

Growing Friends of Helena

. . . planting for today and future generations

Our Purpose

Growing Friends' purpose is to enrich the quality of life in the Helena, Montana area with extensive plantings of suitable, attractive, diverse, and well-cared-for trees and shrubs.

Our Accomplishments, 1990-2008

Growing Friends was founded in 1990. It funds and conducts planting projects, educates the public and decision-makers, and encourages and assists local government. In 1998, the National Arbor Day Foundation recognized Growing Friends' successes with one of its Project Awards.

Planting Projects. Growing Friends conducts its own planting projects, including the Boulevard Tree Program (which has planted over 600 trees along streets in residential neighborhoods), and makes matching grants to support others through its Grants Program. Growing Friends also recruits and organizes volunteers for planting projects, and provides design and planting advice. Here are some examples of the locations where Growing Friends has been involved in planting projects:

Parks and Streets

Batch Park
Benton Avenue Cemetery (2 projects)
Broadway (2 projects)
Cruse Avenue (3 projects)
Euclid Avenue
Fairgrounds Duck Pond (2 projects)
Fire Tower Hill (2 projects)
Menlo Park Road Park
North Main Street (3 projects)
Park Avenue
Reber Broadwater Cupola Park
Ryan County Park (2 projects)
Sierra County Park
Spring Meadow Lake State Park
Treasure State Acres Park (2 projects)

Schools

Broadwater Elementary
Capitol High
Carroll College (4 projects)
Clancy Elementary (2 projects)
C.R. Anderson Middle (2 projects)
Eastgate Middle
Four Georgians Elementary
Helena College of Technology
Helena High (2 projects)
Helena Middle (4 projects)
Jefferson Elementary
Jim Darcy Elementary (2 projects)
Kessler Elementary
Radley Elementary
Ray Bjork Elementary (2 projects)
Smith Elementary
Warren Elementary (3 projects)

Businesses

Allegro School of Dance (2 projects)
Base Camp

Blue Cross
Floor Show
Hair/Hair Salon
Home Beautifiers
Jamie's Westside Welding
Real Food Market & Deli

Community Organizations

American Legion Post No. 2
Archie Bray Foundation
Birdseye Community Center
Covenant Methodist Church
Exploration Works
First Lutheran Church
First Presbyterian Church
Florence Crittenton Home (2 projects)
Grandstreet Theater
Helena YMCA
Helena Youth Soccer Assn. (2 projects)
Holter Art Museum
Last Chance Tennis Association
Margaret Stuart Youth Home
Myrna Loy Center
Plymouth Congregational Church
Queen City Estates
St. Andrew School
St. Anne's Cemetery
St. Mary Catholic Church
St. Paul's Methodist Church (3 projects)
St. Peter's Hospital (3 projects)
Sunset Capital Apartments

Government Buildings

City-County Building
County Health Department
Helena Regional Airport (2 projects)
Lewis & Clark Library

(over, please)

Public Education Projects. Growing Friends educates the public about the desirability of increasing the number of suitable and well-maintained trees and shrubs in the community through its annual Landscaping Awards Program, by producing and distributing educational materials, by co-sponsoring workshops, and by working directly with private sector decision-makers. Here are some examples of Growing Friends' public education projects:

- ◆ "Putting Down Roots" – a 64-page guidebook to trees suitable for planting in Helena (2002)
- ◆ Landscaping Awards Program (1990-2003)
- ◆ Trash For Trees (since 1990) – a semi-annual recycling event
- ◆ Community Improvement Award (since 1999)
- ◆ Annual insert in City of Helena water bills (since 2005)

Local Government Projects. Growing Friends encourages local government decision-makers and staff to assign a high priority to trees and shrubs in the community by participating in the development of community plans and ordinances addressing that subject, by commenting on pending local government decisions affecting trees and shrubs, and by raising money and providing other support for relevant local government activities. Here are some examples of Growing Friends' activities to assist local governments:

- ◆ Participating in the City's Memorial Tree Program (since 1999)
- ◆ Helping to support the City's Tree Planting and Maintenance District
- ◆ Providing extensive assistance to the City's Tree Inventory
- ◆ Working on a revision of the City's Landscaping Ordinance

Our Ongoing Activities

A number of Growing Friends' activities are ongoing, including:

- ◆ Boulevard Tree Program
- ◆ Growing Friends Planting Projects
- ◆ Arbor Day Tree Plantings
- ◆ Monthly Meetings
- ◆ Grants Program
- ◆ Memorial Tree Program
- ◆ Habitat for Humanity House Plantings

Our Future Plans

In 2009 and beyond, Growing Friends will continue to conduct planting, public education, and local government-related projects. In addition, Growing Friends hopes to be able to work on new activities such as:

- ◆ Helena Urban Forest Plan
- ◆ Commercial District Beautification
- ◆ City Landscaping Ordinance Revision
- ◆ Tree Planting and Maintenance Endowment

Our Structure

Growing Friends is nonpartisan and nonpolitical. It is a membership organization governed by a volunteer board of directors. Growing Friends has no staff or office and, therefore, a minimum of overhead expenses. The organization is a Montana nonprofit corporation. It is exempt from federal income taxation under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Our Funding

The financial support for Growing Friends comes primarily from its members. The organization also seeks grants, bequests, and contributions from Helena area businesses. Growing Friends' revenues have been about \$24,000 per year. All contributions to Growing Friends are deductible as charitable contributions for federal and state income tax purposes.

To find out more about any of Growing Friends' activities, to volunteer to help with any of them, or to suggest projects, call 449-8947. To become a member of Growing Friends, or to renew a membership, send \$20 or more to P.O. Box 709, Helena, MT 59624.