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Living in the Urban Forest

A Cause for Celebration: Arbor Day in Shaker

TREE CITY

From the majestic maple to the giant oak, trees are one of Shaker's most awe inspiring and notable assets. For 29 consecutive years, the city has been designated a Tree City USA by the National Arbor Day Foundation. It should come as no surprise that Arbor Day is cause for celebration in this town.

In 2001, the City marked Arbor Day with a festival held in Southerly Park. On a rotating basis, teachers and students from one Shaker elementary school are invited to plan the celebration and take part in the planting of a tree, usually a magnolia in the park. This year students from Lomond Elementary School do the honors in late April.

Past ceremonies have included poems, songs, posters, and even dance performances. The ceremony ends with the planting of the Arbor Day tree. Each tree is marked with a wooden post and a plaque indicating the year it was planted, the type of tree, and the school that planted it.

In addition to the ceremony, Shaker students in grades 3-12 are invited to create a tree-themed poster or poem for the annual Arbor Day contest sponsored by the Tree Advisory Board and the Shaker Library. Prizes are awarded. For information on the contest, contact Margaret Simon at 216-991-2030 or margaret.simon@shakerlibrary.org.

Where a single magnolia tree was originally planted 14 years ago, a grove has taken root. The annual Arbor Day celebration provides a hands-on learning opportunity for Shaker students. They learn to appreciate and understand the importance of trees, which grow and beautify their community. Shaker students can be proud of what they helped to create.

To learn more about Shaker's urban forest, sign up for the TREENews at http://bit.ly/ShakerHtsENews. It will be emailed four times per year. Also, check out the newly enhanced tree information in the Forestry and Tree Advisory Board sections at shakeronline.com/departments/public-works. SL