



SPRUCE UP AUSTIN, Inc.

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

www.spruceupaustin.org

507.437-4561

Spruce Up Austin 2013 Activity Summary

Spruce Up Austin completed its 24th year of existence in 2013. Due to the severe dry weather, projects were limited in size and numbers. 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 \$3045 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 \$4353. During the 24 - year history of our organization, the total value to our community exceeds \$462,974. Twenty trees and spruce were planted during 2013, bringing the 24 - year total to 2,623.

Other activities included the 19th Annual Arbor Day Edition, Yard of the Month winners, the garden tour, a public seminar, and monthly articles in the Austin Daily Herald.

Officers and board members for 2013 with years of service are as follows:

President – Gretchen Ramlo - 18

Vice President – Chris Stepp - 3

Treasurer – Kathy Borland – 11

Secretary – Melanie Faust – 8

Greta Anderson - 1

Penny Bartesch – 3

Rolando Benitez - 1

Jan Chuick – 14

Kelly Lady – 12

Gordon Larson - 3

Bill McLain - 3

Bonnie Mogen - 17

Harlan Nelson – 8

Howard Nepp – 9

Mike Ruzek - 24

Pam Schmidt - 1

Kim Underwood - 5

Reneè Wangen - 1

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 2013 Activities & Accomplishments

Projects

- I. **Trees For Schools** - Initial plans called for one tree to be planted at each one of six elementary schools in Austin on Arbor Day. Four schools were able to participate and due to the weather the project was delayed until May 17. SUA board members showed and explained the proper process of planting a tree to hundreds of students and information on tree planting was handed out. Total cost of trees, mulch, and stakes was \$600 and value to the community of \$900.00. Twelve SUA volunteers.
- II. **Tree For Youth** - SUA donated one apple tree for a 4-H group. SUA volunteers showed the group how to plant the tree and the needed care after the planting. This was planted in the 4-H garden at the fairgrounds. Cost of the tree \$45 and value to the community is \$70.00. Two SUA volunteers.
- III. **Vines and Concrete** - On North Main Street near I-90 a retaining wall was placed to prevent flooding. This harsh area will hopefully be softened with three trumpet vines. If this works more will be tried. Cost of vines \$45.00 and value to the community of \$90.00. Three SUA volunteers.
- IV. **Fall Maintenance and Tree Planting** - SUA again teamed up with Cornerstone Church youth and parents. Maintenance was done in three areas and one of the areas also had nine trees planted. The Sterling Island was cleaned and will be re-done in 2014. Kaufman Park was cleaned and trees planted and mulched. Oakland Avenue East was cleaned and trees mulched. The cost of the trees was \$1,144.50 and value to the community of \$1820. There was nine SUA volunteers plus twenty-six others.

V. **2013 Spruce Up Austin Honorary Tree Program**

HONORED

1. Jim Hormel
2. James & Leona Lunde
3. Austin Chamber of Commerce
4. Bill McLain & Sara Hines
5. Bill McLain & Sara Hines
6. Viola Carlson

TREE TYPE

- Royal Prince
- Autumn Blaze Maple
- Black Hills Spruce
- Weeping Willow
- Weeping Willow
- Autumn Blaze Maple

PARK

- Hormel Institute
- Mill Pond
- Bandshell Park
- Bandshell Park
- Bandshell Park
- Sterling



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Spruce Up Austin 2013 Activities & Accomplishments

PR and Education

Yard and Garden Tour - For eleven years we have celebrated the yard of the month. 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 2013 Yard of the Month were:

June-1601 4th Ave SW, Dennis & Rose Tamke

July- 1806 9th St SW, Bob and Ginny Riege

August – 1111 4th Ave NW, Marty and Kim Evenson

September - 2100 7th Ave SW, Dan and Cathy Hirst

Spring Seminar - On June 6th SUA sponsored a free seminar at Berg's Nursery titled "MN Native and Ornamental Trees". Our speaker was Randy Berg. The evening included a free will donation wine tasting and hors d'oeuvres with profits after expenses of \$12.50. Attendance was approximately 25 people. Randy Berg noted it was the best educational experience with SUA so far.

Arbor Day Tab - Spruce Up Austin partnered with the Austin Daily Herald in 2013 for the 19th Annual Arbor Day Edition. The tab focused on trees and children, and included stories from our board members. SUA received a \$300 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.

Our annual Yard and Garden Tour - This fundraising event was held Saturday June 22. To make the event more appealing, special features were added at each home. The event raised gr \$812 to be used for various SUA projects. The gardens and features in this year's tour are listed here -

Jim Churchill/ Rick Matter, 909 10th St NW, Live jazz music by the Turtle Creek Trio

Tom Matyas, 1904 18th Ave SW, Dylan Kaercher from Enchantertainment

Mark and Barb Kanne, 2206 7th Ave NW, HyVee garden to plate food samples

Sonja Larson, 2206 5th Ave NW, SUA Perennial Plant Sale

Mayo Clinic Austin gardens, 1000 1st Dr NW, Local Art exhibit and cupcakes for sale

RE-Fest - SUA again participated in RE-fest, A Celebration of Green Living and Clean Energy. Although we were not able to man our own booth, several of our members volunteered at the event.



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Resource Development

A thankful appreciation goes to our 2013 financial supporters. They are the Austin Daily Herald, the Austin Utilities, one anonymous donor, and those who participated in the Spruce Up Austin Honorary Tree Program.

Maintenance

The maintenance year began in April with Community Pride Day. We helped to clean up Austin and mulch some trees.

Throughout the year our committee groups kept watch over their areas and pruned, mulched and clipped when needed. All groups were encouraged to take pictures every couple years for historical purposes. It was again a dry year, so all were encouraged to watch their areas and water new plantings, as much as possible.

We once again partnered with Cornerstone Church for Earth Day in October. General maintenance was done, and with Park & Rec dollars we all planted 9 trees at Kaufman Park.

Hopefully 2014 will bring good weather and moisture so we can plant more trees! We have also updated our letter and community maintenance list. This is mailed in the spring and fall to groups who have agreed to do maintenance on past projects for us.

Nominating Committee

A special meeting of the 2013 Nominating committee was held to replace Rolando Benetiz who was stepping down from the board due to scheduling conflicts. The committee consisted of Kelly Lady, Harlan Nelson and Chris Stepp. Replacement Deb Mickelson was presented to the board as his recommended replacement. The board voted her into office at the November board meeting.

Appreciation

Spruce Up Austin gives our continued thanks to Austin Parks and Recreation department, our local nurseries for their 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 9.5 years. A special thanks to the board for their dedication, good humor, and hard work throughout the years.