



**WEST LAFAYETTE  
TREE FRIENDS**  
Planters • Pruners • Protectors

# Urban Leaves

*Tree News You Can Use*

Vol. 2 No. 5  
September 2015

## Donald A. Campbell 1941-2015

A dear friend, lover of trees and editor of Urban Leaves, Don died Tuesday, September 8, 2015. The November issue of Urban Leaves will be published in memory of this wonderful human being.

### Want to Be at Least 1% Healthier? Look at Trees!

"If someone offers you ten thousand dollars or ten trees, take the trees," says Alex Hutchinson.<sup>1</sup> Why? Because research has shown that people's health is improved by having trees around. In his New Yorker article, Hutchinson makes a convincing case for how trees contribute to our overall health. One study Hutchinson cites indicates that an additional ten trees on a block corresponded to a 1% increase in how healthy people in that area felt.<sup>2</sup> "

Another example Hutchinson cites is a 17-year study<sup>3</sup> in which an area whose ash trees were wiped out due to the emerald ash borer showed an increase of over 20,000 deaths involving cardiovascular and respiratory illnesses. Sadly, the emerald ash borer has already killed over one hundred million ash trees across North America. Here in West Lafayette we too see dead ash trees waiting to be cut down. That is why the West Lafayette Tree Friends is at work replacing those dead ashes by planting other trees, as well as planting more trees around town.

The health benefits that have been noted in studies seem to stem less from trees in back yards and more from trees along streets and in front yards. It may be that looking at trees or walking along streets restores us, calms us down, enhances our moods. And it seems not to matter whether it's a cold winter day or balmy spring one. So enjoy the trees you pass by. They are doing a lot of things, such as giving off oxygen, absorbing carbon dioxide, offering shade, cooling the air, saving money on heating and cooling bills, and providing habitat for birds and insects. And we are learning how much they're improving our health!

### Upcoming Events

**Wed 9/23** - Tree Friends at WL Farmers Market

**Tues 10/13** - WLTF committee meeting - noon - WL Public Library

**Tues 11/10** - WLTF committee meeting - noon - WL Public Library

### Quick Links

Fun tree things for kids

[Tree Jokes](#)

[KidZone Science-Trees](#)

To learn more go to the [Tree Friends website](#)

[Try a Tree Friends Crossword here!](#)

[Tree Facts](#)

[Urban Street Tree Benefits](#)

[Learn about the emerald ash borer](#)



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1. "How Trees Calm Us Down." New Yorker, July 23, 2015; [www.newyorker.com/tech/elements/what-is-a-tree-worth](http://www.newyorker.com/tech/elements/what-is-a-tree-worth)

2. Kardan, Omid, Peter Gozdyra, et al. "Neighborhood Greenspace and Health in a Large Urban Center." Scientific Reports 5.article 11610 (2015). [www.nature.com/srep/2015/150709/srep11610/full/srep11610.html](http://www.nature.com/srep/2015/150709/srep11610/full/srep11610.html)

3. Donovan, GH, Bultry, DT, et al. "The Relationship between Trees and Human Health: Evidence from the Spread of the Emerald Ash Borer. American Journal of Preventative Medicine. 44.2 (2013): 1390-45. [www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23332329](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23332329)

## Blackbird Farms To Get 110 New Trees

The Blackbird Farm area, which lies in the Wabash River watershed, will be graced by 110 new trees thanks to the WL Tree Friends. These trees, selected by the Blackbird Farm Housing Association and individual homeowners, are being funded by a grant from the Wabash River Enhancement Corporation.

## Don't Top That Tree!

When a tree around your house grows taller than you would like or is interfering with utility lines overhead, don't "top" it. Topping (sometimes called "stubbing," "heading," or "tipping") is the practice of cutting across the crown of a tree, leaving it looking like a hedge. Pruning called crown reduction, done by a certified arborist, is far better for that tree. Topping causes trees to grow weaker because the leaves at the top aren't manufacturing food for the rest of the tree. And stubs of topped trees left up there attract



insects and are vulnerable to disease. The new growth will never be as graceful in shape as a tree that is carefully pruned.

Some people have trees topped because they fear the tree is unsafe due to its height (although a healthy tree can support its own limbs). A topped tree sends out shoots from

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## Approved Street Trees

Not all trees are a good fit to be "street trees". A list of approved trees as well as landscape trees for yards can be found on the city website [by clicking here.](#)

## WLTF Committee

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the stubs that are weakly attached. Those shoots can grow as much as 20 feet in one year so while the original goal may have been to make the tree safer, it's actually more dangerous now as those weakly attached shoots can easily break in wind and ice storms.

All of these are reasons why topping trees is not allowed per ordinance in the City of West Lafayette.

Pruning may cost more, but you'll be rewarded with a healthier and more attractive tree. The difference between a tree that has been pruned vs. one that has been topped is dramatic. If you'd like more information and photos of topped trees, Purdue University's Department of Forestry and Natural Resources Extension Service has an informative page online:

<https://www.extension.purdue.edu/extmedia/fnr/fnr-faq-14-w.pdf>

You can also call the Extension Office: 765-494-3583.

Beverly Shaw, City liaison

## Tree notable

It has been said that one of George Washington's hobbies was pruning his apple trees.

