

8 May 2012
NEWS RELEASE

Minneapolis Parks Foundation advises that so-called “Re-Leafers” may spread throughout the Twin Cities

“Trees are good” thinking may lead to funding for 400 trees for four tornado-ravaged Minneapolis neighborhoods and a whole lotta community good

Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA – You wouldn’t know it from a casual stroll around this idyllic Midwestern town, but an American cultural hybrid may be branching out here. Authorities haven’t officially identified the cultivar, but the [Minneapolis Parks Foundation](#) has dubbed them “Re-Leafers,” a reference to their common, deeply rooted belief that “trees are good” and so is community involvement.

“When one or two people think trees are good, that’s one thing. They may plant one or two trees in their yard - happy green beacons of nature they themselves enjoy,” says Mary deLaitre, Executive Director of the Minneapolis Parks Foundation. “It’s another thing entirely when individuals come together to help fund replanting an entire section of Minneapolis’ urban forest in neighborhoods where they don’t live and may never visit. Those are the folks who really dig trees.”

deLaitre is referring to the May 2011 twister that tore across several miles of Minneapolis, tearing roofs off homes, tumbling cars down the streets, and ripping 40-foot trees from the earth like weeds from a flowerbed. The Parks Foundation is raising funds for 400 replacement trees to help residents in four neighborhoods “treecover” from the disaster, as part of the “Northside Treecover Program,” a joint effort led by the [Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board](#) with several agency and community partners.

Could YOU be a Re-Leafer?

Re-Leafers from the Twin Cities and other zones thrive in this outdoorsy and philanthropic climate. The Parks Foundation offers these five tips for identifying if you, or someone you know, may “arbor” a secret passion for trees:

1. **You like looking at trees.** You may not notice every tree, everywhere, all the time, but you sometimes find yourself appreciating the natural grace and grandeur of trees when looking out a window or taking a walk.
2. **One tree isn’t enough for you.** While others may be satisfied with one tree in their yard, you’re happiest surrounded by many trees, for example lining the city’s streets or clustered in parks.
3. **You enjoy 50 shades of green.** You may have a favorite species – like Lindens or Maples – but you don’t limit your enjoyment to just one. Instead, you appreciate a diversity of deciduous and evergreen species, from shrubby Lilacs to winsome White Pines.
4. **You’re sappy about saplings.** There’s no substitute for the strong-trunked stature and broad canopy of a mature tree. Still, there’s something about the fresh, fast-growing potential of a sapling that just keeps you planting and replanting.
5. **You put your money where your roots are.** Re-Leafers can’t help but cultivate their “habitats.” [MplsParksFoundation.org](#) is one source many seek out to propagate their tax-deductible tree giving with like-minded “arborphiles.”

-more-

If one or more of these signs sounds familiar, the Parks Foundation's deLaittre advises you to stand tall, like a stately Oak. "In fact, we've found that as far as trees go, a little of a good thing is good for you and a lot of trees is a full-on urban forest of good for everyone," she says. "The more you indulge your appetite for trees, and branch out into community tree planting, the stronger we grow for generations to come."

Re-Leafers Unite!

The Minneapolis Parks Foundation's goal is to raise funds for 400 trees by the end of May, the official Minnesota "Arbor Month" and, coincidentally, the anniversary of the 2011 North Minneapolis tornado.

Already, more than 100 will be planted thanks to the contributions of nearly as many donors. Individual "Re-Leafers" are needed to complete the fundraising goal and bring urgent "Treecovery" to the Northside. The cost of planting one tree is only \$120, and returns a lifetime of individual and community benefits, including improved mental and physical health, greater community cohesion, and reduced homeowner and taxpayer expense.

Re-Leafers (and just plain old folk) are encouraged to visit the **Parks Foundation's Northside Treecovery** project page at <http://MplsParksFoundation.org> to learn more and make a donation. To learn more about the **Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board's** 2011 tornado response and 2012 "Northside Treecovery Program," please visit <http://MinneapolisParks.org>.

About the Minneapolis Parks Foundation

The Minneapolis Parks Foundation is focused on the Next Generation of Parks™, with an emphasis on parks design education, innovation and implementation. Beginning in 2010, MPF co-sponsored the globally renowned Minneapolis Riverfront Design Competition, the largest in the state's history. In 2011, Parks Foundation projects included the Next Generation of Parks™ lecture series, the 4th Avenue North Playground along the Upper Riverfront, and more.

###

Media Contact

Janette Law @ Tableau Pro
JLaw@TableauProductions.com
612-929-0939 dir 612-306-4430 mbl