



# SPRUCE UP AUSTIN, Inc.

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

www.spruceupaustin.org

507.437-4561

## Spruce Up Austin 2014 Activity Summary

Spruce Up Austin completed its 25th year of existence in 2014. The 25th Anniversary of Spruce Up Austin resulted in a special project as a gift to the city and a greater appreciation of what has been accomplished since 1990. 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 \$18,947 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 \$30,323. During the 25 - year history of our organization, the total value to our community exceeds \$493,297. Thirty-Eight trees and spruce were planted during 2014, bringing the 25 - year total to 2,661.

Other activities included the 20th 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 2014 with years of service are as follows:**

President – Gretchen Ramlo - 19

Vice President – Chris Stepp - 4

Treasurer – Kathy Borland – 12

Secretary – Melanie Faust – 9

Greta Anderson - 2

Deb Mickelsen - 1

Pam Schmidt - 2

Penny Bartesch – 4

Bonnie Mogen - 18

Kim Underwood - 6

Jan Chuick – 15

Harlan Nelson – 9

Reneè Wangen - 2

Kelly Lady – 13

Howard Nepp – 10

Bill Hines-McLain - 4

Mike Ruzek - 25

### 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 2014 Activities & Accomplishments

### Projects

- I. **Sterling Island** - One of the first beautification projects in 1990 was improvement of a traffic island located between Sterling Main Street and Kwik Trip. This area was due for a makeover in 2014. A plan was approved at a cost of \$3,393 and \$320 worth of boulders donated. With Park & Rec support, Spruce Up Austin volunteers and discounts for supplies the value to the community is estimated to be \$6,250. The Len Astrup family who owns and operates Sterling Main Street have donated the cost of the project and this island will have a sign honoring Len Astrup who died in 2014.
  
- II. **The Spruce Up Austin Tree Trek** - SUA wanted to do something special for it's 25th Anniversary in 2014. Planning for this project started in 2013 and finished in the Fall of 2014. This project was by far the longest to plan and the most challenging as far as the many details to work out. This Tree Trek consists of 52 different varieties of spruce and trees each identified with a sign. There is also a six sided kiosk that has a map of the area, the SUA honorary tree registry, and other information about trees. The area is along the pathway near Eastside Lake and has the potential for more trees. A special thanks goes to Professor Gary Johnson and graduate assistant Dustin Ellis of the U of M, as this project would not have been as successful with out their help. Thirty new trees were planted with one donated by the City of Austin in honor of the SUA 25th year. The total cost was \$13,726 but the total value to the community is estimated at \$22,746. Thank you Park & Rec, SUP Volunteers, and various donors. This Tree Trek will be enjoyed for many years.
  
- III. **2014 Spruce Up Austin Honorary Tree Program** - The Honorary Tree Program had another good year. Eight trees were planted as listed below at a cost of \$983 and a value to the community of \$1,327. Total of honorary trees since 1995 is 157

HONORED	SPONSORED BY	TREE TYPE	PARK
1. Genevieve & Willard Wagner	Gary Corcoran	Emerald Luster Maple	East Side Lake
2. Gary Corcoran	Donna Barclay	Emerald Luster Maple	Mill Pond
3. Arlis Clennon	Steve Clennon	Autumn Blaze Maple	Mill Pond
4. Arlis Clennon	Steve Clennon	Swamp White Oak	Mill Pond
5. Clarence Nybo	Terry Placek	Golden Raindrop Flowering Crab	Courthouse Parking Lot
6. Ron Seath	Austin Noon Lions	Northern Catalpa	Near Lions Bike Path Shelter
7. Patricia & Robert Poshusta	Dick Poshusta	Two - Hackberry	Wildwood



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## Spruce Up Austin 2014 Activities & Accomplishments

### Public Relations of the Month and Education

**Yard Tour** - For twelve 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 2014 Yard of the Month were:

- June - Peter Lang/Jane McFarland, 1810 2nd Street NE
- July - Richard & Catherine Lemons, 304 7th Place NW
- August - Doug & Kelly Mehus, 2305 15th Avenue SW
- September - Scott & Kelly Diser, 611 5th Avenue SW

**Spring Seminar** - On June 19th Spruce Up Austin sponsored a free seminar at Berg's Nursery titled "Weathering the Storm". Our speaker was Randy Berg. Attendance was approximately 15 people. Despite inclement weather, attendees learned about managing trees, shrubs and flowers damaged by weather-related issues.

**Arbor Daily Herald** - For the final year, Spruce Up Austin partnered with the Austin Daily Herald in 2014 for the 20th Annual Arbor Day Edition. The insert generated \$400, and focused on the history and contributions the organization has made to the Austin Community over the last quarter century. It also previewed the Spruce Up Austin Tree Trek, a gift from Spruce Up Austin to the Austin Community. Members of Spruce Up Austin also continued publishing monthly articles in the Austin Daily Herald on various tree topics and Spruce Up Austin activities. We are thankful for the generous support shown to our organization by the Austin Daily Herald.

**Yard and Garden Tour** - Our annual fundraising event was held Saturday, July 12. To make the Yard and Garden Tour more appealing, special features were again added at each home. The event generated more than \$1,400 to be used for various Spruce Up Austin projects. The gardens and features in this year's tour included:

- Curtis & Greta Anderson, 907 12th Avenue SW  
Live soothing music by Terry Schmidt
- Mark & Aleta Christopherson, 2904 7th Avenue SW  
Life of Simple Abundance, Austin's substantiality farm, sold handmade goat milk soaps and provided samples and information about openings in their Community Supported Agriculture program.
- Dave & Ann Forland, 3507 11th Place NE  
Wine and cheese samples. Hand crafted jewelry from local crafter, Julie Thomson.
- Dave Stahl/Sara Shaw, 605 10th Street SW  
Cupcakes provided for purchase from Crazy Cake Cupcakes (Amanda Schramm)
- Dennis & Rose Tamke, 1601 4th Avenue SW  
Glass sun catchers and wind chimes available for purchase from J&J Yard Art (Jeff & Jane Peterson)

The success of our activities depend on many volunteers. The public relations and education committee is grateful for everyone's help, and wants to thank Penny Olson Bartsch for her years of dedicated service to our team. Best wishes as you move on to new and exciting challenges.



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## Resource Development

A thankful appreciation goes to our 2014 financial supporters. They are the Austin Daily Herald, the Austin Utilities, those who participated in the Spruce Up Austin Honorary Tree Program, Hormel Foundation, City of Austin, The Len Astrup Family, Kwik Trip of Austin, and Dave Hillier. Several years ago, SUA received a significant donation from the Lydia Lein Estate which made the Tree Trek financially possible.

## Maintenance

In 2014 our six maintenance groups continued to watch over their areas and weed, mulch and trim when needed. We met with Park & Rec and reviewed the areas we oversee to make sure all areas are covered. We updated our partners list and mailed the Spring and Fall reminders of maintenance to them. The remainder of our energies went into our "Tree Trek" project.

## Nominating Committee

The success of SUA is attributed to dedicated long term board members. One board member that served for many years is Bonnie Morgen (18 years). She is leaving the SUA board along with Penny Bartsch, Melanie Faust, and Pam Schmidt. They represent 33 years of service to SUA and we thank them for all that they have done to improve the landscape of our community.

The new SUA board members for 2015-2016 are Ruth Arons, Kris Baldus, John Duren, Ernie Hamero and Sara Shaw. Ernie has been indirectly involved with SUA for many years and Sara was a recent garden tour participant.

The new officers for 2015-2016 are President Chris Stepp, Vice-President Bill Hines-McLain, Secretary Greta Anderson, and Treasurer Kathy Borland. The leadership of these and past officers is appreciated.

Ex-officio board members that will continue are Lee Bonorden, Bonnie Rietz, Jack Sherman and Julie Thomsen. Bill Kinney is replaced by Bonnie Mogan. All of these volunteers have served on the SUA board at one time and have continued to be friends of the SUA mission. Their contribution to the success of SUA is appreciated.

## 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. A special thanks to the board for their dedication, good humor, and hard work throughout the years.