


Archive for August, 2010

How Much Is MY Tree Worth?

Sunday, August 1st, 2010

I have touted The National Arbor Day Foundation in several of my entries, because they continue to be the best advocate for trees that we have in the country. They provide a wide variety of programming to promote the proper care and management of trees growing everywhere, from the most remote national forest to an individual's backyard in a big city. Their outreach programs and products are available to everyone, not just Foundation members. They recently introduced a product that is available to anyone with a computer, and I recommend it highly. I've tried it on my own trees, and it not only works, but is eye-opening since it deals in dollars. It is a calculator that you can use by plugging in basic tree information, and it will spew out the benefits/value of that tree where it is growing. Outlined below is the information from ArborDay about the calculator. Give it a try. It is really neat!

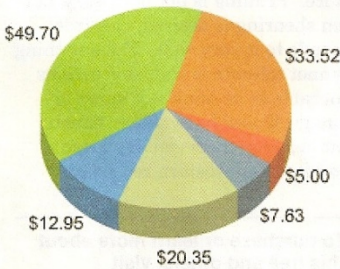


@arborday.org

Do Try This at Home – How much is your tree worth?



National Tree Benefits Calculator

■ Stormwater	■ Property Value
■ Electricity	■ Natural Gas
■ Air Quality	■ CO ₂



Graph output for a twelve-inch Silver Maple,
Kansas City, Missouri 64110
Climate Zone: Midwest

SILVER MAPLE
Acer saccharinum



You have undoubtedly heard of the research conducted by the U.S. Forest Service that has led to quantifiable values for the services provided by street and landscape trees. Now you can visit arborday.org/calculator and easily determine the dollar value of the economic and environmental benefits provided by any tree in your yard.

At this new site, simply enter your zip code. This makes sure that the subsequent calculations are geared to climate factors in your area. Next, you find your tree on a dropdown list of 70 species or genera. If your tree is not on the list, there are 'other' categories based on tree characteristics from which to select. You then add the diameter of your tree and kind of property (residential, commercial or even a park) and the calculator does the rest.

The results show the overall annual contribution of your tree – in dollars! There is also a pie chart breaking this amount into the various services provided – stormwater retention, energy savings, air quality improvement, CO₂ sequestration, and property value enhancement. Tabs take you to any of these values for further explanation.

Try this today. It is quick, easy and very educational!

Confession Is Good For The Soul?

Saturday, August 21st, 2010

I recently lost a seven year old redbud tree in my yard. A burst of wind, during an early morning thunderstorm caused the stem to split all the way to the root collar, and possibly into the main root itself. A tree so damaged very seldom recovers from such damage, no matter what you try to do for it. So, I had my youngest son help me remove it, and haul it to the local composting yard.

My redbud was a pretty tree, and was in the right place, but it had not developed correctly. It was forked badly too close to the ground, and had developed long, drooping branches, that put a lot of weight and strain on the short stem. When the wind caught it just right, Splitsville!

I must confess that the demise of this nice looking tree was my fault. I deferred some corrective pruning when the tree was young, and thus allowed some poor form to develop. I should have encouraged a longer, single stem to develop, and this would have resulted in a more sturdy individual as the redbud grew in size. In addition, I was too conservative in removing side branches that had developed long fronds of growth, because I was afraid to remove too much of the crown area at one time. By the time I realized the error of my ways, it was too late to correct the low fork, and remove major branches, without hacking the tree to death anyway. So I waited for the eventuality that I knew would come, and it happened in a July thunderstorm.

So what can be learned from my redbud's demise? First, even a tree expert can be lulled into letting a good thing go bad, if he doesn't do what needs to be done when it needs to be done. Early, and proper, pruning of a landscape tree is critical if it is to get off on the right course. Second, pay attention to how your tree is growing. I lost my redbud, because I didn't pay it the attention it deserved. In all fairness, however, it was growing very fast without any help from me, but now I realize that it lulled me into a false sense of security due to its rapid growth. It's hard to insert yourself into the way of a fast growing yard tree, but it needed to be done, in my particular case.

Hopefully, my confession will be a good objective lesson for all of us, and will lead to greater vigilance in our home landscape management activities. I can assure you it will for me; it's too embarrassing otherwise.

Return of Red Bud?

Monday, August 30th, 2010

In my previous post, I confessed to the fact that I had lost a 7 year old redbud tree in my yard, during a summer thunderstorm windburst; and it was mostly my fault because I had been inattentive to the pruning needs of this tree during its formative years. Basically, I let it develop into a too wide spreading habit, and it split down the middle; all the way to the ground.

My son and I removed the sorry remains of "Red Bud," cut the stump below mulch pile level, and covered it over with soil. I figured to either remove the stump later and replant, or seed it over with grass. However, nature has intervened, and produced a healthy looking sprout from the covered up stump, and it is already one foot tall and growing, in spite of the fairly dry period we've experienced during August. So.....what to do now?

Basically, I'm going to let nature continue with its work and see what develops between now and dormancy. If the sprout continues to develop and flourish, I'll plan to leave it in hopes that it will develop into a new redbud living off a 7 year old root stock, It should develop rapidly if it's going to. Sometimes root sprouts act like they're going to do well, but then fizzle out as the old root system starts to die away because the new volume of leaves (small) can't support the big root system volume in the manner to which it has been accustomed. But, since I really can't do anything until next spring anyway, I can just wait and see what might develop.

REST ASSURED, HOWEVER, THAT I WILL CERTAINLY TAKE BETTER CARE OF THIS RED BUD (if it develops), THEN I DID OF THE PREVIOUS ONE!!!!

REALLY!! I PROMISE!

I'll try to periodically report on progress between now and spring.....or final demise.....whichever comes first.