

CONSERVATION COMMISSION
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TOWN HALL
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PRESS RELEASE

October 19, 2021

Celebrating Arbor Day and Wilton Tree Stewards for 2020 and 2021

The Wilton Conservation Commission and its subcommittee the Wilton Tree Committee encourage residents to celebrate Arbor Day on Wednesday October 20th by planting a tree and joining the commission at a recognition ceremony for Wilton's newest Tree Stewards – Liz Craig (2020) and Nick Lee (2021). The ceremony will take place on Wednesday, October 20th at 3:00 p.m. at Merwin Meadows located at Lovers Lane in Wilton.

While most communities recognize Arbor Day in April, the Conservation Commission and Tree Committee opted to move Wilton's recognition to the fall, which is a better planting season for Connecticut. Trees planted in the fall season are more likely to grow well because they are readying to become dormant for the winter, they require less light, warmth, water, and nutrients as they go quiescent, and they are healthier when they start growing again in early spring because they have not been stressed. For these reasons, the Commission will be planting all donated trees in the fall of each year.

As part of Wilton's annual American Tree City status, each year on Arbor Day the Commission names an individual as Tree Steward. This is someone who has brought a wealth of knowledge about conservation and an abundance of personal effort to projects supporting conservation in our Town over the past years. Because of the pandemic, last year's Tree Steward was named, but not acknowledged. Therefore, this year the Town will celebrate our 2020 Tree Steward, Elizabeth Craig and our 2021 Tree Steward, Nicholas Lee.

For Liz Craig, a white oak, *Quercus alba*, planted at Merwin Meadows outside the children's playground, will remind residents of the various continuing commitments Liz provides Wilton as former Chair and member of the Inland Wetlands Commission, founding member of the Pollinator Pathway, Board member of the Norwalk River Watershed Association and former Co-Chair of the Wilton Garden Club's Conservation Commission. An advanced Master Gardener and an Arborist, Liz designed and led the project to replace invasive species with native plantings at the corner of the Norwalk River Valley Trail (NRVT) at Autumn Ridge and Sharp Hill, and she teaches classes on native plantings at Norwalk Community College.

In Nick Lee's honor, a *Nyssa sylvatica* (Black Tupelo) was planted in the area between the Bank of America and Wilton Library parking areas. This tree will remind our townspeople of Nick's dedication to Inland Wetlands as well as his tenures on both the Conservation Commission and the Tree Committee.

For more information, contact Mike Conklin at the Wilton Department of Environmental Affairs at (203) 563-0180.

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