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## Celebrate the Earth — and Trees!

April 06, 2021

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**By Marion McParland**

If our PHS team had a favorite month, April would be our top choice! Every April, we celebrate Earth Day and honor the progress that has been made since its founding in 1970 in the global effort to protect our natural resources. Also in April, we observe Arbor Day, founded in 1872, by J. Sterling Morton in Nebraska City, Nebraska, to call attention to trees and their planting, as the newly formed territory in Nebraska was treeless. During April's warmer temperatures, we welcome the opportunity to plant hundreds of trees. Read on as we share the impact of our tree

programs, partnerships, and initiatives, as well as ways you can help support the environment and local tree canopy.

### **Celebrate Earth Day: April 22**

This coming Earth Day, PHS will celebrate by planting 13 trees at Mary McLeod Bethune School in North Philadelphia. This planting is part of a two-year project funded by Vistra Energy to create a healthy tree canopy on the school's campus and the surrounding neighborhood. The census tract where Bethune is located has less than 7% canopy coverage, well below the 30 to 40% levels desired for urban neighborhoods. Trees are especially important in and around schools where they improve air quality, reduce stress levels, and reduce crime and violence.

Take time to educate yourself this Earth Day. [Register](#) for "Say No Mow to Your Lawn," a virtual program presented by PHS on Thursday, April 22 at 5 p.m. Jeff Lorenz, principle at Refugia Design/Build, and an exhibitor at this year's upcoming Flower Show, will discuss how you can turn your lawn into a functional and resilient pollinator paradise.

#### **REGISTER FOR SAY "NO MOW" TO YOUR LAWN**

### **Volunteer to Plant a Tree: April 21-25**

[Volunteer](#) to help plant trees! This month's Spring Tree Planting, taking place April 21-25, needs volunteers to help plant more than 950 trees in the region. No experience or tools are required. You'll feel enormously proud as you watch "your" tree mature over the years.

#### **VOLUNTEER TODAY**

### **Arbor Day Awareness: April 30**

PHS celebrates Arbor Day each year for many reasons. Topping the list? Trees are one of the most effective strategies for capturing atmospheric carbon and mitigating pollution. In Philadelphia, the tree canopy is currently at 20%, but dips to as little as 2.5% in some neighborhoods. PHS is committed to building and maintaining a healthy tree canopy — about 30% coverage — throughout Philadelphia.

In areas with more pavement capturing the sun's heat, combined with a sparse tree canopy, heat islands can form. According to the Philadelphia Office of Sustainability, average surface temperatures in some neighborhoods can be 22 degrees hotter than others. Planting trees in these areas is a priority for PHS's volunteer Tree Tenders groups in both the Spring (usually in April) and the Fall. "Some neighborhoods can reach life-threatening temperatures in the summer," says Dana Dentice with

the PHS Tree team.

### **Become a PHS Tree Tender Starting this May**

**Sign up** for the next Bilingual (Spanish and English) Tree Tenders Basic Training, May 5, 12, 19, and 26. This course is one of the leading volunteer programs in the country focused on educating people on tree biology, care, planting, and monitoring. Mindy Maslin, Tree Tenders Program Manager and Founder, got the idea for Tree Tenders at a tree conference in 1991. "I realized we needed a program that empowered citizens to take the lead in organizing tree care in their own neighborhoods. Thirty years later, it seems to have worked," says Maslin. Every planting season, about 76 Tree Tenders groups throughout the region participate in planting and caring for trees.

Since 1993, more than 5,000 volunteers in the region have become certified PHS Tree Tenders, receiving hands-on training. Collectively, the program's volunteers plant more than 2,000 trees annually in southeastern Pennsylvania.

### **BECOME A TREE TENDER**

#### **Get Involved with PHS**

PHS is dedicated to creating a healthy living environment and we can only achieve this with your help. Through education, training, and planting together, we will increase the tree canopy and care for existing trees. Join our effort as a PHS Tree Tender or volunteer this season. Together, we can protect and strengthen our planet and our trees, this month, and always.

Volunteer to Help Plant Trees

[SIGN UP HERE](#)

PHS invites everyone to garden for the greater good.

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