

2020

ANNUAL REPORT

“A tree with strong roots laughs at storms.”

-MALAY PROVERB

Forest ReLeaf
OF MISSOURI

25 YEARS &
GROWING

*Planting trees.
Enriching communities.*



About Forest ReLeaf of Missouri

Forest ReLeaf of Missouri's mission is to plant trees and enrich communities. Our goal is to connect people with the benefits of trees and remove barriers that limit successful tree planting projects including access to trees, cost of materials, confidence in implementation and care, limited resources, and quality of plant material. With the help of thousands of volunteers we grow, plant, and advocate for trees, to create resilient community forests that restore healthy land, air and water, improve human well-being, and promote economic vitality.

Note from the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

Over the past year, the outpouring of support for Forest ReLeaf from community partners, volunteers, and donors has filled me with confidence in the powerful impact of our mission. This has been an incredibly challenging year but our neighborhood trees offered comfort and peace to Missourians. Those fortunate enough to live near woodlands, a park, or a tree-lined street enjoyed an escape from the confines of pandemic restrictions, as well as clean air and water, cooler temperatures, and so much more.

We believe that everyone should have a right to nature in their communities and our urban forest should be a resource for the many rather than a lucky few. This commitment drove our team to creatively deliver programs that grew our tree canopy and connected more people to the natural world.

Forest ReLeaf strives to remove barriers so that everyone may know the power of planting, nurturing, and living alongside trees. Each individual tree planting contributes to a landscape scale improvement in the health and resilience for communities across Missouri. I am humbled to be apart of this amazing work and network. Forest ReLeaf is building positive momentum and we are grateful that you are a part of this community.

Sincerely,

Meridith Perkins
Executive Director



Staff

Our staff works with volunteers and partners to grow, plant, and care for trees.



Eric Floro
Nursery Manager



Mark Halpin
Forestry Manager



Rebecca Hankins
Partnerships Coordinator

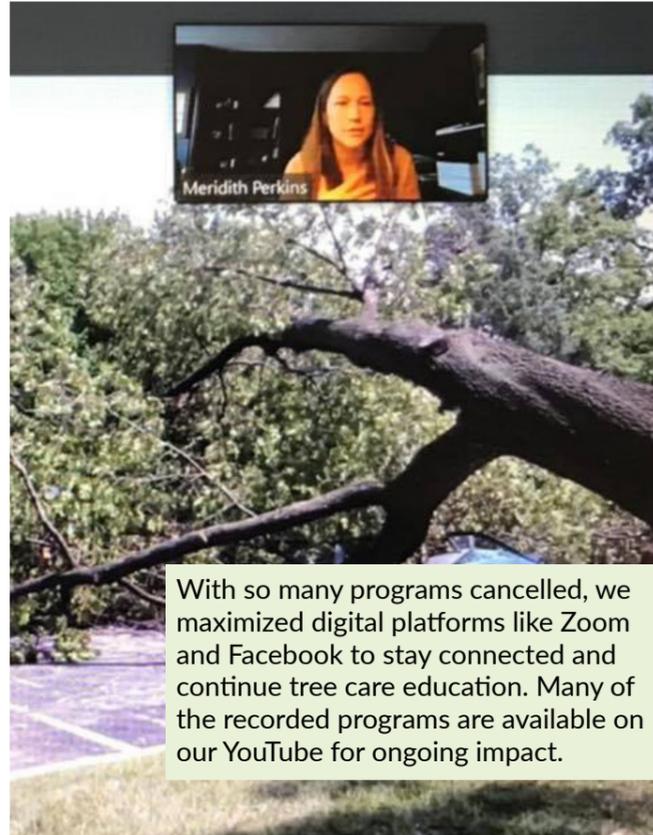


Amy Klein
Development & Marketing Manager

2020 Highlights



Forest ReLeaf's nursery in Creve Coeur Lake Memorial Park was internationally recognized as a Level III Arboretum. Level III Arboreta have at least 500 species of woody plants, engage in substantial educational programming, and participate in tree conservation.



With so many programs cancelled, we maximized digital platforms like Zoom and Facebook to stay connected and continue tree care education. Many of the recorded programs are available on our YouTube for ongoing impact.



We maintained a safe working environment that kept all staff and volunteers healthy and creatively adapted events and outreach to comply with COVID-19 gathering restrictions.



Forest ReLeaf renewed our commitment to social and environmental justice and set goals to enhance access, diversity, equity, and inclusion in all aspects of our work.

Forest ReLeaf of Missouri
(314) 533-5323
www.moreleaf.org
PLEASE REMOVE TAG AFTER PLANTING!

Our Volunteers



\$111,277

Value of volunteer time



2,672

Number of volunteers



25,164

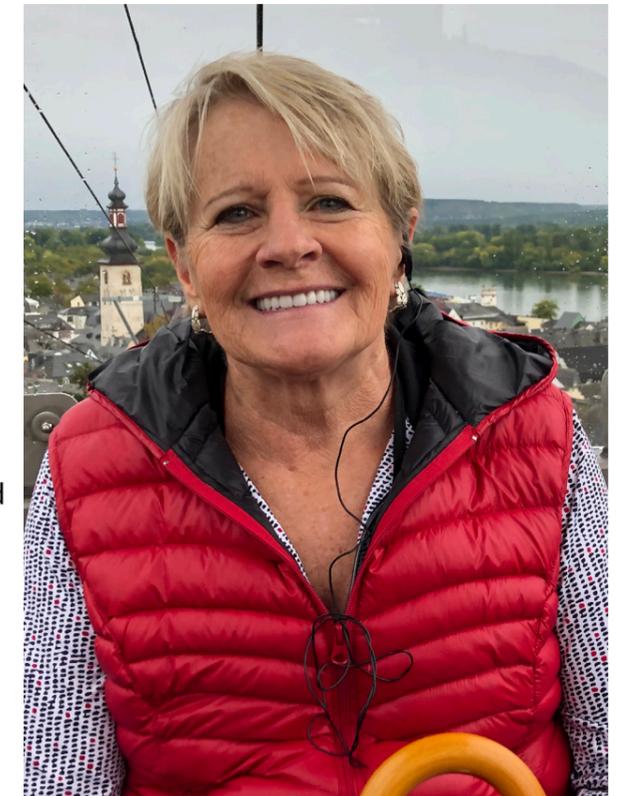
Number of volunteer hours

Volunteer Spotlight

CORKI MOLLER

Forest ReLeaf operates because of the care of tree lovers that nurture seedlings at the nursery, the families that join us for community planting days, the Board of Directors that guide our growth, and the grassroots leaders that organize their networks to establish tree canopy in neighborhoods across the state.

This year demanded more of our organization than ever before and Forest ReLeaf volunteer, friend of 20+ years, and official "Office Angel" Corki Moller, boldly leaned into the challenge. With grace and grit, Corki volunteered over 500 hours working to find efficiencies, apply for a PPP loan, onboard new employees, build volunteer appreciation baskets, and set the organization up to thrive in 2021. When asked why she does it, her answer was simple, "I get immense satisfaction from feeling I am helping where needed! I am so encouraged to see gray spaces become green to improve health benefits for generations to come."



How have our volunteers been inspired to take action?



"I have written grants to help nonprofits plant native trees."



"I adopted a county road to clear invasive species and pick up trash."



"I plant trees in my park and prune neighborhood street trees."



"I reach out to local schools to see if they need trees."



Forest ReLeaf's Young Friends committee hosted their annual Weeding Happy Hour in July to help our young trees grow!



2020 Impact



9,591
Free trees distributed



205
Tree planting projects



225,662
Trees distributed to date

“Project CommuniTree has given me the opportunity to feel like I can do something important for the environment without having a lot of money. Thanks to the program, I (and many helpful friends and neighbors) have planted about 140 trees in 4 different St. Louis City parks.”

- Aaron Dohogne, Gateway Science Academy

Project CommuniTree

We believe cost and access to trees should not be barriers to urban forest canopy growth. Project CommuniTree exists to support the ambition of all enthusiastic tree planters. Through this program partners can request FREE 3-gallon native trees and shrubs to plant on public and nonprofit property. Led by the community leaders, Project CommuniTree gives tree planting ownership and inspire ongoing forest stewardship at a hyper-local level.

Priority ReLeaf

Systemic racism, redlining, and disinvestment create compounding challenges, including low-tree canopy in neighborhoods across our region. Priority ReLeaf provides technical support, larger trees, project coordination, and planting assistance to equity-seeking areas so residents in these communities can receive the essential benefits of a healthy tree canopy. Priority ReLeaf also serves victims who suffer tree loss related to catastrophic storms; something we expect to see more of in this unpredictable climate.

“The trees are giving a once vacant space, life and hope through nature. It has been a learning opportunity for all involved. We look forward to seeing our neighbors pick fruit from our native trees.”

- Dail Chambers



Missouri Forestkeepers Network

The Missouri Forestkeepers Network took incredible action in protecting our forests in 2020. The network has more than 3,000 members, mostly in the St. Louis and Kansas City regions. Forestkeepers planted over 11,000 trees, treated 1,914 acres of unwanted vegetation, participated in 445 hours of advocacy, and spent 4,966 hours caring for trees. Several Forestkeepers were recognized for their dedication to our forests at the annual conference at Pioneer Forest.

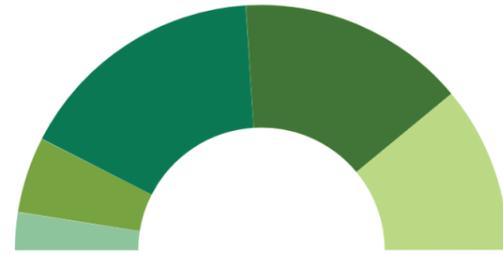
And the winner is...

... Missouri forests! When the pandemic forced our nursery to close its gates and limit volunteer support, Nursery Manager Eric Floro worked overtime to make sure healthy trees would be available to partners when restrictions were lifted. Upon returning to the nursery, our volunteer corps presented Eric with the “Forestation in Isolation” award for his tireless dedication to our mission. Thanks to this effort, fall tree distribution exceeded all expectations.



Financials

2020 Revenue & Support



Tree Sales (5%) Donations & Events (10%)
Private Grants (33%) Government Grants (30%)
Miscellaneous/Other (22%)

Revenue & Support \$

Government Grants	231,000
Private Grants	257,159
Donations & Events	81,141
Tree Sales	37,244
Miscellaneous/Other	61,831
Total	778,961

2020 Functional Expenses



Management & General (3%) Fundraising (12%)
Program Services (85%)

Expenses \$

Management & General	11,590
Program Services	384,672
Fundraising	54,734
Total	450,996



Source: Fick, Eggemeyer & Williamson Independent Auditor's Report dated April 1, 2021. Forest ReLeaf meets all charity standards of the Better Business Bureau's Wise Giving Alliance.

Board of Trustees

John Moller,
President
Jason Pratte,
Vice President
Joni Ott,
Treasurer

Tim Brunsmann,
Operations Chair
Sheila S. Voss,
Development Chair
Patrick Brown
Christopher Erker
Tom Jacobs

Alan Jankowski
Cindy M. Lewis
Danny Moncheski, *ex officio*
G. Satkowski
Mary Sherfy
Jesse Stuart
Kara Ward

Welcome to our new Board Members!



PATRICK BROWN
Ameren Missouri



TOM JACOBS
Mid-America
Regional Council



DANNY MONCHESKI
MDC



GEORGE SATKOWSKI
Enterprise



KARA WARD
Barnes-Jewish
Hospital



Featured Partners

Ameren Missouri

A long time sponsor of CommuniTree Gardens Nursery, Ameren partners with Forest ReLeaf to promote planting the right tree in the right place. Our partnership contributes to Arbor Day Foundation's recognition of Ameren as a Tree Line USA company.

Bank of America

Bank of America supported 150 new trees in the River Des Peres watershed. 100 trees were planted along the River Des Peres Greenway and another 50 were given to neighbors and volunteers to plant at home.

Better Family Life

30 trees were planted to honor victims of gun violence. This effort will continue each fall and spring to bring peace and life back to the grieving families and communities.

Spire Energy

Spire made it possible for 900 trees to be planted statewide! With the help of Spire volunteers, trees were distributed to seventeen communities in the Kansas City Metro region, Southwest region, and the St. Louis Metro. 250 trees were sent to Carol Junction for homeowners who suffered tree loss during a recent tornado.

SSM Health

SSM Health has a strong commitment to health, wellness, environmental stewardship and marginalized communities. Their support of a 50 street tree planting event in December launched an ongoing partnership between Forest ReLeaf, SSM Health, and the St. Louis City Divisions of Sustainability and Forestry to strategically plant trees that combat the negative public health impacts of urban heat island.

Sustaining Partners



Forest ReLeaf is powered by tree lovers like you! Thank you for supporting our urban forest. For a full list of 2020 donors, visit moreleaf.org/supporters



Trees on Tap

Once tree seedlings arrive at our nursery, they must be potted in soil before they begin to leaf out. With limited capacity in spring of 2020, Forest ReLeaf was left with more seedlings than we could manage.

We teamed up with local breweries to offer seedlings to customers picking up to-go beer orders on Arbor Day. This resulted in over a thousand trees planted in yards, tree lawns, and other community spaces around St. Louis.



Tree Take-Out

Forest ReLeaf took a page from local restaurants and offered a touchless, drive-through, tree pick up option for community members in April. This initiative served as a critical fundraiser for Forest ReLeaf during an unpredictable time while engaging individuals and families in the act of planting trees in their own backyard.



Tree Camp

Through fun, hands-on activities at Forest ReLeaf's Nursery participants planted trees, experimented with soil, tracked raptors, and investigated the arboretum to gain a better understanding of how trees work to support the ecosystem where we live and play.

TreeKeepers

The 2020 TreeKeepers Course started strong with 40 people registered for the 6-week training at Urban Chestnut Brewery. After the second week, COVID forced programming online and Forest ReLeaf got our first taste of virtual classes. Despite the shift in delivery, all participants gained tree biology and management information. One graduate noted "I will now be able to notice trees/plants that are struggling in their environment, what the cause of the problem is, and how to mitigate the problem if possible."

"Our kids have been missing friends, missing creative learning and missing nature. This week you gave them all of that. They came home [from Tree Camp] each day smiling and brimming with facts about trees and all that dirt they were covered in!"

- Shannon Grass



ArborMeisters

In 2020, ArborMeisters took place at home! Featuring a live-streamed and recorded program, ticketholders visited Forest ReLeaf's nursery to pick up trees and beer to join together for a virtual moment of celebration. Trees were simultaneously planted throughout the St. Louis region and we ended with a cheers to planting more trees! The recording of ArborMeisters is available for viewing on Forest ReLeaf's Youtube channel.

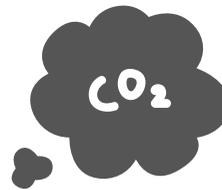
Trees are Essential Workers

The pandemic forced people to stay close to home and experience their local green spaces in new ways. Forest ReLeaf partnered with the Missouri Community Forestry Council, Great Rivers Greenway, and local municipalities to connect people to the role trees play in supporting our overall well-being.





Forest ReLeaf of Missouri
4168 Juniata St. Suite 1
St. Louis, MO 63116
moreleaf.org



17,723,909

Pounds of CO2 offset over 30 years

That's 2,813,319 gallons of gas!



The benefits of trees grow over time!

After 30 years, the 9,591 trees planted in 2020 will be incredible assets to their communities.

moreleaf.org

That's like taking 3,691,221 showers!



119,128,641



Gallons of Runoff Avoided

58,321,288

Gallons of Rainfall Intercepted



Or 180 Olympic swimming pools!



Total Square Feet of Tree Canopy



10,608,989

Or about 221 football fields!

