

The benefits of planting trees

BY DANA LEE

Throughout cultures spanning the globe and time, trees have been a symbol of our connection to the earth and the unexplainable beyond, the “threshold between the worlds.” Ancient cultures in every corner of the world have regarded



Acer macrophyllum, Oregon native Bigleaf Maple.

trees as our providers and guardians of physical and spiritual nourishment. In recent years, many sacred groves that have been preserved for centuries have become examples of pristine regional biodiversity. They are largely undisturbed ecosystems that are now serving as models for the restoration and conservation of biodiversity all around the world.

There is a Chinese proverb that states, “The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second best time is now.” Much truth still rings from this ancient sentiment. Planting trees benefits our homes and communities in many ways.

Air quality improvement. Not only do trees consume carbon dioxide through photosynthesis and produce oxygen, but they also remove other pollutants from the air, such as nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, and carbon monoxide, as well as particulates that are harmful for us to breathe.

Preservation of water and soil quality. Tree canopies intercept rainfall, allowing the water to more slowly seep into the soil, preventing runoff. This purified water, slowly absorbed through the soil, recharges underground aquifers, reducing the likelihood of floods and storm-water damage. The deep and intricate root systems of trees help hold soil in place,

preventing erosion into our surface-water streams, rivers, and lakes. This also allows the beneficial bacteria and fungal mycelium in the top layers of the soil to maintain a healthy balance and rich fertility.

Lower energy costs. Trees can have a positive impact on the expense of heating and cooling your home. Strategically placing shade trees around a house, especially on the south, west, and east sides, can lower cooling costs by 20 - 30 percent, according to the US Forest Service. Planting trees as winter windbreaks can also reduce heating expenses by 20 - 50 percent!

Food sources and habitat for wildlife. Trees foster the growth of other plants and fungi, creating an environment in which wildlife can flourish. In addition, the trees themselves provide habitat and food for birds, small mammals, and pollinators.

Trees offer precious benefits to our communities. They have a positive impact on our overall well-being, personally and societally. When we grow trees for fruit we tend to share our bounty with our friends and neighbors. Having shaded areas encourages outdoor activities in the summer because people tend to jog and walk more in places that are protected from the sun. As we know, southern Oregon can get stifling hot in the summer. It is always such a relief to take a rest under beautiful, mature trees. It is an added pleasure to see the colors change as the cool of autumn sets in.

We at Forestfarm have a deep admiration for trees that we want to share with our community. This is why we have decided to have a continuous oversized tree sale. We often have trees that we grow right here in the Applegate Valley that are too tall to ship elsewhere, which we would love to see go to homes and businesses in our local community. Please feel free to stop by Forestfarm Nursery on the Pacifica grounds at 14643 Water Gap Road in Williams (541-846-7269). We are open from 9 am - 2 pm, Monday - Friday. We greatly appreciate our community and look forward to seeing all of these beautiful trees find good local homes.

Happy Planting!
Dana Lee
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Pacifica wants to hear from you

BY GERI LITTLEJOHN

Perhaps you already know about Pacifica: A Garden in the Siskiyou. With hiking and riding trails, bird-watching, plant gardens, catch-and-release fishing, a top-notch disc golf course, and much more, it is a wonderful resource for the Applegate Valley and southern Oregon.

In this *Applegater*, hopefully you've read the article about Forestfarm at Pacifica and were delighted to learn that one of the foremost mail-order nurseries in the country is located right here in our valley.

It is open for you to come and see the wide selection of plants and tap into the knowledge of manager Greg Mason and his staff. Perhaps you've been enlightened about the extent of the education programs that have been the staple of Pacifica's mission for the past 20 years. A percentage of every dollar you spend on plants is a public contribution to Pacifica and supports our education and camp programs and assists in the grant-approval process.

Like many nonprofits, Pacifica is run by a small, working board of directors. These individuals are passionate about nature, education, the arts, and community. They donate their time and energy and oversee the education staff and maintenance team.

Like many small nonprofits, we have large dreams and see the potential to offer so much more to the community and to the public. Like many nonprofits, we are woefully undercapitalized and understaffed.

We dream of having an events/arts program director to oversee regular community offerings and a volunteer coordinator. Imagine what this could bring to the community.

To bring these dreams closer to fruition as a full-fledged community center, to help with the overhead of maintenance and improvements on the property and buildings, and to help cover the cost of insurance and taxes, we are launching several initiatives and inviting deeper participation from you, our community.

Last year, we announced the launch of Pacifica 2.0, looking 20 years into the future. Now 2020 is here, and we are putting ideas into action. At our January board meeting we formed three

new committees: land-use, visioning, and membership-volunteer activation. This spring we will be holding community meetings. Be on the lookout for notices on Jo's List and Pacifica's Facebook page.

Are you interested in joining one of the committees? Do you have ideas you would like to share for designing the public meetings? Contact Geri Littlejohn, board chair, at geri@pacificagarden.org or 828-712-0277 or Ohana T, vice president, at ohana@pacificagarden.org.

Do you want to help in the gardens or learn about other volunteer opportunities or have a skill or other resources you would like to donate to Pacifica? Send an email to info@pacificagarden.org.

We really want Pacifica to thrive and be a vibrant community space. And that means we want to hear from you.

Other ways to support Pacifica

Become a member. Whether you enjoy the grounds or come to arts or music events, got married or enjoyed a wedding at Pacifica, have a child who participated in a Caterpillar program or a field trip or the Outdoor School, or simply want to express your gratitude and appreciation for all we do and for maintaining a large tract of land open to the public, we've made it easy for you to join. There are tiers of memberships to choose from, beginning with a free membership. Information is available at pacificagarden.org or on the Pacifica Facebook page.

You can hold a class, workshop, retreat, or special private event like a wedding or family reunion at Pacifica. We offer both outdoor and indoor facilities depending on the needs and size of your group. Our 400 acres are home to the Cedar Center, the Pond House, and the Steve Miller apartment.

We keep our prices low by being a venue-only location so that you have more freedom and flexibility to create your event exactly as you want! Contact Harmony Haynie at 541-660-3585 or harmonysue@pacificagarden.org for more information about the venue and pricing.

We are excited that 2020 is here and hope you will assist us in making this vision a reality.

Geri Littlejohn
Board Chair, Pacifica
geri@pacificagarden.org

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