

The tree commission continues its education from the Division of Forestry each quarter. We will be graduating the course on November 12. One graduation requirement is a powerpoint presentation demonstrating our program and creating an urban site index of village trees (locations and condition of trees) and a capital and operating budget which includes budgeting rules, schedules, and priorities. It has been an intense training, but so important and interesting for the sake of a truly beautiful and healthy urban landscape.

Our district state Urban Forester is coming this morning (Monday) to assist us in preparing our urban index. It is a scientifically researched and proven format written by the Division of Forestry from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and implemented by municipalities who wish to have a long term and successful urban forest. It is also a recommendation to obtain "Tree City" status which requires yearly application.

Several reasons for wanting a pleasant urban forest have been known for decades. A well planted and maintained urban forest is part of a good eco-system where rainwater is stored and there is less water runoff per acre per year. Trees aid in keeping air clean. The shade of trees near your home or business reduces air conditioning needs. A pleasant urban forest has positive mental health effects such as boosting mood and concentration. It also supports self-discipline, lessens impulsive behavior, reduces hospital visits, helps create more socializing with neighbors, lessens crime and domestic violence.

In regards to real estate, a thriving urban forest contributes to higher property values and trees are the only urban infrastructure that appreciate in value.

Last week Swanton area residents Walt and Donna Lange were given a prestigious award by the Division of Forestry of the Ohio Dept. of Natural Resources as members of the "Forest of Honor". A ceremony was held at Zaleski State Park in the Southeastern part of Ohio in the Hocking Hills area. It was attended by several retirees and current dignitaries of the Division of Forestry. I had the privilege to attend and wish to congratulate Walt and Donna on their success and their relationship with the folks from the State Forests and the Division of Forestry. Walt is the current chairman of our local Swanton Tree Commission and an integral part of our work. He and Donna are long time tree advocates and we appreciate their commitment.

The Tree Commission meets monthly to assess our hazard trees, schedule educational seminars for ourselves and the public, learn about tree species, and discuss our plan for proper tree pruning and planting. Please call village hall at 419.826.0335 if you have any questions regarding our village trees. Our motto is *Happy Trees = Happy People*.