

COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT

Marshfield Rotary Club is a small club without affluence, but has put its shoulder to the wheel to make major improvements in the local community for future generations to enjoy

In 2004, Rotary sent a small delegation of Rotarians to City Council to begin the process of getting a Tree City Advisory Committee appointed to help our small town of 7000 be awarded the status of a Tree City USA. No trees had been planted in public parks for many years, and the tree care suffered from mechanical damage. Many improved standards in tree care had to be adopted before additional planting could be considered advisable. Rotarians influenced the City Council to adopt a tree ordinance and a tree care plan. This committee, now appointed by the Mayor, met all the criteria and was awarded the honor of being a Tree City USA for the year of 2005, which helped in being awarded grants. This status is renewed for 2006.

With the full support of the Marshfield Rotary Club, this Tree City Advisory Committee championed a tremendous volunteer effort in 2005 planting 1332 trees, three gallon to ball root sized, in six city parks, five schools, county property, and several other public properties at no cost to city, county or school government. Rotary Club paid for transportation, a Pick 'n Shovel Pig Roast and a Weiner Roast, and coordinated as many as 170 volunteers planting several hundred trees in one day. Volunteers planted trees several days in Marshfield. A very successful effort was made to write grants making funding available in addition to the donations received. The value of the work was estimated to be worth \$150,000.

Additional grants have been awarded and more trees have been planted already in 2006. We will soon pass the number of 1500 new trees in the ground with some being planted professionally through grants acquired. More trees will be ordered this spring with other resources. These efforts have accomplished much towards landscaping several parks that have been neglected for many years.

Marshfield Rotary's premier project is the Heritage Celebration Trailway in Rotary Park. This park was renamed for Rotary in this time frame because Rotary has worked many years to place playground equipment and a pavilion in the park. We have built a quality fence across the front of the park with brick posts and steel with Rotary's name above the entrance.

It is a work in progress and the trees will need a few years to shade the park. A grant for \$56,300 has been awarded to assist in paving the eight-foot trail and build a bridge with our local club matching \$13,000. The establishment of this memorial park is a long-term commitment made by the Club. As memorials are purchased, granite bricks are engraved and set flush in concrete near the tree. The first line of each brick lists the common name of the tree thereby making it an educational park. Among the hundreds of trees planted in Rotary Park, 54 species have been added with plans to plant more species this spring.

The bridge will be named for Howard Fillmer, a charter Rotarian and former District Governor. Again this is a work in progress with the money in place with much work remaining to be done to pave the trail and volunteers must build the bridge. Employees formerly supervised by Howard Fillmer are doing the engineering of the bridge.

While lots has been accomplished, there is much still to do to complete Heritage Celebration Trailway in Rotary Park. The stage has been set for good tree care in Marshfield as evidenced by the 90% survival rate experienced this very dry year. Rotary has many goals yet to accomplish, but can boast the establishment of quite a legacy. In a twelve-month period, citizens will have planted nearly two thousand trees in cooperation with the Tree City Advisory Committee, which they originally sponsored and have fully supported every step of the way.

For more information on how these community service projects were accomplished, you may contact Neva Schroder at nevabill@hotmail.com or call 417 859-3506.