



Branching Out

Membership Essential to the NKY Urban & Community Forestry Council

By DJ. Scully, U.K., Campbell Co. Extension Agent for Natural Resources & Environmental Management

The Northern Kentucky Urban and Community Forestry Council is a non-profit, volunteer based organization interested in creating an awareness in our communities about the value of urban forestry as an integral part of comprehensive planning and action for the purpose of improving our quality of life and shared landscape. The executive committee is the council's governing body and may be composed of member(s) from the following entities:

Kentucky Division of Forestry, U.K.-Cooperative Extension Service, a Northern Kentucky utility company, Municipal

Government League of Northern Kentucky, a conservation organization, Northern Kentucky Nurserymen's Association, a Northern Kentucky Conservation District, a landscape architect, Northern Kentucky Home Builders Association, a local arboretum, and no more than 12 total members from local (Boone, Kenton, Campbell) counties' tree boards, commissions and/or park boards that may include no more than two members from any one group.

General membership shall be open to any organization, society, association, business, public agency, group, pro-

fessional or lay person having an interest in urban forestry.

The council holds meetings on the third Wednesday of each month at noon. The meetings rotate between Boone, Campbell and Kenton Counties and occur at the Cooperative Extension Offices. Additionally, the council offers many educational programs that may be of interest to you.

If you or your group is interested, contact DJ. Scully at the Campbell County Cooperative Extension Service, (859) 572-2600 or djscully@uky.edu for more information.

TREE WALK

Campbell County Environmental Education Center
Saturday, July 16 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Come learn to identify native and introduced trees. All participants will receive "A Guide to the Trees of the Campbell County Environmental Education Center."

We will be walking through wild/natural areas; therefore, contact with insects and poison ivy is possible. Participants should wear appropriate clothing, including boots, and should bring a sack lunch and a beverage. You may also want to have a notepad, pencil, old magazine (for pressing leaves) and hand lens.

Space is limited. Pre-registration is required by calling (859) 572-2600.

Planning Commissions in Boone, Kenton and Campbell Counties Receive Earth Day Award from EQC

By Sherry Carran (Council Secretary) and Don Girton (Previous Council Chairperson)

On April 22nd Kentucky's Environmental Quality Commission (EQC) held their Earth Day Award Ceremony at the Governor's Mansion in Frankfort. EQC, the Kentucky League of Cities and the Kentucky Association of Counties recognized 12 outstanding initiatives in the State of Kentucky that "exemplify the heart and spirit of Earth Day and demonstrate the positive benefits when communities support job growth, environmental stewardship and social equity – the three pillars of sustainability". Two of the twelve awards were given to initiatives here in Northern Kentucky.

Ryan Kent, Northern Kentucky Area Planning Commission, received an award for the Kenton County Brownfield Inventory, and the three planning commissions in Northern Kentucky (Boone County Planning Commission, Northern Kentucky Area Planning Commission (Kenton County) and Campbell County Planning Commission) received an award for their Regional Stewardship Initiatives.

For the past decade the planning commissions in Northern Kentucky have sought to foster regional stewardship of the area's land and water resources through a variety of innovative and collaborative approaches. Individually and collectively, they have undertaken and supported a variety of programs and projects aimed at encouraging civic involvement and cooperative community efforts in sustainable development, growth management, and promoting healthy ecosystems to include land, water and forest resources.

Projects include collaboration with the Northern Kentucky Urban and Community Forestry Council (NKUCFC) and the County Extension Services of the three counties to encourage and support over two

dozen county and community tree boards and tree commissions, completion of county wide forest quality assessments for Boone and Kenton Counties along with the integration of this data into the county geographic information system (GIS) planning data. NKAPC assisted with publication of a tree planting guide for Northern Kentucky. The Boone County Planning Commission along with their Urban Forest Commission and the County Parks & Recreation Department undertook development of a county urban forest strategic plan.

Northern Kentucky Area Planning Commission (NKAPC), in partnership with NKUCFC, Banklick Watershed Council, Boone County Planning Commission, Sanitation District #1 and Northern Kentucky Telecommunications Board, received a grant from the National Urban & Community Forestry Advisory Council to undertake an in-depth analysis of the Banklick Creek Watershed and explore how forests can help address water quality issues in this rapidly developing watershed. This resulted in a handbook for responsible management of forest and water resources that can be used for watershed planning anywhere in the country. This project was just recently awarded the Kentucky Chapter of the American Planning Association 'Outstanding Project/Program/ Tool Award'.

Each planning commission was instrumental in establishing a land conservancy in their county and they give needed support to those conservancies. Boone Planning Commission completed a study on Purchase and Transfer of Development Rights Program for their County. Currently NKAPC and Campbell County Planning Commission are supporting farmland preservation studies being con-

ducted in their counties by the Kenton and Campbell County Conservation Districts. NKAPC also supported the initiative that is bringing about the Northern Kentucky Regional Farmers Market to the City of Covington.

The three planning commissions have hosted and supported a variety of public workshops on topics such as conservation development, low impact development and smart growth. The Directors for the three planning commissions serve on Local Alliance for Nature and Development (LAND) which meets once a month, along with developers, engineers and conservationist, to brain storm on how conservation and development can go hand in hand to cause Northern Kentucky to be an 'Optimum Community'.

The three planning commissions have played a big part in Sanitation District #1's (SD#1) award winning Storm Water Program. The three planning commissions and SD#1 will be working together to do land use planning on a watershed basis. NKAPC is also pursuing a model project, in partnership with the City of Ft. Wright and SD#1, where tree planting along an interstate exchange can improve storm water quality and quantity coming from the site.

Boone County Planning Commission, Northern Kentucky Area Planning Commission and Campbell County Planning Commission are taking a leadership role in careful land use planning and stewardship for all of Northern Kentucky. Together they are making great strides toward livable communities where the man-made and natural environments are both accommodated and valued.

Kris's Corner focuses on recommended and often overlooked high quality urban tree species.

Kentucky Coffeetree (*Gymnocladus dioica*)

Kentucky Coffeetree is one of our most famous native trees of Kentucky. As once the state tree at one time, Kentucky Coffeetree is now officially our state heritage tree. Since the tree cannot be found native in all 120 counties of the state, it lost its designation as the state tree to Tulip Poplar after some debate. State Heritage Tree, however, is certainly a well-deserved title for this impressive native tree species of Kentucky. Seeds of the tree were used by early Kentucky settlers as a coffee substitute, resulting in the tree's common name. It should be noted, however, that the gummy resin inside pods is toxic, along with seeds that have not been roasted to remove alkaloids.

Kentucky Coffeetree is well known by name, but not yet frequently used in the landscape or in urban forestry. This is unfortunate, for the tree is extremely



adaptable, very durable once established, and has more than one season of appeal. Fruitless male

Coffeetrees lend themselves well as a medium to large shade tree on larger properties, park settings, and use as a street tree. Female Coffeetrees produce reddish brown to black leather pods that can be considered messy by some in high profile public areas. It is generally recommended, therefore, to purchase one of the selected fruitless varieties if using this species in areas that must stay highly manicured.

In character, Kentucky Coffeetree shows great beauty throughout the year. In the winter landscape this species has interesting coarse branching habit, forming a narrow obovate crown, but sometimes can be more spreading and variable. Bark is characterized with light gray to brown scale like ridges, and offers considerable winter interest in itself. In summer, Kentucky Coffeetree grows luxurious blue-green foliage in the form of impressive tropical looking bi pinnately compound leaves followed by butter yellow to orange fall color. Considering the tree's seasonal appeals and cultural tolerances, this is definitely a tree that deserves wider use in the landscape. Young specimens of Kentucky Coffeetree can be viewed in Northern Kentucky at Boone County Arboretum.

Selections:

'Espresso'- Upward arching branch form resulting in an Elm-like vase shape.

'Prairie Titan'- Upright spreading 60-70' blue-green summer foliage.
'Stately Manor'- Narrow, upright form 50' by 20' wide possibly the best for street tree use.
'Variiegata' - Little known cultivar, slower growing than species with streaks of creamy white variegation, and pink-purple new growth.



Availability:

Available at many nurseries and garden centers locally in small numbers.

**NORTHERN KENTUCKY URBAN &
COMMUNITY FORESTRY COUNCIL**

c/o Boone County Extension Service
P.O. Box 876
Burlington, KY 41005

Phone: 859-572-2600

*Creating an awareness about the value of urban
forestry in Northern Kentucky Communities.*

We're on the web!
www.nkyurbanforestry.org

Nature at Your Service

American Forests is pleased to host the 2005 National Conference on Urban Ecosystems November 17-18, 2005 at the Westin Hotel in Charlotte, North Carolina.

The urban forest is an untapped resource—one that can help cities meet regulatory requirements for clean air and water, revitalize neighborhoods, and reduce the costs of building and maintaining infrastructure. The 2005 National Conference on Urban Ecosystems, Nature at Your Service, will show how to re-

connect people to their city's natural resources.

The latest chapter in urban thinking for the 21st century recognizes the ecological city and the importance of respecting and using natural systems of forests, soils, water, and air to support urban areas. Nature at Your Service is designed both for those who want to influence the shape and direction of their community and for those who must meet environmental quality requirements. From local to regional perspectives, the con-

ference will highlight latest technologies, emerging public policies, and tools to help put the urban forest to best use.

For more information, visit www.americanforests.org/conference

For conference questions, contact Donna Tschiffely, registration coordinator, donna@amfor.org or call 703-904-7508.