



To educate, advocate and promote a healthy urban forest in Centre Wellington

A Decade in Review

2009-2019



*"People who are crazy enough to think they
can change the world are the ones who do."*
- Unknown

Neighbourwoods has achieved a lot in the last 10 years...

TREE INVENTORY - the program that started it all...

Since 2009, trained volunteers led by summer students have worked in Elora, Fergus and Salem, systematically collecting 31 points of data about public and front yard trees. Volunteers work two-hour shifts once a week for eight weeks each summer. Helping trees and learning more about them—in the company of like-minded people—is satisfying outdoor work, and many volunteers return year after year.

For each tree, volunteers note the species and size, which includes the height, DBH and crown width, along with various subjective assessments that paint a picture of the tree's overall health. The information is collected and recorded in an online database managed by Greg Wolowich, Centre Wellington's GIS Planning Coordinator.

Centre Wellington Urban Forest Manager Mat Alain is using the data to determine pruning sites, understand the history of individual trees and plant for diversity.

"Volunteering for the Neighbourwoods Tree Inventory project has brought me in the company of passionate tree enthusiasts and redefined my knowledge and appreciation for the many and varied trees in our urban environment."

- Nico Vandersluis, Tree Inventory Volunteer



CITIZEN PRUNER

Thank you to:

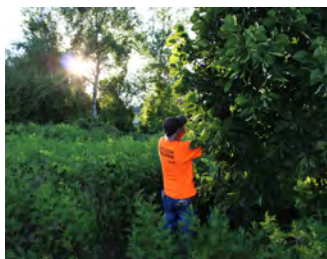
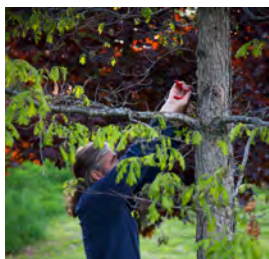


While inventorying, we often inspect old trees with poor architecture. Corrective trimming at this late stage, if possible at all, will create large, hard-to-heal wounds. This led us to ponder the fate of the young trees we have planted, many of which will suffer the same issues years from now. Since every cut is a wound and pruning is a specialized skill, we decided to learn more. And so in 2017 our Citizen Pruner Program was launched.



*Citizen
Pruners have
pruned 420
young trees...
so far!*

Recruiting volunteers proved easy because people want to help trees and expand their knowledge. Fifteen people signed up that year and were trained by certified arborists over two evening workshops and one field session.



During that summer, Citizen Pruners put their training to work on young trees that we had planted. Before the summer was over, the Township, by then confident in our skills, gave us the green light to work on park trees. This year, Citizen Pruners have graduated to pruning some of the street trees in new developments.



What I have learned has allowed me to not only properly prune tree limbs, but to watch for signs that the tree may be in trouble, signs of damage, disease or stress. Thank you, Citizen Pruners!"
- Mark Kozakowski, Citizen Pruner

TREE PLANTING & STEWARDSHIP

Thank you to:



For more than a decade, we have planted trees on boulevards, in parks and schoolyards. We return to mulch every tree planted for at least three years. One of the trees we are most proud of is the White Spruce at MacDonald Square, Elora's Christmas Tree. Donated by the GRCA and spaded in 2006, look how it's grown!



The Elora Christmas Tree in 2006



The Elora Christmas Tree in 2019



Check out the 2019 Mulching crew



Young volunteers planting trees in Elora

CELEBRATION TREES

Since the program began in 2009, 129 Celebration Trees have been added to our public parks.

COMMUNITREES

Five years ago, Carolyn Crozier started Communitrees to begin restoring native trees on our Elora Cataract Trailway.

Since then, more than thirty volunteers have planted and staked over 400 native trees and a number of compatible shrubs. Twenty-one different native species were selected to add biodiversity to the trail. Species include Ironwood, Shagbark Hickory, Hackberry, Trembling Aspen and Red Oak. Every new addition was tended for at least two years after planting which, no doubt, accounts for the impressive 98% survival rate.

Key support came from Frank Stillo, Carolyn's right-hand man, who took care of all the logistics—picking up trees, delivering mulch, making stakes and more. In addition to planting, biologist Kelsye Coulter led volunteers on a campaign to identify and remove hundreds of the highly invasive buckthorn shrubs that threaten our native trees.



Trees and supplies funded by:

- TD Friends of the Environment
- The Elora Cataract Trailway Association
- The Grand River Conservation Foundation
- The Centre Wellington Community Foundation
- Individual members of our community

Thank you to Carolyn for your leadership!

Public Education

TREE WORKSHOPS

In order to share experiences with other tree organizations, in 2018 Neighbourwoods initiated annual one-day Urban Forest Workshops. The first one focused on the very successful Citizen Pruner Program. Representatives from Reforest London, Long Branch Toronto and REEP Waterloo attended, along with several Neighbourwoods volunteers. Arborist Chris Morrison of StormWaterForestry taught theory, biology and pruning techniques. The morning classroom session was followed by afternoon hands-on fieldwork.



This year's topic was *Introducing a Tree Inventory Program to Your Community*. Volunteers from Waterloo, Elmira, Nith Valley and new Neighbourwoods volunteers attended. Three instructors covered tree ID, tree assessment and worked with participants in the field. Based on the success of both workshops, we are planning one for 2020.

"This was a terrific day. Your speakers addressed exactly what we were there to learn. And they were clear and entertaining. The fieldwork was very useful and well organized. I learned lots, thank you."

-Susan Bryant, Elmira



TREE TALKS

Three times a year, we host talks featuring experts who share their enthusiasm and knowledge about various aspects of trees. Recent talks have included restoration of Ontario elms; stewardship of natural landscapes at the 'rare' Charitable Research Reserve; and a Haiti reforestation project sponsored by the Mennonite Central Committee. Tree Talks are held at the Elora Arts Centre. They are free for members and \$5 for the public. Check our website for more details on upcoming talks.



INNOVATIONS

TREE GUARDS

Anyone who has ever planted or tended a tree knows that mowers and trimmers are a young tree's arch-enemy. Careless nicks inflict wounds that can impact the long-term health of a tree—some are even fatal.

Products used in the industry are plastic and far from ideal, retaining heat and often harbouring insects. As well, they can be time-consuming to install, are seldom removed and add more plastic to the planet.

To offer more ecologically sensitive protection, Neighbourwoods developed the Tree Guard, our own waterproof, plastic-free, biodegradable alternative that is made in Ontario from 100% recycled paper. Tree Guards are quick to install and will last one growing season.

For more info, please visit **EloraEnvironmentCentre.ca** under the Tree Guard tab.



The impact of carbon on our planet has never been more clear, so many of us are trying to reduce our footprint.

One big emitter is air travel. While many airlines offer carbon offset options, we saw an opportunity to offer a **local** solution—one that would benefit our community, specifically our trees. And so began Tree Trust in 2019.



The first tree stewarded by
Tree Trust



Tree Trust luggage tags



Tree Trust stewardship
sign

Through Tree Trust, air travellers can calculate and purchase their offset. All money raised is invested in hiring members of the Centre Wellington Arborist Association to care for our old trees, which offer a myriad of environmental benefits, including acting as carbon sinks. Along with each tree stewarded, two adjacent trees are planted to take over when the senior one comes down.

Tree Trust purchasers receive a tax receipt and a handy luggage tag, as well as the knowledge that they are helping support our urban forest.

We have partnered with local travel agents, Ursula's Travel in Fergus and Noecker Travel in Elora, who are helping spread the word. Very special thanks to Pearl Street Communications, who generously gave their time and amazing marketing talent to this project.

For more info, please visit **EloraEnvironmentCentre.ca** under the Tree Trust tab.



TOUR THE TREES

Thank you to:



Centre
Wellington



Last year, with help from the Canadian Tree Fund, Neighbourwoods hosted a 10 km bike ride, visiting ten trees—and one rock—in Fergus and Elora. At each tree, speakers shared stories about the site. The ride was led by local bike adventurer Rick Goodfellow. The event culminated in a tree planting in Bissell Park, Elora.

Due to the popularity of the event, in 2019 we created an interactive online Tour the Trees Story Map. The map revisits the trees on the tour, providing facts about tree histories, biology and identification. Short videos feature local actors and historians. Find it at: EloraEnvironmentCentre.ca under "News"



Centre Wellington ARBORIST ASSOCIATION (CWAA)

In addition to providing shade and beauty, trees increase property values by at least 10%. Once established, trees ask very little of us. However, when they do, it is worth seeking the help of a qualified professional arborist. In the same way you look for qualified tradespeople to work on your home, you should seek out qualified arborists to work on your trees.



Members of the CWAA are local professionals, highly skilled and experienced in all facets of tree care. Whenever possible, they look for options to extend the life of a tree.

Thank you to each member of the CWAA for volunteering time to support the Citizen Pruner Program.

To find a member, please visit: CWArboristAssociation.ca

NEIGHBOURWOODS FUN!

SUPERMAN CAPES

Trees are superheroes! Our project in 2015 reflected this notion. In a festive sewing bee, volunteers made 25 capes, which were tied around trees to celebrate Earth Day. The capes have just returned from a recent stint decorating trees in Oakville.



TREE TAGS



People are not always aware of the true value of trees, so for several years we have placed signs on selected trees. Each sign indicates the dollar value of the tree's contribution to storm water management, air filtration, carbon sequestering and property value. This underscores why professional tree care is worth every penny.

MOVIE NIGHTS



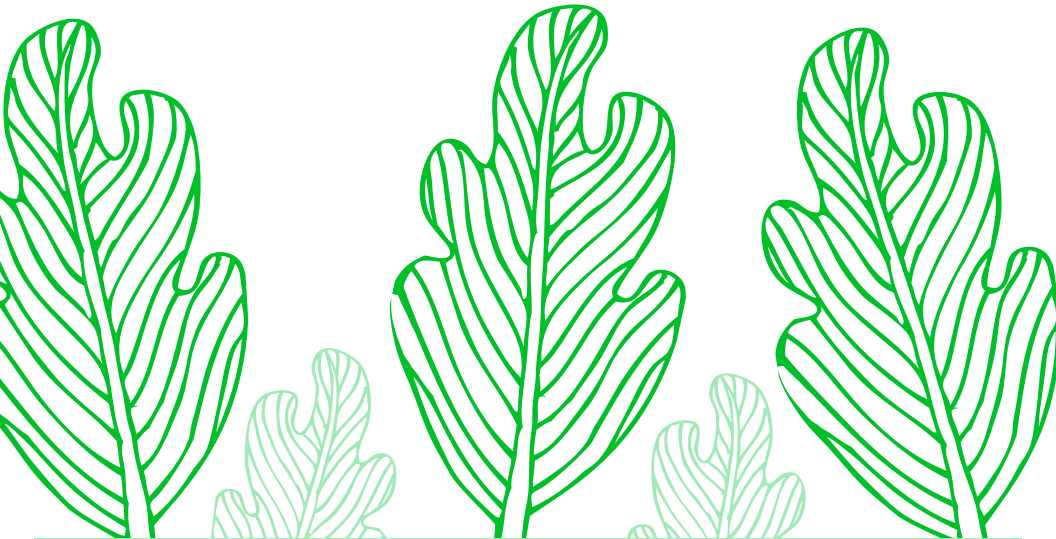
Each summer Neighbourwoods hosts a movie night. We set up a projector, sit outside under the stars, enjoy some popcorn and watch a movie that is, of course, about trees!



*Neighbourwoods relies on the
community for volunteers and
financial support.*

We hope that you can help our urban forest
by making a tax-deductable donation, taking
out a membership, and/or purchasing a Tree
Trust carbon offset next time you fly.

Please mail your donation to:
EEC, 75 Melville St., Elora ON, NOB 1S0
or use the Canada Helps button on our website.



Website: EloraEnvironmentCentre.ca
Email: Neighbourwoods@EloraEnvironmentCentre.ca
Social Media: [@EloraEnvironmentCentre](https://www.instagram.com/EloraEnvironmentCentre)

For questions please get in touch.

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Neighbourwoods is a project of
the Elora Environment Centre.

