

GROWING FRIENDS' MEMORIAL TREE GRANTS

Growing Friends of Helena has an on-going grant program to assist people in planting of trees as a memorial to family and friends. Growing Friends will match, up to \$150, the cost of planting a tree to honor the person if the planting is on public grounds. Initially the program was offered in conjunction with the City of Helena and the Parks Department, for the planting of trees in the City's parks. The program has been expanded to include any public agency and public grounds. Trees have been planted with the help of the school district on school grounds, the county of Lewis and Clark around the courthouse and most recently, with the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks at Spring Meadow State Park. While this short explanation gives you an idea of the program, we'd be happy to discuss other ideas for plantings you may have.

If you are interested in taking advantage of Growing Friends' offer, start by contacting the governmental agency which controls the property on which you think the person would have wanted to see a tree planted. You may eventually end up having to get the approval of someone higher up in the agency, but start first by contacting the site manager or grounds keeper. It is this person who most likely has the working knowledge of the site. They will work with you in selecting a planting site and recommending a tree species that fits with landscape plans for the property.

Sometimes the agency is willing to have its crew do the planting. It will make the arrangements to get the tree and plant it. Or you can contact one of the local nurseries to arrange for the planting. Be flexible and keep an open mind. It has been our experience that the agencies managing a property are more than happy to have a tree planted and will work with you to arrange the planting.

Once you have contacted the agency and arranged the planting, contact Growing Friends. The easiest way is through our web site and e-mail. We don't require any formal application, but we want to make sure of the details of the planting before we approve our contribution. By the time you contact us, you should have all the information we both need to get the tree planted. You've contacted the agency, arranged for the selection of a tree and found a planting location. And you've arranged for the physical planting, either by the agency or through a nursery. With this information, all it takes is an e-mail or a phone call to us to approve the planting.

The handling of payment is going to be a little different in every situation.

The easiest way is when you go through a nursery. You can arrange for the nursery to bill you. When you receive the bill, send a copy to Growing Friends and we'll send our contribution to the nursery. You can pay your part of the bill directly to the nursery. When working through a government agency, you'll have to find out how that agency handles its billing and we'll both have to follow that procedure.

Each memorial planting entails a different set of circumstances depending on the agency involved. Hopefully this gives you a general idea of the steps in the process for getting a memorial tree planted. The important thing is to have one person willing to make the necessary contacts and phone calls to see the process through. Again, if you have any questions, please feel free to contact us. The easiest and quickest way is through the web page, www.growingfriends.org.