Celebrate Arbor Day April 29-30 with Park & Zoo Activities

There’s no better way to begin Spring than by turning over a new leaf—literally! The CNY Conservancy, City of Utica, and Utica Zoo will celebrate Arbor Day and Earth Day on Friday and Saturday, April 29-30. Experience events that range from planting, to pruning, to recycling, with some songs, games and animals added into the mix, too.

“Arbor Day is a time to honor the Earth and Utica’s Olmsted designed parks,” said Peter C. Falzarine, the Conservancy’s Executive Director.

Arbor Day observance dates from 1872 and was first celebrated at the suggestion of Julius Sterling Morton, the Secretary of Agriculture under President Grover Cleveland. Currently celebrated in all 50 states and in several foreign countries, National Arbor Day is celebrated on the last Friday in April.

“The City of Utica and the Conservancy look forward to welcoming back several of the tree removal companies who have so generously donated their time and expertise to us for the last 3 Arbor Day celebrations. They will remove unsafe trees in all three of Utica’s Olmsted parks,” Falzarine noted. “Last year, the tree companies made a combined contribution of time and effort that equaled $40,000. Their donation of expertise means that the Conservancy may remove dead and diseased trees and plant healthy trees to renew the canopy in our parks for just the purchase price of the new trees.”

The public is welcome to observe Arbor Day tree removal and planting in FT and TR Proctor Parks and Roscoe Conkling Park (where the Utica Zoo is located) will gather at the pavilion in FT Proctor Park at 8:30 a.m. for a safety talk by Randy Chandler of National Grid. Work crews will disperse to their assigned park areas immediately after the talk. All work will conclude by 4 p.m.

A highlight on Friday will be the ceremonial tree planting at 10 a.m. at the Utica Zoo with participants from the Conservancy, City of Utica, NY State, and the Utica Zoo.

Tree removal companies that have volunteered for Arbor Day 2016 include Nelson Tree Service (Charlie Skellington); Rick Turk Tree Service (Rick Turk); Stumpin’ By Mike (Matt...
“Home Sweet Home” offers a glimpse into the past

Home Sweet Home: Utica’s Olmsted Garden Neighborhoods 1913-1929 is currently on view at the Oneida County Historical Society, 1608 Genesee Street, Utica, NY. The exhibition, co-curated by Virginia Kelly and architect Michael Lehman, celebrates the work of preeminent landscape architect and city planner Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. and his nationally renowned firm Olmsted Brothers of Brookline, MA who worked on major Utica projects between 1906 and 1931. During these twenty-five years, the firm designed the Utica park system and connecting Memorial Parkway, a master plan for Utica, and a group of residential neighborhoods.

These century-old residential subdivisions include Proctor Boulevard, the Parkway East area, Ridgewood, Talcott Road and Hoffman Road (Oxford Heights) in New Hartford. Today they retain their aesthetic character, distinguished architecture, landscape design and vitality significantly contributing to greater Utica’s urban fabric.

Utica is unique among upstate cities for its heritage of numerous intact garden residential neighborhoods designed by the Olmsted Brothers, which very successfully integrate man-made and natural elements.

The rich architectural and landscape tapestry of the neighborhoods are an enduring testament to the collaboration between the Olmsted firm, visionary area developers Hugh R. Jones and Harry W. Roberts, residential architects and the city of Utica which enacted new zoning laws.

Technological advances including the automobile, paving of roads, trolley line expansions, electric street lighting and utility/sewer extensions encouraged development of the new neighborhoods. The neighborhoods and the homes they contained were products of their time and reflected the most current national thinking and trends of the day. Potential home buyers found these well designed environments appealing as solid, long-term financial investments and healthy environments in which to raise families.

These Utica neighborhoods feature a balance between aesthetics and practicality and harmonize use and beauty. The Olmsted firm carefully planned each detail to enrich the visual environment. They concealed power and telephone lines in rear yard right-of-ways or underground, created curvilinear street layouts to enhance views, specified a variety of street trees and designed manhole covers, lamp posts and stone subdivision gateways.

Learn more about these unique Olmsted neighborhoods and look back into Utica a century ago by visiting Oneida County Historical Society. Tuesday-Friday 10-4; Saturday 10-2. Closed Sunday and Monday. 315-735-3642.

--Virgina Kelly

THEN: Dr. Capron House rear garden, circa 1926 (Photo courtesy Oneida County Historical Society)

NOW: Another Olmsted-designed neighborhood – Arlington Road – in South Utica. (Photo by Roger B. Smith)
Arbor Day 2016...

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Macrina); Cresswell Brothers, Inc. (Frank Cresswell); Bartlett Tree Experts (Steve Blair); and Hutchings Tree Service (Dave Hutchings).

SATURDAY, APRIL 30: The Conservancy will join the Utica Zoo to commemorate Earth Day with a number of family-oriented, eco-minded activities. Sponsors for the Zoo’s event include the Oneida-Herkimer Solid Waste Authority, Empire Recycling Corp., and the Conservancy. Regular Zoo admission prices are in effect all day and Zoo members may attend free. Student volunteers from Utica College, the House of the Good Shepherd, TR Proctor High School’s NJROTC (under the command of Mark Williamson), and several Memorial Parkway homeowners will work alongside the Conservancy to plant trees at the Zoo, in FT Proctor Park, and on the Memorial Parkway. In all, 35 shade and flowering trees will be planted.

“The Zoo will receive some of the trees removed from the parks on Arbor Day,” Falzarine noted. “The poplar trees will be given to the beavers because they like to eat the bark. Logs that are cut from other downed trees will be provided to the monkeys for their habitat.”

Zoo visitors will have the chance to participate in animal meet-and-greets and to enjoy family games. Kids will learn how to protect forest habitats with Smokey the Bear. Local singer Peggy Lynn will share her interactive bio-songs.

A recycling relay and free paper shredding - sponsored by the Oneida-Herkimer Solid Waste Authority and Empire Recycling, respectively - will also be available at the Zoo.

A number of Earth Day booths will be located on the Zoo premises, including 4-H, the Adirondack Museum, Bardwell Farms, Candy Jar Confections, Oneida-Herkimer Solid Waste Authority, Sweet Indulgence, Three Sisters Creations, the US Forestry Service, and Weekend Creations,

“In addition to all the Zoo activities on Saturday, at 12 noon, the Conservancy will plant four new trees in an area of FT Proctor Park that has been designated as a memorial grove,” said Falzarine.

(For more on the Memorial Grove, please see related story)

Save a place in your busy schedule!

Your hosts: Central New York Conservancy & City of Utica

Saturday, May 7: I Love My Park Day 10 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Join Conservancy volunteers as they rake, prune, mulch and prep Utica’s Olmsted parks and the Memorial Parkway for the upcoming summer season. Volunteers from the Mohawk valley Chamber of Commerce Catalyst Group, KidsOneida, and others will spend the day cleaning up the parks and Parkway to prepare them for a summer and fall of non-stop colorful blooms.

If you would like to volunteer, please contact Executive Director Peter Falzarine at pfalzarine@roadrunner.com or contact the Conservancy at centralnyconservancy@gmail.com.

Wednesday, August 17: Wine in the Park 5:00 – 7:00 p.m.

Conservancy creates new Memorial Grove

As part of its Arbor Day celebration, the Central New York Conservancy will dedicate a new Memorial Grove, with trees contributed in memory of four individuals, two of whom had a long-time connection to the organization. A fifth tree will be planted on the Memorial Parkway.

The new Memorial Grove is located on the corner of Rutger and Ludlow Streets, directly across from the parking lot for FT Proctor Park.

**Abigail Jeanette Freitag**, age 4, passed away in April, 2015, after fighting a year-long courageous battle with cancer. Abigail was born in 2010 to her parents Peter and Christine Freitag. Abigail lived in Sauquoit, N.Y. A Tulip Tree will be planted in her memory.

**Dr. Kevin Nelsen** died in February, 2016. He earned a baccalaureate degree from Cathedral College and a Master’s Degree in Philosophy from Notre Dame University. He continued his education at the University of Maryland Washington Hospital Center, and earned his Medical Degree from Emory University. Dr. Nelsen’s practice, in New Hartford, specialized in Pulmonary Medicine and Critical Care.

**Roger B. Smith** shared his love of Utica’s Olmsted parks and the Conservancy in a different way. Since 2005, Smith served as the chief photographer for Conservancy events and projects. He donated thousands of images to the Conservancy for use in publications, exhibits, on the website, and in social media. Smith died in December, 2015, and a Triumph Elm will be planted in his memory.

**Suzanne Eckert Underhill** will also be remembered, with the planting of a Radiant Maple. Mrs. Underhill attended the Utica Country Day School and graduated from Miss Porters School, Farmington, CT. In 1944 she joined the “Frontier Nursing Service” as a nurse’s aide (“Nurses on Horseback”) in the Appalachian Mountains of Kentucky for one year. She was a former member of the Junior League and served on the board of Sunset Wood.

**The Hon. Richard J. Cardamone**, who died in October, 2015, will be honored with the planting of a Red Oak in his memory on the Memorial Parkway. According to an obituary that appeared in the *New York Times* at the time of his death, Judge Cardamone, 90, was the first sitting New York State judge to join the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit in more than a century when President Ronald Reagan nominated him in 1981. He had been a Republican county chairman in upstate New York, but on the bench he became respected for his independence. Judge Cardamone was among the first donors to the Conservancy when it was established in 2002. He and his family supported a number of restoration projects in FT Proctor Park.

You’ve heard of “Who moved my cheese?” But do you know who moved the chair? The Galvanized Steel chair was created in 1999 by sculptor Jonathan Kirk. John Hubbell, owner of Hubbell Galvanizing, donated the chair. In the next several months, the chair will be removed from its current spot near the Eagle in Roscoe Conkling Park to a new site at the Utica Zoo.
Tell us your Utica Olmsted Parks story!

Do you have a Utica Olmsted Parks story to share? You likely have more than one!

Do you hold a family or school reunion at one of the parks? Were your wedding pictures taken in one of the parks? Or maybe the parks are where you received your first kiss or where you celebrate your anniversary?

Is FT Proctor Park where you learned to ride a bike or roller skate? Did you learn to play golf on the public golf course designed by Robert Trent Jones in Valley View/Roscoe Conkling Park.

Did you play soccer in TR Proctor Park? Begin writing music or poetry near the Lily Pond? Learn to appreciate animals at the Zoo?

There are likely thousands of stories out there about each of Utica’s parks. And, the Conservancy would enjoy hearing them! The stories and the moments they describe are special and worth sharing. You make our parks what they are!

Please take a moment to share your stories — and photos — with us. You may submit them to our Facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/cnyconservancy/, email it to us at centralnyconservancy@gmail.com, or send it the old fashioned way via USPS at PO Box 8224, Utica, NY 13505.

We’ll include as many stories as we can in our next newsletter, on Facebook, and even on our website.

What’s your Proctor connection?

A few years back, the film Six Degrees of Separation, posited that everyone and everything is six or fewer steps away, by way of introduction, from any other person in the world. With that in mind, can you draw a connection to FT or TR Proctor? How about to Fredrick Law Olmsted, Jr.?

CNY Conservancy Board President Bill Locke recently discovered through some personal ancestry research that Thomas and Frederic Proctor’s great-great grandfather and mother are his 7th great grandparents.

If you’ve got a connection, we’d love to hear about it! Contact us via Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/cnyconservancy/. Or, email us at centralnyconservancy@gmail.com. You can even “snail mail” us at PO Box 8224, Utica, NY 13505.
2015 Gifts to the Central New York Conservancy

We appreciate the generosity of all who made gifts in support of the Conservancy and Utica’s Olmsted Parks from January 1 – December 31, 2015.

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We invite you to make a unique gift of spring flowers either in your name or for someone you wish to honor.

Your $25 donation will contribute to our spring planting of daffodils, tulips or flowering annuals in FT or TR Proctor Park or along the Memorial Parkway.

For your contribution, you, or those you wish to honor, will receive a card that describes what has been planted and the date of your gift.

Your contribution is an investment in the legacy created more than one hundred years ago by the Proctor Family and famed landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr.

Please use my gift of $_______ to plant the following (check all that apply):
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