

# TREE TALKS

Georgia Urban Forest Council



## FALL 2013

### Be part of the national tree celebration this October.

As we move into October, we want to remind you about the national celebration of trees in communities: **National NeighborWoods Month**. Each October, National NeighborWoods Month shines a spotlight on urban and community forestry in cities and towns across the country. We want to make sure that all the good tree activities going on in Georgia are recognized and included, so we encourage you to register your October tree events at [www.NeighborWoodsMonth.org](http://www.NeighborWoodsMonth.org). It'll just take you a few minutes, and it connects your local work to a bigger national campaign that shows how much people care about trees and healthy green communities. Check out [this video from the USDA](#) asking everyone to get involved, both personally and professionally. We do great urban forestry work in Georgia -- let's show everyone else just how much we're doing.

## Circuit Rider Arborists Take to the Road

The Georgia Forestry Commission (GFC) has been allocated Urban and Community Forestry funding from the U.S. Forest Service to help communities in Georgia develop effective, sustainable community forestry programs. This funding has been used to initiate a *Circuit Rider Arborist Project* which, in partnership with the **Georgia Urban Forest Council**, will provide the services of an International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) arborist to communities wishing to develop or broaden their community forestry program. Some of the services to communities may take the form of:

- Meeting with community officials to promote the benefits of an effective community forestry program.
- Providing technical expertise and professional advice on tree management issues and activities.
- Writing, revising or evaluating tree ordinances.
- Developing effective, efficient tree boards.
- Working with current Tree City USA communities to strengthen and improve their community forestry programs.
- Encouraging and working with communities to become a Tree City USA, by providing assistance and guidance with completing required paperwork.
- Developing a management or storm mitigation plan.



From top: Connie Head, Steve Smith, and Jerry Holcomb are Georgia's 2013-14 Circuit Rider Arborists

Continued on page 8

## President's Letter

Wow! The year is three-quarters over, October is here, the fall season is nipping on summer's heels, and my time as President of the GUFC Board is almost over. Where does the time go? The answer to that age-old question is ever elusive. What is not so elusive is the amount of time it takes to run and support an organization like the GUFC. This is something that became more apparent to me during my term. Inextricably linked to time are people. I'd have to say that one of the greatest satisfactions of my being president are the people I've met and relationships that have been formed. One thing has crystalized over the past year: it takes people to make the GUFC successful in fulfilling its mission day after day.

While we are blessed with an outstanding Executive Director in Mary Lynne Beckley, she can't do it alone. We constantly need an influx of people willing to share their time and talents, their support of our programs, their spreading the good word and work. As more people get involved it could mean less time is required per person, spreading the burden, or a greater amount of time that could help grow GUFC's people power, or both.

The challenge I would submit is: let's grow GUFC's people power!

The GUFC has had many successful years, including this past year's return to "normalcy," in the economic sense. Its membership and Board has become increasingly diverse, over the years. The role it can play in our communities will continue to grow and diversify as environmental and green issues become the rule. To meet these opportunities we need to grow our supporters, constituency, and membership. We should and can be marketing ourselves, banging the drum of support. My parting plea is, let's all rally to help grow GUFC and its people power! Invite colleagues, allied professionals and others concerned with our urban forest to join our membership. Consider dedicating some free time to our programs. Plan to attend or participate in our education programs. Last but not least come to the Annual Conference and ArborJam October 23<sup>rd</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup> in Columbus and see what GUFC is all about. You will be surprised. Don't forget to bring a friend!

The GUFC has a future filled with promise and I am proud to have been a part of it in a small way. I hope my time as President has been beneficial. Thank you for a great opportunity and I look forward to seeing you at the conference.

**Rob Ryan**

Funds for this project were provided by the Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Program administered by the Georgia Forestry Commission. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political belief, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communications of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-A, Whitten Building, 14<sup>th</sup> and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410.

## From the Executive Director

Goal One of the Five Year Plan (2013-2017) for Georgia's urban forests is "promoting tree canopy and longevity at the landscape scale through the green infrastructure approach." In a few weeks, we'll meet in Columbus to learn more about green infrastructure planning, and how tree canopy is vital to green infrastructure systems. We are so appreciative of the outstanding speakers who will be travelling, from other parts of the country and all parts of our state, to bring this information to us. And because we know that liability has been on everyone's minds lately, we've invited Mark Dunteman of Natural Path Urban Forestry Consulting, to spend some time talking to attendees about how to reduce the risks and reap the benefits of a healthy urban forest. I hope to see you in Columbus.

**Mary Lynne Beckley**

## 2013 GUFC Annual Conference October 23 and 24 in Columbus

We're all set for the 23rd Georgia Urban Forest Council Annual Conference and Awards Program October 23 and 24 at the Columbus Georgia Convention and Trade Center, 801 Front Avenue, near the beautiful Columbus Riverwalk. This year, we'll explore "**Tree Canopy and Green Infrastructure:**

**Creating Vibrant and Healthy Communities.**" At this conference, we will concentrate on furthering our knowledge of green infrastructure, learn of green infrastructure successes in communities, and gain ideas on how to get it done. And for the first time, we are rolling our college canopy conference into our annual conference, providing a campus educational track for landscape and tree personnel at colleges and universities. Guest speakers will include **Karen Firehock**, Director of the Green Infrastructure Center in Charlottesville, Virginia; **Dr. Graeme Lockaby**, Center for Forest Sustainability, Auburn University; **Mike Beezhold**, Senior Planner, CDM Smith, and former Watershed Manager, Lenexa Public Works, Lenexa, KS; and many other noted experts. **Mark Bays**, U & CF Coordinator, Oklahoma, will lead us through his journey in saving the Oklahoma "Survivor Tree."



*The Columbus, Georgia Riverwalk*

Join us for excellent general session talks, concurrent sessions, roundtable sessions, tours, our annual urban forestry awards luncheon, and our annual **ArborJam** event that raises funds for the Georgia ReLeaf Program (ticket included in registration). Click on [agenda here for full list of topics, sessions, and speakers.](#)!

### Registration:

- \$135 for members (includes ArborJam admission and a \$10 donation to Georgia ReLeaf)
- \$160 for non-members (includes discounted GUFC membership, ArborJam admission and a \$10 donation to Georgia ReLeaf)

Register [here](#).

For **conference lodging information**, click [here](#).

**Continuing Education Units:** 9.25 ISA Arborist **CEUs**. 7 Society of American Foresters CFE hours. Professional development certificates available for landscape architects and all others.

**Scholarships** are available for nonprofit staff and tree boards. Two scholarship available per organization. [Click here to download an application.](#)

### **"\$12M verdict puts Savannah tree program in spotlight"**

It's no doubt that everyone has learned of the tragic [falling limb case](#) in Savannah. Many Georgia communities are now expressing concern about their urban forestry programs and liability. We've asked Mark Dunteman of **Natural Path Urban Forestry Consulting** to talk to **GUFC Annual Conference attendees** about the contributions that an urban forestry program makes in reducing a community's **liability** issues. Proactive management like tree inventories, maintenance, and management plans help reduce the fear factor. We can't get rid of liability, but we *can* lower the risk.

Register for the GUFC Annual Conference in Columbus today for this and other beneficial information.



# Food for thought: Edible Orchards offer Benefits of Trees plus Healthy Food for Communities

*Text and Photos by Robby Astrove*

Simply stated, “trees are the answer” for many environmental, social, and economic problems. There’s even a bumper sticker to prove it.

Shade, clean air, clean water, habitat, increased property value, crime reduction, emotional well-being, and improving overall quality of life are just a few benefits that are most familiar. This list is very much the jargon and justification of our industry.

For some reason, eating, or nutrition, or just “food,” rarely gets talked about. Why is this? Yet every human eats, thus creating a direct and personal relationship to trees. It is this very connection that leads us to better understand, value, advocate, and ultimately act (behavior change) in support of trees and forests. Food for thought?

Yes, do give fruit trees serious consideration for enhancing the impact of your next planting project, understanding they provide a meaningful way to connect people and trees. In Georgia, where our agricultural heritage is paramount, fruit trees really make sense and might be a tipping point for more people to value and plant trees. Hungry for more?

Fruit trees capture all of the benefits of trees we know and love plus provide ‘answers’ to the increasing and ever so serious childhood obesity epidemic. Fruit trees improve access to fresh and healthy foods supplying nutrients, vitamins, minerals to people of all ages. Orchards increase food security in “food deserts,” places where there is no access to fresh and healthy food. Fruit trees belong in communities where people live and improve health and resiliency. Fruits can be instrumental in bringing the community together, especially at planting and harvest time. With all the bounty and abundance that comes naturally to fruit trees, orchards and green jobs are a natural fit and create economic and entrepreneurial opportunities as well. Fruit trees provide so much more than just a delicious harvest; it’s a broader package of economic redevelopment, health and wellness, and beautification to say the least.

**Fact:** Fruit trees are the best long-term, most sustainable and low maintenance form of agriculture. Fruit trees equate to decades of fruit production. What an incredible return on investment, yet why aren’t we seeing more of the tree community embrace fruit trees and the planting of orchards?

Municipalities who manage public parks and urban forests cite the messy fruit droppings as a prime issue, or the rats they attract, and they require lots of chemicals, and perhaps municipal park departments lack the training and expertise to care for fruit trees.



*Kids enjoy planting fruit trees.*



*A bounty of plums from an urban orchard*

Provided are case studies, best practices, and awareness that orchards are happening in the public realm without chemicals and are successful thriving projects.

*Continued on next page*

## Selecting Species

Always select a species and variety from a local nursery that is appropriate for our climate. Be mindful about pollination requirements and, when possible, select disease resistant varieties. In Georgia, we are blessed with geographic and climactic diversity, so that means we have a large palette to choose from.

### Right tree, Right place: Community Gardens

Looking to start your first orchard? Planting fruit trees where there is already public food growing is a good place to start. Community gardens, and the folks who grow there already, understand food systems and have a vested interest and stewardship responsibility of the space. At Brownwood Park in East Atlanta you will find a diversity of berry bushes, vines, and an orchard with apples, figs, plums and more interesting trees like pomegranates, paw-paws, loquat, serviceberries, and persimmons that produce from May through November. After school and community groups help provide care, and children are learning the value of trees and where real food comes from. Gardeners and plot owners are more inclined to harvest and use fruit as to eliminate the “problem” of waste falling to the ground. We’ll just eat our way out of this perceived problem.



*Concrete Jungle foraging group at work*

### Concrete Jungle, Atlanta’s urban fruit tree foragers

Speaking of waste, Concrete Jungle has rescued and redistributed over 14,000 pounds of fruit that would otherwise fall to the ground and rot. Working with a group like this IS the solution to that messy sidewalk, rodents, and other complaints that may arise with fruit plantings. They also provide educational workshops and mulch, water, and prune trees. Municipalities can create partnerships with foraging groups to provide public education and park stewardship. Concrete Jungle has a database of over 1200 trees, many of which are public, neglected, and not under any managed care (no pruning, no spraying, no fertilizer) yet they produce abundantly! This is proof that chemicals and aggressive care is not required for results as many proclaim.

### Pruning

If there is one thing needed for fruit trees it is pruning. Pruning develops strong scaffold branches to support the forthcoming heavy load of fruit. Pruning also allows for more sun to reach the interior of the tree which increases production and helps to minimize moisture that can led to disease. Prune to remove dead, dying, and broken branches. Prune at the end of winter for best results always using sharp and clean tools.

### Small, Slow, and Simple

Do your homework and get familiar with fruit trees. Start small and select low maintenance/ disease resistant varieties suitable for our southern climate. If I had to recommend 3 trees to start with, they would be serviceberry, fig, and persimmon. All are very tough and tolerant to urban conditions and drought; two of them are native, always a plus, and they spread the harvest from May to November with figs sometimes producing a summer and fall crop.

*Continued on next page*

## Learn more about fruit trees!

Attend the annual G UFC conference and attend Keep Georgia Beautiful's session on Urban Orchards to learn more about fruit trees. More information can be gained by connecting with Concrete Jungle, Atlanta Local Food Initiative and the Fruit Tree Planting Foundation.

*Robby Astrove is an arborist and environmental educator with DeKalb County Natural Resource Management Office. He serves on the advisory board for the Atlanta Local Food Initiative, East Atlanta Farmers Market, and instructs workshops regarding edible landscape design, fruit trees and orchards. G UFC recognized Robby as the Individual Achievement Grand Award winner in 2011 for his work with fruit trees and community forestry education.*

## Seeking arborist certification? G UFC can help you prepare for the exam.

The Georgia Urban Forest Council will present a two-day arborist certification review course taught by **Consulting Urban Forester and Certified Arborist Connie Head** on October 8 and 9, 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. (both days), at the Georgia Forestry Commission headquarters in Macon. Connie will help attendees prepare for the exam with lectures and hands-on demonstrations covering Tree Biology, Tree Identification, Soil Science, Water Management, Tree Nutrition and Fertilization, Tree Selection, Installation and Establishment, Pruning, Tree Support and Lightning Protection, Diagnosis and Plant Disorders, Plant Health Care, Tree Assessment and Risk Management, Trees and Construction, Urban Forestry, Tree Worker Safety, and Climbing & Working in Trees.

Attendees should read through the ISA Arborists' Certification Study Guide to prepare for the review and the exam. An ISA Certified Arborist exam will be scheduled approximately three weeks after the review course. Attendees will be responsible for completing their own application for the exam. The study guide can be purchased at [www.isa-arbor.org](http://www.isa-arbor.org) and on Amazon.com.

**Location:** Georgia Forestry Commission headquarters, 5645 Riggins Mill Road Dry Branch, Georgia 31020  
**Date and Time:** October 8 and 9 (8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. both days) **Registration Fee:** \$100 G UFC members; \$115 non-members **ISA CEU hours** will be available for certified arborists taking the class as a refresher course.

Register at [www.gufc.org](http://www.gufc.org).

## A Walk in the Forest for Metro Scouts

The 5th annual [Walk in the Forest for Metro Atlanta Scouts](#) will be held Saturday, October 19th at the Stone Mountain Educational Annex. This event is designed to help Boy Scouts, Webelos and Cadette Girl Scouts meet most or all of the requirements of the [Forestry Merit Badge](#), [Forester Activity Pin](#) or Trees Badge.

At this event, scouts are divided into groups with fellow Boy Scouts, Webelos or Cadettes to work with professional foresters at various educational stations to learn about the benefits of trees and forests and the forestry profession.

**Educational Stations Include:** Tree and Wildlife Identification, Forest Products and Sustainability, Managing a Georgia Forest: Silvicultural Basics, Forest Health, Forest Fire Fighting: Prescribed Burning, Maps and Safety, Urban Forestry, Tree Climbing and Careers in Forestry.

This event is funded by various **corporate sponsors** and relies heavily on volunteer support from professional foresters from the Chattahoochee and Oconee Chapters of the Society of American Foresters, educators, nonprofits and federal, state and local government employees.

Are you involved with a scout troupe in the metro Atlanta area? Spaces are available in this program – register your group today!

**For more information or to register, please visit:**  
<http://walkintheforest2013.eventbrite.com/>



## DESTRUCTIVE TREE PEST DETECTED IN GEORGIA

An invasive insect responsible for the death or decline of tens of millions of ash trees in 20 states has been detected in Georgia for the first time. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, suspect emerald ash borer beetles were removed from survey traps during routine monitoring in DeKalb and Fulton counties in July. Federal officials confirmed the specimens as emerald ash borers days later, setting in motion plans to prevent its spread and educate the public.

The Georgia Invasive Species Task force is working to execute the plan. This group consists of the Georgia Department of Agriculture, Georgia Forestry Commission, University of Georgia, Georgia Department of Natural Resources and USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.



Photo: Leah Bauer, USDA Forest Service Northern Research Station, Bugwood.org

“Forestry specialists have been monitoring the emerald ash borer for more than a decade, and have been surveying for the pest since 2005,” said Robert Farris, Georgia Forestry Commission Director. “We’ll need the public’s help in stopping it from spreading further.”

According to Agriculture Commissioner Gary Black, emerald ash borers “are hitch-hikers.” Black said emerald ash borer larvae live underneath the bark of ash firewood, hidden from view. People unknowingly give the pest a ride when they move emerald ash borer firewood between counties or from home to campsite. “Everyone can help by spreading the message, ‘Don’t move firewood,’” he said.

Farris explained that while only one percent of Georgia’s forested acres contain ash trees, the potential destruction is significant. Some three million ash trees are in urban environments and another two million acres are in rural settings. Losses generated to the forest industry and the public could reach \$1 billion.



Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources - Forestry Archive, Bugwood.org

Because of known occurrences, DeKalb and Fulton counties are proposed to be quarantined to prevent potentially infested ash wood from spreading outside this area. The Georgia Forestry Commission and Georgia Department of Agriculture are developing regulations in an effort to quell the spread of emerald ash borers. These rules are in draft form now and will be available for public comment soon. Both agencies will work with forest landowners, loggers, firewood producers, nurseries, municipalities and others to insure that commerce can still occur while safeguards are in place to prevent ash borer movement.

The emerald ash borer (EAB) is a small, green metallic beetle first detected in North America in 2002 in southeastern Michigan. The emerald ash borer attacks only ash trees and all ash species – including green, white, black and blue – are at risk. Signs of emerald ash borer infestation include a general decline in the appearance of the tree, thinning of upper branches and twigs, loss of leaves, and serpentine tunnels produced by EAB larvae under the bark. Woodpeckers may often be observed removing the bark of infested trees to access the larvae.

For more information, including identification tips for landowners who suspect the presence of emerald ash borers or other invasive species on their property, visit [www.gainvasives.org/eab](http://www.gainvasives.org/eab). For more information about emerald ash borers and the proposed quarantine for Dekalb and Fulton counties, visit <http://www.gatrees.org/forest-management/forest-health/alerts-and-updates/index.cfm>. **See page 9 for information on an upcoming seminar on Emerald Ash Borer.**

### ***Circuit Rider Arborists Take to the Road, continued from page one:***

- Creating partnerships with municipal officials, community organizations and residents that bring resources to a municipality's community forestry program.
- Organizing Arbor Day events and other educational opportunities.
- Training work crews and volunteers on proper planting, pruning, and other tree care Best Management Practices.
- Encouraging communities to employ services of an ISA certified arborist. This may entail conducting workshops to prepare city workers or tree board members to take the ISA Certified Arborist exam.
- Using inventory software to evaluate the economic and environmental benefits of a community's urban forests.
- Conducting regional roundtables on topics of interest to multiple communities.
- Directing communities toward existing educational and arboricultural resources.

Services are free to communities, but are available on a limited basis to ensure that all communities that want to participate can take advantage of this opportunity. Communities are being asked to provide staff and volunteer time to work on selected projects with the Circuit Rider Arborist. This program is currently funded through May 2014.

## **GUFC Third Quarterly Program: A Special Guest and a Special Award**



Many thanks to **Professor Buck Abbey**, ASLA, (left) who traveled from Baton Rouge, Louisiana to Athens, Georgia for our Third Quarterly Program, "The Next Step for Georgia Tree Ordinances." Professor Abbey spoke to 75 attendees about the history of tree laws, how tree ordinances fit in with other community regulations, and the emerging urban forestry ordinance. Athens-Clarke County Environmental Coordinator **Andrew Saunders** (middle) Technical Forestry Services' **Connie Head** (right), and USDA Forest Service's Ed Macie also spoke on this program about components of a good tree ordinance.

At the August 14<sup>th</sup> Tree Ordinance Program, **Susan Granbery**, Urban and Community Forestry Coordinator for the Georgia Forestry Commission, presented artist **Barry Nehr** with a Lifetime Achievement Award from the **Southern Group of State Foresters** for his legacy of urban forestry artwork. Barry, a retired illustrator for the U.S. Forest Service, has completed paintings and drawings for forestry and natural resources for many years. For over 20 years, Barry has painted a beloved Georgia tree for the GUFC Annual Excellence in Urban Forestry Awards.





## Deadlines for Tree City USA, Tree Campus USA, and Tree Line USA

The **November 15<sup>th</sup>** deadline for Tree City USA, Tree Campus USA, and Tree Line USA recertification and new applications is fast approaching. Please apply online at [arbor.day.org](http://arbor.day.org) or by mailing your application to:

Georgia Forestry Commission  
 Susan Granbery  
 6835 James B. Rivers/Memorial Drive  
 Stone Mountain, GA 30083

Questions? E-mail Susan Granbery [sgranbery@gfc.state.ga.us](mailto:sgranbery@gfc.state.ga.us)



A post-conference whitewater raft ride in Columbus has been scheduled for GUFCC conference attendees – read more at [www.gufcc.org](http://www.gufcc.org).

Our friends at **Park Pride** are planning their 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference, “Pipes to Parks: Building Greenspaces with Rainwater” (March 31) and are calling for breakout session proposals. [Click here to download information.](#)

## GEORGIA URBAN FOREST COUNCIL 2013

### OFFICERS

Rob Ryan, ASLA, LEED AP, Atlanta **PRESIDENT**  
 Mary Hardin Thornton, Director, Keep Rome/Floyd Beautiful **PRESIDENT-ELECT**  
 India Woodson, Arborist, DeKalb County **PAST PRESIDENT**  
 Samantha Grey, Herod Horticultural Research & Evaluation Co., Dawson **SECRETARY**  
 Larry Morris, Retired, Georgia Forestry Commission, Grayson **TREASURER**

### GUFC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jon Balkcom, Forestry & Right of Way Services, Georgia Power Company, Atlanta  
 Mark Fockele, The Fockele Garden Company, Gainesville  
 Barbara H. Gallo, Attorney, Krevolin & Horst, LLC, Atlanta  
 Bill Haws, Forestry Administrator, City of Savannah  
 Karol Kelly, Bibb County Cooperative Extension, Macon  
 Roy Matthews, Coweta County Arborist, Newnan  
 Adrian Sasine, Branding Hawk, Atlanta  
 Andrew Saunders, Environmental Coordinator, Athens-Clarke County Government  
 Joan Scales, Community Forester, Georgia Forestry Commission, Athens

### EX OFFICIO

Susan Granbery, GFC Urban & Community Forestry Coordinator, Stone Mountain  
 Mary Lynne Beckley, GUFC Executive Director, Decatur

**November 19, 2013**

The Georgia Forestry Commission presents

## Emerald Ash Borer: How Communities Will Be Affected by this Pest

8:00 a.m. – 12 noon  
 Building 100, Room 401  
 Gwinnett Technical College  
 5150 Sugarloaf Parkway  
 Lawrenceville, GA 30043

A good introduction for *city officials, city landscape personnel, arborists, foresters, tree services, landowners, extension agents, or anyone* that has in interest in Emerald Ash Borer.

This meeting is designed to give an overview of EAB, and to answer questions that you may have. There will be **no fee** for the meeting and we look forward to seeing you there.

[Click here for agenda and speakers.](#)



Many thanks to the Georgia Forestry Commission for funding and for partnership on educational programs throughout the year.



Follow GUFCC on

