“What a friend we have in a tree, the tree is the symbol of hope, self improvement and what people can do for themselves.”

Wangari Maathai
Dear Friends,

Scientists estimate the first trees grew on earth 380 million years ago. Until very recently, our planet had 6 trillion trees. Humans have cut that number to 3 trillion and as our communities grow, the native landscapes that support them continue to shrink. This has resulted in catastrophic changes to our climate with mass plant and animal extinctions.

In Missouri we want to change this trajectory. We value our forests, rural and urban. And are working to protect and rebuild them.

Last year, more than 6,000 volunteers helped plant over 11,000 native trees from Forest ReLeaf’s nursery. From the teacher who plants one tree with her students in their school’s front yard; block captains who coordinate the planting of five trees in a neighborhood pocket park; the city forester who plants 50 trees on residential streets, and the land manager who plants 200 trees along the banks of rivers and creeks, these are our valuable partners.

Thank you for being a part of our team,

Meridith McAvoy Perkins
Executive Director

Note from the Executive Director

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Looking to the Future

In 2022 our Board completed a strategic plan, recommitting to Forest ReLeaf’s mission, “planting trees and enriching communities by growing, providing, and planting trees through the power of people and partnerships.” This mission has inspired us for 30 years and remains the heart of our work.

Our future goals include:

**SUSTAIN** a healthy organization by engaging in practices that strengthen our capacity for service.  
**GROW** trees that expand the tree canopy in Missouri communities.  
**GIVE** free trees for community-based projects to improve environmental, economic, and social resilience.  
**EDUCATE** to spark excitement and strengthen community capacity to care for trees.  
**INSPIRE** people to become advocates for trees.  
**RESPOND** to existing and emerging forest threats.
Aaron Dohogne (third from left) has planted 200+ trees in south St. Louis City over the last 5 years. He utilizes Forest ReLeaf’s Project CommuniTree to get trees for parks but wanted to have a greater impact. So, he created the Trash For Trees campaign where he raises money from local businesses, like Garcia Properties, for picking up thousands of pieces of trash in the neighborhood. He then uses the money earned to purchase trees from Forest ReLeaf to give away free to residents wanting to plant trees in their private yards!

“You can’t just talk endlessly about a problem like climate change & not take some action. While it’s hard for an individual to tackle the big leverage issues around climate, anyone can learn the right way to plant a tree.”

-Aaron Dohogne

Volunteer Spotlight

Kristen Westley

When Kristen saw dozens of invasive Callery Pear trees growing at Orchard Farm School, she decided to do something about it. Thanks to her efforts in advocacy and education, the school district agreed to remove all 26 trees and relied on Kristen’s expertise to lead the replanting effort! With two years of Forest ReLeaf volunteer experience, she confidently selected 16 species of native Missouri trees and shrubs to enhance the area’s biodiversity and designed a new planting plan for this highly visible space that supports wildlife and delights students.
Forest ReLeaf believes that cost should not be a barrier to urban forest growth. Project CommuniTree supports the ambition of all enthusiastic tree planters. Through this program, YOU can request FREE 3-gallon native trees and shrubs to plant on public and nonprofit property. The trees planted in 2022 will create 238 acres of mature tree canopy across the state!

DID YOU KNOW...

More Ways to Volunteer!

In 2022, we added:

- Park maintenance projects, including mulching and pruning
- More Saturday opportunities for working professionals, families, and students
- Corporate employee engagement experiences

Volunteer Impact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value of Volunteer Time</th>
<th>Number of Volunteers</th>
<th>Number of Volunteer Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$535,025</td>
<td>6,045</td>
<td>18,747</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pocketparks

Transforming Vacant Lots

"Putting something on this vacant lot, including a tree, just sends a different message into the world, like ‘this lot has potential, this community has potential’" said Samantha Smugala, President and Founder of the nonprofit, Pocketparks. Pocketparks is dedicated to turning vacant city lots into beautiful and active community spaces. Forest ReLeaf was eager to support their mission and has donated over 50 trees through Project CommuniTree to date. These plantings allowed eager community members to plant a tree for the first time, expanding their knowledge of trees and their appreciation and connection to nature.
Priority ReLeaf focuses on sites with low tree canopy in under-resourced neighborhoods, communities experiencing loss from catastrophic storms, and areas facing threats from invasive species. Environmental racism, redlining, and disinvestment have limited quality tree planting and care in many neighborhoods across the state. Priority ReLeaf provides tools for residents to receive the critical benefits of a healthy tree canopy.

In collaboration with The Nature Conservancy, Davey Resource Group, Beyond Housing, and St. Louis City Forestry, the Treesilience Initiative coordinated the removal of 34 dead trees in North St. Louis County from residential yards and 73 dead ash trees from St. Louis City Parks and will be replacing them with over 200 new native trees.

In partnership with 4theVille, the #TreeTheVille Initiative is working to address environmental injustice in the Ville, Greater Ville and Kingsway East neighborhoods by elevating the community's tree canopy goals. Here, community volunteers helped plant and continue stewardship of 30 trees and dozens of perennials at Triangle Park, a residential greenspace in the Ville.

Forest ReLeaf worked with Missouri State Parks, Magnificent Missouri, and the Robert J. Trulaske Jr. Family Foundation, Forest ReLeaf completed our 3-year commitment to forest restoration along the Katy Trail with 200 native trees near the McKittrick and Dutzo trailheads.

In partnership with the Missouri Invasive Plant Council and the Missouri Department of Conservation, Forest ReLeaf distributed 600 trees to a record 6 locations (Kansas City, Joplin, Springfield, Columbia, St. Louis, and Jackson) for the popular Pear Buy Back program, encouraging the public to replace invasive pear trees with more sustainable natives.

In partnership with the Missouri Department of Conservation, generous sponsors and hundreds of volunteers, Forest ReLeaf was able to facilitate a record 16 Community Tree Planting projects in St. Louis, establishing 1,029 new trees that will add 41 acres of canopy to the region. These trees will be stewarded by Forest ReLeaf staff over the next 2 years to improve long-term success.

**Hannibal Tree Board**

“Hannibal has been a Tree City USA for 24 years. Our past tree plantings have focused on street trees, parks, & schools. Forest ReLeaf’s Priority ReLeaf encouraged our Tree Board to realize all neighborhoods need trees. We now have a tree-lined entry to the Hannibal Housing apartments near Huckleberry Park.

Thank you, Forest ReLeaf, for providing our community with 12 wonderful trees.”

Kristy Trevathan  
City of Hannibal Tree Board

**Priority ReLeaf**

**2022 Priority ReLeaf**

** Strategic Partners**

Pear Buy Back

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Community Plantings

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**4theVille**

Better Family Life

Beyond Housing

Great Rivers Greenway

Magnificent Missouri

Missouri Invasive Plant Council

Missouri State Parks

The Nature Conservancy

SSM Health
Forest ReLeaf’s Summer Canopy Crew program exposed a diverse group of young adults to tree health and management, along with other opportunities in urban forestry. The crew spent their days in the field getting practical experience that bolstered their knowledge of the function of trees in the landscape and their direct impact on neighborhood health.

“Forest ReLeaf created a clear picture of why our work mattered and how our small contribution was significant for creating a greener world for tomorrow. This vision often carried me through some of the tedious and exhausting day-to-day work. Overall, the experience has been eye-opening and incredibly transformative.”

Kieran, Canopy Crew Member

Great news! Trees planted through Project CommuniTree have a survival rate* of 85%, which is considered good. Trees planted and stewarded with support from Forest ReLeaf have a 91% survival rate, which is considered excellent.

*The main causes of tree mortality are drought and vandalism.

Billy Haag, Forestry Manager, leads the Canopy Crew in tree inventory to determine the success and maintenance needs of previously planted trees each summer.

Canopy Crew

Trees planted

Acres of land cared for

45,719

11,309

3,523

350

Hours of forest advocacy

This year the Missouri Forestkeepers Network supported the publishing of a new Tree of the Week booklet to engage and inspire the Forestkeeper network with a unique perspective on 50 Missouri native trees. In August, the annual conference field trip to Finger Lakes State Park and Barrel 53 Cooperage highlighted the significant role White Oak plays in our Missouri ecosystem and economy.

Each August, Forest ReLeaf welcomes 5th and 6th grade campers for Tree Camp. In 2022, 16 campers attended and enjoyed learning about trees. Activities focused on forestry, water, soil, birds, and stewardship.

Tree Camp

TreeKeepers

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Financials

Revenue & Support

- Government Grants: $375,206
- Private Grants: $324,054
- Donations & Events: $190,348
- Tree Sales: $18,240
- Miscellaneous/Other: $7,909
- Total: $880,235

Expenses

- Management & General: $44,946
- Program Services: $649,123
- Fundraising: $83,525
- Total: $777,593
- Change in Net Assets: $102,641

Source: Pre-audited Quickbooks Financials.

Forest ReLeaf meets all charity standards of the Better Business Bureau’s Wise Giving Alliance.

Corporate & Foundation Donors

- 4 Hands Brewing Company
- AECOM
- Ameren Corporation Charitable Trust
- Arbor Day Foundation
- Bellefontaine Cemetery
- Beverly Haefling Thomas Charitable Fund
- Bright Funds
- Conservation Foundation of Missouri
- Custom Foodscaping
- Davey Tree Expert Company
- David V Butruille Fund
- Droege Tree Care, Inc.
- dhl Landscape Architecture
- Federated Garden Club of Missouri
- FedEx
- Garvey Memorial Foundation
- Gaylord Foundation
- Grant Char. Trust
- Great Rivers Greenway
- Heart of Oak Foundation
- Herzog Products LLC
- Hoagland Charitable Fund
- Horwitz/Friedman Charitable Fund
- ICL Specialty Products
- James A. & Elizabeth Maritz Charitable Fund
- JM Family Enterprises Inc.
- Mastercard
- Metropolitan Forestry Services
- Missouri American Water
- One Tree Planted
- Pang Family Charitable Trust
- Parkview Horticultural Society
- Peche Family Foundation
- Peckham Gayton Albers & Viets, Inc.
- PGAV
- Potriviti Inc
- Shade Tree Service Company
- Spire Energy
- SSM Health
- St. Louis Philanthropic Organization
- StraightUp Solar
- Sunset Hills Garden Club
- The Bellwether Foundation
- The David V Butruille Fund
- The Robert J Trulaske Family Foundation
- Trio Foundation of St. Louis
- Robert J. Trulaske, Jr. Family Foundation
- Vanguard Charitable Fund
- Victor & Selene Deliniere Charitable Foundation

Concert in the Trees

On May 26, Forest ReLeaf hosted our Sixth Annual Concert in the Trees. The unique spin on the event combined both art and music as a way to connect individuals to Forest ReLeaf’s mission and work. A new mural was unveiled by award-winning graphic designer, Jayvn Solomon (pictured on the back page) and can be seen on view when visiting Forest ReLeaf’s Nursery and Arboretum. Over 200 people attended to see Janet Evra, an international jazz vocalist, bassist, and bandleader. The event continues to grow every year and raises critical funds to support our tree giveaway programs!

Arbomeisters Festival

Forest ReLeaf presented the Arbomeisters Homebrew + Craft Beer Festival on September 24. The unique event requires that each brew includes an ingredient sourced from a tree. This year’s winning beer was “How do You Like Dem Apples Apple Pie Sour” brewed by Shawn Campbell of the St. Charles County Society of Brewers with the runner up being the “Pecan Porter” from Brandon Bostic of Flannel Hop Brewing. The St. Charles County Society of Brewers took home the club trophy with Brewminati in second place. We look forward to hosting everyone again in 2023!
2022 Tree Recipients

Add 6,200 acres of new tree canopy

2020 Arboriculture Status

Served 78 Missouri counties

Supported 3,000 community projects

Over the past 30 years, we have...

Distributed over 245,000 trees

2023 30th Anniversary Education: Pavilion opens at Forest ReLeaf’s Nursery & Arboretum.

2021 Water Resource Nursery irrigation is moved off the town water and onto a new well.

Forest ReLeaf takes on watering community planting projects.

2020 CommuniTree Nursery is now Forest ReLeaf nursery.

“Forest ReLeaf and CommuniTree Gardeners expand the greenway trail outside the nursery Pear Buy Back launches.”

2019 Ongoing Forest ReLeaf Pollinator garden and gazebos are installed along the greenway trail outside the nursery.

Forest ReLeaf’s Seeds of Hope receiving an additional 2 acres of growing space.

Forest ReLeaf nursery moves to St. Louis County.

2018 Record Set Forest ReLeaf celebrates 25 years & plants the 200,000th tree in Fairground Park.

2017 Nursery Relocation CommuniTree Gardeners move nursery moves to St. Louis County Creekside Memorial Park.

2016 Nursery Expansion CommuniTree Gardeners & nursery moves to St. Louis County Creekside Memorial Park.

2015 Record Set 100,000th tree planted in Peace Park.

2014 Nursery Relocation CommuniTree Gardeners move nursery to St. Louis County Creekside Memorial Park.


2019 Inspiration Volunteers plant 10,000 trees on the Mississippi Riverfront to commemorate the 25th anniversary of Earth Day.

2012 Forest ReLeaf becomes an official nonprofit organization.

2009 Programs Project CommuniTree & Priority ReLeaf are launched.

2007 Community Engagement through the new Tresselite initiative.

2006 established with support from the National Tree Trust, the first “growing out stations” is built near the St. Louis Airport.

2005 Growth The Missouri Foresters Network begins in partnership with the Missouri Department of Conservation.

2004 Record Set 50,000th tree planted in Fairground Park.


1999 Added 6,200 acres of new tree canopy

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Local designer and muralist, Jayvn Solomon, helped bring some attention to the front door of Forest ReLeaf’s Nursery and Arboretum.

Artist statement: This piece titled “RELEAF” represents the deep-rooted imprint trees have on our lives and the role we play in cultivating a healthy life cycle for us and nature. The letters “RE-LEAF” morph into illustrations of swirling tree roots and tree trunks, demonstrating how interconnected everything is in our ecosystem. The larger line work resembles a fingerprint, reinforcing the distinct way trees touch and leave a mark on our lives. Like fingerprints, each of us has a good, unique experience and relationship with trees. Aligning with Forest ReLeaf’s mission, the intent of this mural is to inspire those who are willing to turn those unique experiences into life-generating action for trees -- a win-win for all of us!