



SPRUCE UP AUSTIN, Inc.

329 North Main Street • Suite 102 • Austin, MN 55912

www.spruceupaustin.austincoc.com

507.437-4561

Spruce Up Austin 2011 Activity Summary

Spruce Up Austin completed its 22nd year of existence in 2011. It was another good year of our continued work of beautifying the community. A dedicated board, terrific support by other volunteers, an excellent working relationship with businesses and the Austin Parks and Forestry Department continue as strengths of Spruce Up Austin.

Spruce Up Austin was directly involved in projects where more than \$20,028 was spent. When the volunteer time associated with these projects is taken into account, and the internal work of the Austin Parks and Forestry Department, the value to the community amounts to more than \$46,053. During the 22 - year history of our organization, the total value to our community exceeds \$455,395. Eighty-six trees and spruce were planted during 2011, bringing the 22 - year total to 2,589.

Other activities included the 17th Annual Arbor Day Edition, three Yard of the Month winners, a public seminar, and monthly articles in the Austin Daily Herald.

Officers and board members for 2011 with years of service are as follows:

President – Mike Ruzek - 22
Vice President – Gretchen Ramlo - 16
Treasurer – Kathy Borland – 9
Secretary – Melanie Faust – 6

Other Board members and years of service include:

Penny Bartesch – 1	Bill McLain - 1	Chris Stepp - 1
Jan Chuick – 12	Bonnie Mogen - 15	Darlene Thaisen – 16
Terry Fox – 1	Harlan Nelson – 6	Julie Thomsen – 5
Kelly Lady – 10	Howard Nepp – 7	Kim Underwood - 3
Gordon Larson - 1	Jack Sherman – 21	

Mission Statement

Spruce Up Austin, Inc. is established for the purpose of coordinating various resources to initiate, establish and maintain beautification projects in the Austin area with a strong emphasis on planting trees. Spruce Up Austin, Inc. will use these projects to promote a greater environmental awareness within the Austin community, to encourage citizens to improve their property and to enhance a positive image for the City of Austin. Spruce Up Austin, Inc. will also participate in various activities that will educate the Austin community on plants and landscape concepts.



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Spruce Up Austin 2011 Activities & Accomplishments

Projects

- I. Arbor Day Project – April 29, 2011. Nine Flowering Crabs and three Meyers Spruce were planted on a site just after the bridge on south main street. Eighteen volunteers planted, mulched, and pruned other trees in the area. Volunteers of SUA, friends, and the AHS Wrestlers devoted thirty nine hours of time. The value to the community is estimated at \$2,848. Actual cost was \$1,948.
- II. Veterans Memorial – This was the second year of SUA support for this very worthwhile project. SUA funded \$400 and \$555 came from the Austin Area Foundation. Six arborvitae were planted and other landscaping for a total value of \$955. No volunteers were involved.
- III. South Main Project – Since 2008 SUA has continued to beautify this area. At the end of 2011 SUA has spent \$9,814 and provided a value to the community of \$13,937. For 2011 landscaping was done around the bronze sculptures that were placed by the Austin Park & Rec with money received from the Lydia Lein estate. SUA and Windom 4-H volunteers planted sixty-three plants of ten varieties, along with mulching and other cleanup. The cost was \$1,466 and with forty-nine hours of volunteer support the value to the community is \$2,264. The bronze sculptures were discounted at a cost of \$9,000 but valued at \$18,000. For 2011 the actual expense was \$10,466 with a value for the community of \$20,264.
- IV. Spruce Planting – In October SUA teamed up with the Cornerstone Assembly Church youth. Five teams planted three Spruce each in their respective areas and did general cleanup and pruning. The cost was \$1,813 and with the help of 35 volunteers devoting 65 hours the value to the community is \$2,713.
- V. Mower County Fair Grounds – On Saturday, October 29 SUA teamed up with the Fair Board to plan and plant forty large trees of four different varieties. Trees were discounted to \$65 per B & B 2" diameter tree. Holes were dug at a discounted rate, freight was donated, and with outstanding volunteer support the value to the community far exceeded the actual cost. This would be the largest difference between actual cost and value to the community of the 22 years of SUA. The actual cost was \$3,080 and the value to the community is \$16,685. Volunteer support of 76 hours came from SUA, AHS Wrestlers, Sentence to Serve, the Fair Board, and others.



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VI. Honorary Red Pine – SUA acknowledged the 100th Anniversary of the Minnesota DNR by planting a large Red Pine (The State Tree) in the areas of the Eastside Lake. The cost was \$359 and with three hours of volunteer support and help from Austin Park & Rec, the value to the community is \$504.

VII. Honorary Tree – Fifteen honorary trees were planted in 2011. The cost was \$2,134 with a value to the community of \$3,158.

1. Viola Besse	Crab	South Main Trail	9	Paula Smith	Oak	Rotary Park
2. Levi Kimmel	Crab	South Main Trail	10.	Paula Smith	Oak	Rotary Park
3. Viola Rietz Fowler	Crab	South Main Trail	11.	Paula Smith	Oak	Rotary Park
4. Jim Foster	Linden	South Grove Park	12.	Paula Smith	Maple	Rotary Park
5. Deanna Tischer	Linden	East Side Lake	13	Harold Mattfeld	Catalpa	Morning Lions Park
6. Peter Peck	Spruce	Todd Park	14.	Julie Thomsen	Spruce	Bandshell Park
7. Bob Block	Maple	East Side Lake	15.	Melanie Faust	Spruce	Bandshell
8. Anne Blowers	Maple	Mill Pond				

PR and Education

It's hard to believe we are in the tenth year of our Yard of the Month recognition. We continue to find people whose pride in their yard earns them the coveted Spruce Up Austin Yard of the Month award. Winners of the 2011 Yard of the Month were:

June – 205 24th St NW, Randy and Wendy Kramer

July – 2206 5th Ave NW, Sonia Larson

August – 2100 7th Ave NW, Pat and Beth Schwab

September – 2300 8th Ave NW, Curt and Greta Anderson

On April 14th SUA sponsored a free seminar at Dolan's Landscape Center titled "Proper Tree Trimming and Spring Yard Maintenance". Our speaker was Aimee Whiteaker. The room was filled with pruning enthusiasts who were able to watch live identification and hands on pruning take place. Attendance was approximately 29 people. All enjoyed the information shared.



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Spruce Up Austin partnered with the Austin Daily Herald for the 17th Annual Arbor Day Edition. The tab focused on our signature planting of three spruce trees and included stories from board members. SUA received a \$633 donation from the Austin Daily Herald, to be used for Spruce Up Austin projects. We have also continued contributing monthly articles in the Austin Daily Herald on various tree topics and SUA activities.

In July SUA acquired the domain name for their website www.spruceupaustin.org. We had previously been running our site under the Chamber of Commerce as www.spruceupaustin.austincoc.org. Spruce Up extends a special thank-you to our webmaster TT-Inc for donating the hosting fees and keeping our website up to date.

On September 10th, SUA board members again worked the Welcome Booth at the RE-fest Celebration of Green Living and Clean Energy and holding a workshop on proper tree planting technique.

Resource Development

A thankful appreciation goes to the 2011 financial supporters. They are the Austin Daily Herald, the Austin Utilities, the Mower County Ag Fair Board, and those who participated in the Spruce Up Austin Honorary Tree Program.

Maintenance

After considerable discussion and planning SUA maintenance efforts took on a whole new approach. Reviewing 22 years of projects and other maintenance needs the city has been divided into size areas with each area headed up by SUA board members who in turn get other volunteers. As these individuals get accustomed to their areas maintenance efforts will be more frequent and more effective.

Appreciation

Spruce Up Austin gives our continued thanks to Austin Park and Recreation department, our local nurseries for their continued cooperation, and our various donors. The greatest asset of SUA is its board members' dedication and length of service. SUA has an eighteen member board with the average years of service being over 8 years. A special thanks to the board for their dedication, good humor, and hard work throughout the years.