



SUFA E-News

Fall 2024



Welcome to the Fall 2023 issue of the Sunnyvale Urban Forest Advocates (SUFA) newsletter. This quarterly newsletter will keep you informed about how you can participate in SUFA's efforts to increase the tree canopy in Sunnyvale through education, tree plantings, and advocacy.

Farewell Leonard and Thank You!



Leonard Dunn, Sunnyvale's Urban Landscape Manager, has retired after 35 years of service to the City of Sunnyvale. Leonard was instrumental in writing the Sunnyvale Urban Forest Management Plan and has guided, educated, and inspired SUFA since our group was founded in 2014. While serving as the liaison between the city trees department and SUFA, Leonard advocated for trees, managed community tree plantings, and led tree walks. Leonard generously shared his passion for and knowledge of trees with SUFA and the community through both formal and informal talks, as well as community tree plantings. The value of his advice has been immeasurable.

At his retirement party, we were reminded that Leonard has overseen the planting of almost 20,000 trees in the city during his career.

These trees will likely outlive most of us and many of our new buildings. His work will continue to contribute to the beauty and health of Sunnyvale for years to come. That's quite a legacy.

We thank Leonard for an amazing career and for the impact his work has had on all of us. We wish Leonard a great retirement.

Welcome, James LeMasters!

SUFA would like to introduce our new liaison to the city, James LeMasters. James is a Sunnyvale City Arborist who has been working with the Trees Department for many years and has been involved in projects throughout the city. He has jumped into the liaison role with enthusiasm. SUFA is grateful for his support and we look forward to working with him in our common goals of increasing and improving Sunnyvale's urban forest.

Thank you, James!



SUFA at the 2024 State of the City Celebration

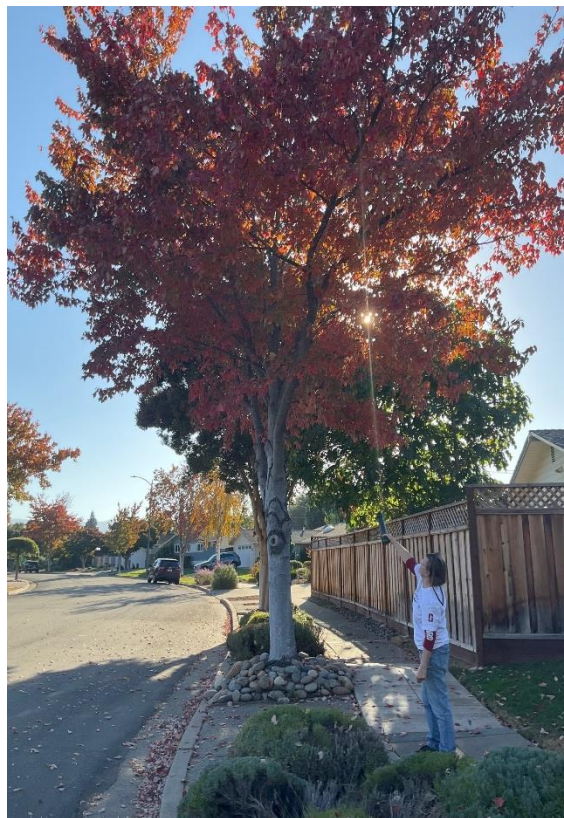
Sunnyvale's State of the City was held on September 21 and continued its vibrant community celebration theme. The event featured the Arc of Dreams Dedication, the State of the City Address, Board and Commission Recognition, a Community Awards presentation, and concluded with a reception and Community Resource Fair.

SUFA was pleased to be able to showcase our organization's contribution to Sunnyvale during the Community Resource Fair. We were delighted to meet many people and share our about advocacy efforts and educational opportunities related to Sunnyvale's urban forest. Highlighting information about SUFA's many tree walks, Jenny Puroshotma shared with visitors about our popular Edible Tree Walk as well as the many fruit-bearing trees in her own backyard.

We continue our series featuring common Sunnyvale street trees with information about the trees presented in an interview format. These are trees you'll see as you walk or bike through Sunnyvale neighborhoods or parks.

SUFA: Thank you for being willing to be interviewed by Sunnyvale Urban Forest Advocates. First, can I get your full name?

Red Maple: Of course. My Latin name is *Acer rubrum*. The genus, *Acer*, refers to trees which have leaves with several parts and often turn bright red, yellow, or orange in the fall. *Rubrum*, the species, is Latin for "red". But commonly, we're simply called red maples.



Tree on the Street Interview: The Red Maple

SUFA: Your foliage is indeed red so you have a very appropriate name.

Red Maple: Well, if I could add – it's not just our leaves turning red in the fall but our buds are red in the winter, our flowers are red in the spring, and our leafstalks are red in the summer. So, indeed, we are aptly named!

SUFA: Anything else about your red color?

Red Maple: Oh, yes! Red maples are the state tree of Rhode Island. It's a little unclear, but possibly it's because Rhode Island is from the Dutch meaning "red Island". Also, the state bird is the Rhode Island red hen. So, there you go!

SUFA: And can we get maple syrup from you?

Red Maple: Hmm. Yes and no. Red maples do produce the sap from which syrup is made but our buds emerge very early in the spring. When the buds emerge it changes the nature of the sap making the syrup less flavorful. Our cousins, the sugar maples (*Acer saccharum*), bud much later and so are used commercially for obtaining syrup. But we have many other uses. May I share?

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SUFA: Please do.

Red Maple: Indigenous people use our bark as a wash for inflamed eyes and cataracts and also as a remedy for hives and muscle aches. They brew a tea from our inner bark to treat coughs and diarrhea. Early settlers made dyes from an extract of our bark and by adding iron sulphate to our tannin, they made a black ink. Some people these days enjoy eating the seeds. They can be roasted, steamed, boiled, or just eaten plain right from the casing.

SUFA: Yes, I see your seeds. I believe they are called samaras?

Red Maple: Yes, that's their technical name but informally our seeds are also known as keys, whirligigs, whirlybirds, and helicopters because of the way they twist as they drop.

SUFA: So, does that make you a helicopter parent?

Red Maple: Oh, no! Quite the opposite! Once the seeds leave me, I have no control over them! They go wherever the wind takes them.

SUFA: Well, thank you! You've been very informative. Lastly, we always ask our tree interviewees what makes them a good tree for the urban forest. What would you say?

Red Maple: Well, in the arboreal world, red maples are known as "generalists". We grow well in sun or shade, dry or wet soil, high or low elevation so we can be planted in many different conditions. Also, when mature, we provide lots of shade to cool hot urban streets and sidewalks. Squirrels and birds find us great habitat as well.

SUFA: And you are absolutely beautiful this time of year!

Red Maple: Oh, goodness! You're making me turn red! Oh, wait! I do that every year at this time...

The samaras or seeds (*left*) and the spring buds of the red maple (*right*).





Sunnyvale Tree Trimming Is Back!

Well-maintained trees are less likely to drop branches and are more attractive, improving the safety and desirability of street trees. Unfortunately, tree trimming was cut from the city budget several years ago as a cost-saving measure during the pandemic.

In the past, city trees were trimmed about every seven years, but we are now several years behind, and some trees have not been trimmed in over ten years. Regular tree trimming has been re-established, but there is still a backlog.

The City Council recently authorized hiring two tree trimming companies to help get us back on track. West Coast Arborists has been contracted to trim at least 8000 trees and Brightview Tree Care Services has been contracted to trim 5000 trees. Both companies started their work this summer and should complete their activities within a year.

The city has over 38,000 street trees, so these contracts will have a big impact. SUFA recognizes how important tree trimming and maintenance are to the health of the trees and the urban forest and encourages the city to continue with its regular tree trimming schedule.

On Sunday, October 20th, Resurrection School teamed up with SUFA to host our inaugural Family-Friendly Tree Walk for Resurrection School families.

Nestled on a lush, green, 10-acre campus, the school boasts more than 20 ornamental and fruit-bearing trees. This tree walk offered a fantastic opportunity for participants to learn about the trees on campus, their significance, their benefits, and how to care for them.

The walk was led by an arborist-trained guide. During the walk, families discovered the importance of grapes, figs, and olives in the Catholic faith. It was a delightful blend of nature and education.

The next tree walk is scheduled for spring, when the campus will be in full bloom!

Resurrection School Tree Walk

