

Dept. of Natural Resources: Wisconsin Tree Champions lauded for outstanding community service

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MADISON, Wis. – The Wisconsin Urban Forestry Council recently announced their annual awards honoring those dedicated to protecting, preserving and increasing the number of trees that line city streets, fill community parks and beautify neighborhoods throughout the state.

The [Wisconsin Urban Forestry Council](#) advises the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) on managing urban and community forest resources.

“Wisconsin plays a critical role in conservation, especially when it comes to trees! These awards honor individuals, organizations and communities for their hard work and dedication to trees and the benefits they provide,” said Linda Cadotte, Wisconsin Urban Forestry Council Award Committee Chair. “It’s an honor to learn more about the incredible work happening around our state that helps support healthy community forests.”

This year’s recipients were announced recently at the 2023 Wisconsin Arborist Association/DNR Urban Forestry Conference. The categories and winners are:

Innovation

The Innovation Award recognizes the creativity, commitment and success of urban forestry efforts.

The Mequon Nature Preserve (MNP) received this award in recognition of its work to increase environmental consciousness with novel ways to repurpose the remnants from these restoration efforts. They created Marty’s Playspace, a nature-made

playground that uniquely promotes the green movement for children of all ages. This project culminated in a final product even greener than initially planned, upcycling dead and invasive trees on an underutilized space to create a playspace close to MNP's education center and parking lot and easily visible to new and curious guests. The continued success of this initiative cements MNP's originality and prospects for future innovations.

Lifetime Achievement

The Lifetime Achievement Award recognizes outstanding contributions to urban forestry in Wisconsin demonstrated throughout a lifetime career.

John Gall was recognized with this lifetime achievement award for assisting dozens of communities and entities in enhancing their urban forestry. He served on the Wisconsin Urban Forestry Council from 2005-2013, among many other affiliations, and is a three-time award recipient through the Wisconsin Arborist Association.

In Fox Point, John Gall spearheaded the Village's first official tree inventory in 2009, ensuring it's updated every five years. He has coordinated grants and volunteers to improve Indian Creek woods and forestry. John coordinates a kid's climb with WAA during Fox Point's annual open house, which exposes children to urban forestry and allows them to harness up and climb tall trees to experience a day in the life of an urban forester. His impact will endure, and his work will continue to provide multiple benefits to the residents of Fox Point.

Leadership

The Leadership Award recognizes an individual or elected official at the county or local level of government who has made an outstanding recent contribution to urban forestry in Wisconsin.

John Wayne Farber was presented with the Leadership Award. He is a board-certified Master Arborist and has dedicated himself to being a true professional and leading arborist. His subject matter expertise was critical to the improvements made to the Wisconsin Registered Arborist Apprenticeship when it was revised in its second rendition. This award recognizes his leadership in urban forestry through his work with the Student Society of Arboriculture, volunteerism with the Wisconsin Arborist Association and the International Society of Arboriculture, and service as a board-certified Master Arborist. He has created a legacy improving the safety and

training of arborists in Wisconsin and beyond.

Learn more about the [Wisconsin Urban Forestry Council annual awards, see previous winners and nominate your community tree champion](#). The deadline for 2024 nominees is Oct. 31, 2023.