayors!* Future work will include developing tree/shrub “fact sheets” with additional information for them to post to their website that visitors can access with QR codes on the signage. www.natgen.org

www.natgen.org

Morven Park Trail Project

This team is working to identify, map, and research trees on two nature trails at Morven Park, a local historic property in Leesburg (Wood Thrush Trail - 8.1 miles; Ridge Top Trail - 1.24 mile loop). Findings will be presented to the **Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy**, sponsor of the trail, a wonderful non-profit that teams with the LCMG organization and its mission. The information collected is to be included on individual tree ID signs and brochures.

www.loudounwildlifeconservancy.org



Taken from the Morven Park website: <http://www.morvenpark.org/explore/trails>



Oatlands Historic House and Gardens Tree Walk Projects

The team planned the route and content of a tree walk for a Loudoun treasure, Oatlands Historic House and Gardens, sponsored on November 8. The LCMG Tree Stewards conducted the walk, which addressed each chosen tree's history and approximate time of planting—many 100 to 200 years ago—including the state champion hornbeam and former state champion ginkgo. The role of the trees in the economy and the environment, historically and today, was stressed. This walk examined trees on the west side of the mansion. Next spring the Tree Stewards will conduct a second walk examining trees on the east side, which includes many spring flowering trees and a huge *Larix decidua* (European Larch). www.oatlands.org



Town of Lovettsville Projects

This team is researching a Big Trees project in Loudoun County. The project is gathering info on: species, circumference, height, crown spread, GPS coordinates, and photos for 15 homeowner trees in Lovettsville, with a total of approximately 40 trees to be researched. They are still working on the histories of different trees in this group and hope to create a tri-fold brochure with photos of the star trees. Coordinating with the Town of Lovettsville, they will create the first annual Big Tree Walk in 2015. A second project is a tree planting video. The script is written and they are in the process of gathering info to create an accurate and entertaining video that can be used not only for the 20180 zip code, but for any other part of Loudoun County that would care to use it. (Perhaps other counties?) When finished, the plan is to have it up on the Lovettsville Town homepage. *Taxodium distichum* (bald cyprus) www.lovettsvilleva.gov



English Ivy Project

This project was to create a brochure that would address the issue of ivy growing up and choking trees. With many historic areas in Loudoun County, the tendency to let ivy grow up trees is rampant. An English ivy tri-fold brochure was printed and used at the Hillsboro Heritage Day, the Family Stream Day and the Chapman DeMary table to educate residents on the invasiveness of the ivy to trees and hardscapes. The LCMG website has been updated to reflect all this information and more at:

<http://loudouncountymastergardeners.org/programs/tree-stewards>

One of our Tree Stewards' goals is to create a brochure every year to help the communities in Loudoun County. Our first one was on proper mulching techniques and now the control of English Ivy. Maybe next year will be the proper planting of trees in neighborhood settings to coincide with the Lovettsville and Leesburg cities' push for more trees to be planted!

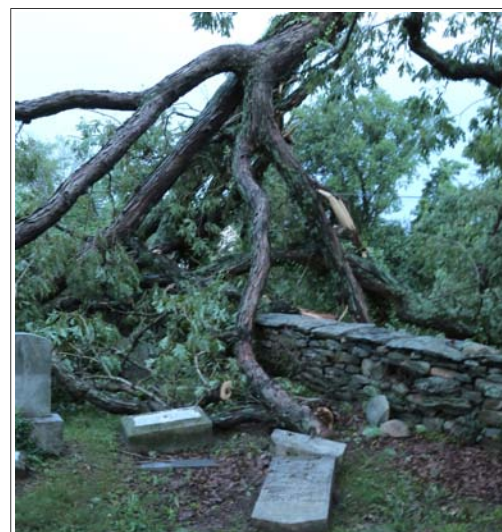
Projects shared with our **LCMG Community Partners Team** and the LCMG Tree Stewards:

Town of Lovettsville Program

Several projects, as stated above, were developed as an outgrowth of building a relationship with the Town of Lovettsville. Based on understanding the Town's needs, we were able to strategically match their objectives with Loudoun County's Water Implementation Project (WIP). Lovettsville agreed to partner with the County, along with additional entities—which included **Piedmont Environmental Council** and the LC Master Gardeners and Tree Stewards—in an effort to obtain a US Wildlife and Fisheries grant for storm water erosion and other water quality projects. This \$200,000 grant was awarded to PEC for administration, with the majority of the funds earmarked for Lovettsville. This is an ongoing partnership for all, with projects scheduled in 2015 and beyond. www.loudoun.gov; www.pecva.org

Town of Hillsboro "Releaf" Project

Two of our Loudoun Tree Stewards are part of "Releaf" Hillsboro, a newly formed group under the leadership of Randy Lawrence of Casey Trees. As a result of that partnership, LCMG TSs participated in the 1st Annual Hillsboro Heritage Day, serving as an educational resource to the public on the value and care of trees. A video was completed on the historic Hillsboro treescape and the tree destruction that has occurred from the 1800's through current times. It will be used in future instructional efforts. You can view the video here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v4_QWfFC2eA&feature=youtu.be



Storm damage 2014

November 2014

Text by: Cathy Anderson & Carol Ivory
Photo credits: Edye Clark, Pat Hatfield, & Alta Jones