



SPRUCE UP AUSTIN, Inc.

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

www.spruceupaustin.org

507.437-4561

Spruce Up Austin 2015 Activity Summary

Spruce Up Austin completed its 26th year in 2015 and as the next twenty-five years has begun we look forward to continuing the efforts to enhance the landscape of our 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 \$4,574 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 \$7,788. During the 26-year history of our organization, the total value to our community exceeds \$501,085. Twenty-eight trees and spruce were planted during 2015, bringing the 26-year total to 2,689.

Other activities included:

- Yard of the Month winners
- The garden tour
- A public seminar

Officers and board members for 2015 with years of service are as follows:

President – Chris Stepp (5)

Vice President – Bill Hines McLain (5)

Treasurer – Kathy Borland (13)

Secretary – Greta Anderson (3)

Ruth Arons (1)

Ernie Hamero (1)

Mike Ruzek (26)

Chris Baldus (1)

Deb Mickelsen (2)

Sarah Shaw (1)

Jan Chuick (16)

Harlan Nelson (10)

Kim Underwood (7)

John Duren (1)

Howard Nepp (11)

Reneè Wangen (3)

Kelly Lady (14)

Gretchen Ramlo (20)

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 2015 Activities & Accomplishments

Projects

I. Arbor Day, Friday, April 25

SUA gathered at Austin High School with the Go Green Club. An Ironwood tree was planted as ten students watched on how to plant a tree properly. Information was also given out. Also during this time, SUA continued a program where every board member who serves five years is honored with a spruce tree planted. Two were planted honoring Chris Stepp and Bill Hines McLaine. The total cost for the two events was \$500 and the value for the community is \$700.

South Grove Park, July 1

With several new board members joining SUA in 2015, President Chris Stepp conducted a workshop about proper tree planting and the park gained another tree. Total cost was \$120 and the value to the community is \$168.

II. Friday, October 9

SUA teamed up with the Modern Woodman Fraternal Group to plant trees at the Farmers Market site located at Oakland Avenue East and 3rd Street NE. Six trees were planted including maple, ironwood, oak and catalpa with a \$800 budget split evenly. Dolan's Landscape provided considerable discounts from the retail value of \$1200. Modern Woodman provided five adults and seven children plus four SUA board members. The total cost was \$800 but the value to the community is \$1680. Park & Rec was again a good partner augering the holes, staking and initial watering. SUA volunteers mulched the trees the following day.

Saturday, October 10

The Tree Trek that was started in 2014 to celebrate SUA's 25th Anniversary was expanded by 8 more trees and spruce and 2 trees that needed to be replaced. This now totals 60 trees of different varieties. Sod was removed and Park & Rec augered the holes and helped SUA with site selection and staking the trees. Seven adults and two children helped with sign preparation, placing the signs, planting the trees and mulching. The total cost was \$1152 for the trees and delivery, \$235 for removing the sod and mulch and \$81 for the signs. The total cost was \$1468 but the value to the community is \$2202.



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Projects continued

III. Saturday, October 10:

The South Main Project with the bronze sculpture, trees and other landscaping is a project established over several years. The landscaping around the sculpture needed an overall update. Volunteers from SUA and the Windom 4-H spent over 80 hours of planning, site preparation, and the actual planting of a variety of shrubs and perennials but with a focus on low-maintenance. Austin Park & Rec and Dolan's Landscape Center were very helpful in the successful completion of this project. The total cost was \$615 but the value to the community is \$1537.70. The Windom 4-H will do ongoing maintenance.

Honorary Trees

For 2015 there were 8 trees planted and one that was adopted that SUA had planted in 2006. Donors sometimes exceed what is required so \$1760 was donated but the actual cost of the trees was \$1071. Austin Park & Rec planted all the honorary trees and the value to the community is \$1506. The following is a list of the 2015 Honorary Trees:

HONORED	SPONSOR	TREE	PARK	REC	COST
"Skip" Hasting	Friends of Daughter	Royal Red Maple	Courthouse Lawn	\$200.00	\$200.00
Bob Boomgard	Noon Lions Club	Varigated Maple	by Lions bike shelter	\$150.00	\$130.00
Bob Johnson	Noon Lions Club	Royal Red Maple	by Lions bike shelter	\$150.00	\$150.00
Rotaract Club	Rotaract Club	Ginko Biloba	Rotary Park	\$150.00	\$160.00
Gretchen Wangen	Wangen Family	Ironwood Blue Beech	Honorary Park	\$300.00	\$120.00
Roger Walsh	Betty Walsh	Austrian Pine	Eastside Lake	\$200.00	\$96.00
Betty Walsh	Mike & Sandy Landheer	Austrian Pine	Eastside Lake	\$350.00	\$129.00
	Mike Ruzek				
Ethan Kimmel	Bonnie Rietz	Existing Autumn Blaze Maple	Rotary Park	\$200.00	\$0.00
Viola Carlson	Candice Carlson	Replacement Autumn Blaze Maple	Sterling Park	\$00.00	\$150.00
				Received	Cost
				\$1700.00	\$1071.00



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Public Relations and Education

Yard of the Month: For 13 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 2015 Yard of the Month were:

- June – Greg and Helen Jahr, 406 8th Pl. NW
- July – David and Betty Neus, 1513 2nd Ave. SW
- August – Vera Hill, 600 Oakland Pl. NE
- September – Dennis and Betty Olson, 1905 2nd Ave. SW

Spring Seminar: On May 14 Spruce Up Austin sponsored a free seminar at Dolan's Landscape Center titled "Navigating the Tree Trek," which included an Emerald Ash Borer update. Our speaker was Gary Johnson, University of Minnesota extension professor. He highlighted how the Tree Trek promoted tree diversity and the asset it brings to the community. Attendance was about 15 people.

Yard and Garden Tour: Our annual fundraising event was held Saturday, July 18, 2015. To enhance the Yard and Garden Tour, special features were again added at each home. The event generated more than \$1,500 to be used for various Spruce Up Austin projects. The gardens and features in this year's tour included:

- Scott and Teri Wermager, 2403 4th Dr. SW
- The Table Saw offered creations throughout the yard for sale while Apollo Liquor provided wine samples
- Mike and Jo Hull, 1607 3rd Ave. SW
- Scott Jasmin performed radio hits from the 1970s
- Howie and Sherri Crawford, 18198 536th Ave.
- Hand-crafted jewelry from local crafter Julie Thomson
- Linda Marsh, 709 10th St. SW
- Austin ArtWorks Center featured paintings, pottery and other special pieces throughout the garden

Recognition: The Minnesota Shade Tree Advisory Committee presented Spruce Up Austin with a Minnesota Community Forestry Award for Outstanding Project, which recognized Celebrating Spruce Ups 25 Years and Tree Trek.



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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

2015 was a busy one for our 6 maintenance groups. Everyone was busy weeding, pruning and mulching their areas. We had one major project that included our entire board. We worked with the 4-H group that maintains our major project on South Main Street. We also worked with Park and Rec and Dolan's Landscaping. Brian and Josh from Dolan's helped select low-maintenance plants for replacements of some that had died out and gave the group some on-going maintenance education. The 4-H group will continue to maintain the area. We worked hard...and had lots of FUN!

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.