

Massachusetts Tree Wardens and Foresters Association

*Organized for the Protection and Preservation of Trees
March 27, 1913 ♦ Dr. George E. Stone, Founder*



BARK

2025
Issue 1
Spring

MTWFA 112th Annual Conference Run Down

Our 112th Annual Conference took place January 7-8 and was another record breaker with over 500 attendees. Thank you to Richard Parasiliti (MTWFA Conference Committee Chair) and everyone on the MTWFA Conference Committee and Board of Directors who worked so hard to make this conference a success. Thank you to everyone that attended to learn and network with this great group of tree wardens, arborists, and urban foresters.

The meeting kicked off on Tuesday morning with some new blood. MTWFA board member and tree warden of Westborough, Kyle Grendell, led the remembrance and moment of silence to honor members who passed away in the last year. Kyle also introduced the association's all-new website (take a look at www.masstreewardens.org) and the "Who is My Tree Warden?" feature. Thank you to all that helped us update our information about Massachusetts tree wardens. Part one of the association's business meeting closed out the first session of the day.



Who is my tree warden?, interactive map located on the MTWFA website.



Dr. Christine Carmichael, keynote speaker.

The educational programming commenced with talks from the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation Urban and Community Forestry and Forest Health Programs. The University of Massachusetts gave an update on research and programming. The agenda on day one included topics like women in arboriculture, succession planning in urban forestry, and a municipal arboriculture case study from Ithaca, New York. The highlight from day one was the keynote speaker, Dr. Christine Carmichael, speaking about her book, *Racist Roots*. Dr. Carmichael signed over a hundred copies of her book while at the conference.

During the luncheon on day one, the second part of the business meeting commenced including announcing Blair Crane, MTWFA Vice President and tree warden of Norfolk, as the 2025 Tree Warden of the Year. (Please read the full article about Blair in this issue.) The George E. Stone award, the highest honor bestowed by the association,

was given to David Bloniarz, USDA Forest Service. (Please see more details about Dave and this award on page 5.)

Finally, MTWFA president and tree warden of Needham, Ed Olsen, introduced the 2025-2026 MTWFA incoming President and tree warden of Northampton, Richard Parasiliti.

Continued on page 3

MTWFA Executive Board 2025

OFFICERS

- President—Rich Parasiliti, Jr, Northampton
- Vice President—Blair Crane, Norfolk
- Secretary—Chris Gonzalez, Eversource
- Treasurer—Brandon Schmitt, Wellesley
- Past President—Ed Olsen, Needham

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- Essex—Jonathan Fobert, Marblehead
- Middlesex—David Lefcourt, Cambridge
- Norfolk/Bristol—Open
- Southeast—Jeremiah Pearson, Falmouth
- Western Mass—David Hawkins, Pelham
- Worcester—Paul Raskevitz, Athol

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- Joel Custance, Lexington
- Kyle Grendell, Westborough
- Scott Hathaway, Westfield
- Paul Newell, Greenfield
- Chris Rosa, Malden
- Paul Sellers, Falmouth
- Alex Sherman, Springfield
- Alan Snow, Amherst
- Marc Welch, Newton

NEWSLETTER EDITORS

- Heather Leff, MTWFA Executive Director
- Mollie Freilicher, News & Events Editor

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DON'T MISS A SINGLE ISSUE OF THE BARK— To stay connected, be sure to send in your 2025 membership dues before June. **NEW** - You can now manage your membership on our website.

MTWFA

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Published Quarterly
Spring-Summer-Fall-Winter

President's Message

Dear Members,

I am truly honored and grateful for the opportunity to serve as your President for 2025. Thank you for placing your trust in me. This Association has been an integral part of my professional journey, and I deeply appreciate the unwavering support from our membership over the years.

I would like to start by extending a special thank you to the Executive Board and our Executive Director, Heather Leff, for their dedication and commitment to our mission. With their support, we continue to provide both members and non-members with valuable education through our Professional Development Series, Massachusetts Qualified Tree Warden Training, our Annual Conference, and our Annual Field Day.

I would also like to recognize the 2025 Tree Warden of the Year and newly elected Association Vice President, Blair Crane, Public Works Director for the Town of Norfolk. Blair's dedication to this organization, his community, and the industry exemplifies true leadership. We look forward to celebrating his well-earned recognition in the Town of Norfolk during our May Executive Board Meeting.

Additionally, I want to officially welcome our newest Executive Board Members: Malik Drayton (City of Somerville), Leah Grigorov (Town of Longmeadow), Erica Holm (City of Lynn), and James Sacco (Town of Sandwich). Your enthusiasm and fresh perspectives will undoubtedly strengthen our mission, and we are excited to have you on board.

Reflecting on our 112th Annual Conference (January 7-8, 2025), I am proud to say it was a tremendous success! With over 500 participants—including industry professionals,

federal, state, and municipal partners, exhibitors, students, and speakers—the event provided an incredible opportunity to exchange knowledge, reconnect with old friends, and establish new professional relationships. Thank you for your continued support, which makes this conference such a valuable and enriching experience.



On a personal note, my time as a member and Executive Board Member has been deeply rewarding. The friendships I've formed and the professional growth I've experienced have been life changing. I encourage each of you to continue engaging with this Association, forging new connections, and taking advantage of all the opportunities we offer. We are more than just an organization—we are a community and a support system for one another.

As we look ahead to Arbor Day and Earth Day, let's embrace the opportunity to give back by planting trees and handing out seedlings in our communities. These traditions help shape the future of our urban forests, ensuring that we leave a lasting impact for generations to come.

We are currently in the middle of our annual seedling sales, which fund scholarships for students. I encourage you to visit our online web store and place your orders early to support this important initiative.

Once again, thank you for your trust, commitment and passion. I look forward to working together to strengthen our industry, uplift our communities and continue making a difference.

Best regards,

Rich

Conference Recap *Continued from page 1*

Day two featured presentations on beech Leaf disease, and from UMass on tree diseases, as well as a safety presentation from the Women's Tree Climbing Workshop®. Professor Pricklethorn rounded out the day demonstrating the presentation that he can give to local schools emphasizing the importance of trees! The conference also raised \$650 for the Childs Fund, which honors Bob Childs, UMass Extension Entomologist, who passed away in 2015.

No conference would be complete without corgis and door prizes! A huge thank you to our master of ceremonies, and tree warden of Watertown, Tom Brady! A giant thank you to our generous exhibitors that donated all of the awesome door prizes.



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Kevin Benner, Cassidy Landscaping

Andrew Bernier, Town of Barnstable

Mark Bezreh, Arbor Care Tree Service

Richard P. Carey, IV, Forest Hills Cemetery

William Casey, Town of Easton

Dennis Donovan, Town of Westborough

Allan Fenner, Bartlett Tree Experts

Howard Gaffin, Gaffin Tree

Christopher Gonzalez, Eversource

Stephen Graham, Town of Hanson

Nate Hartley, American Forest Foundation

Richard Hills, Town of West Newbury

Thomas Joyce, Town of Bellingham

Tim Lecuivre, Town of Arlington

Teresa Siarnacki, University of Massachusetts

Jacob St. Louis, City of Everett

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David Bloniarz Awarded George E. Stone Award

At the 2025 conference, Dave Bloniarz was named the recipient of the George E. Stone Award. This award is the highest honor MTWFA bestows and “recognizes a person or organization that has continually demonstrated a strong commitment to the industry, significant advocacy on behalf of public trees, and dedicated volunteer service to the organization.”

Dave is Project Coordinator, USDA Forest Service Urban Natural Resources Institute. In Dave’s 27 years with the USDA Forest Service and UMass Amherst, he has led and worked on many exciting initiatives and research that touch the lives of urban foresters (and tree lovers in general) every day, including the development of i-Tree and other tools to help communicate the value of trees. He has mentored many students and drawn many into careers working with trees.

Many of Dave’s projects have centered around his beloved Springfield, where he has led ReGreen Springfield since its formation in 2011. Through efforts in Springfield, Dave has developed programs to teach “green skills” for adults and youth, planted countless trees, pollinator gardens, and orchards, brought the USDA Forest Service’s STEW-MAP to Springfield, advocated for trees in the city (And put in the action behind the words!), and much more.

Dave was unable to attend the conference and Ed Casey, Retired Springfield City Forester and MTWFA Past President, accepted the award on Dave’s behalf. On Dave receiving the Stone Award, Ed says, “Dave was an excellent selection for the Stone Award. He has dedicated his career to the advancement of Urban Forestry through out New England . He has also made an incredible impact in his hometown of Springfield with the creation of ReGreen Springfield with tree planting and training programs in Springfield and neighboring counties. I am very happy to have been able to have Dave as a close friend for over 45 years.” Congratulations, Dave!



Tree Warden of the Year, Blair Crane, Town of Norfolk

The Massachusetts Tree Wardens' and Foresters' Association (MTWFA) presented the 24th annual Seth H. Swift Tree Warden of the Year award to Blair Crane, Tree Warden and Director of Public Works for the Town of Norfolk. MTWFA president, Ed Olsen presented the elegant silver tree award to Blair Crane at the association's 112th annual meeting and conference on January 7, 2025.

Blair is a United States Air Force Security Police Veteran and was a business owner prior to starting his career in public service many years ago. Beginning his public service career in a small Berkshire town, Blair was the town's Highway Superintendent, Tree Warden, Harbormaster, and even the official "Measurer of Wood and Bark". (Yes, that is a thing!)

For the past six years, Blair has worked for the Norfolk Department of Public Works and has been the Tree Warden and DPW Director for the past five. While being responsible for multiple facets of the DPW, he believes that taking care of the town's trees and helping to educate the public as the Tree Warden is not just a responsibility, but also an incredible honor. Blair received numerous nominations for the Tree Warden of the Year award.

Here is just a small sample of what the people of Norfolk had to say about their tree warden:

"Blair Crane has shown an immense dedication to the duties of Tree Warden. He is very active in the community with residents and the planting of new trees, education of the youth in the community of the importance of trees and the environment, attending all of the meetings and programs to stay current and share ideas. He is a true leader and truly enjoys his work as tree warden and takes pride in the work he does. I believe, and I'm sure everyone else who has seen his commitment would agree, Blair Crane is more than deserving of the recognition of Tree Warden of the year."

"Blair is dedicated, enthusiastic, knowledgeable, personable, attentive not just about his assigned duties as head of the DPW and Tree Warden for Norfolk, MA., but finds ways, on a daily basis, to extend these attributes to everything he does. He is the first one to roll up his sleeves to pitch in and do the "dirty work" along with his employees, endless hours plowing snow, educating community groups and supporting state & national organizations.....It seems as if his day never ends, (he) just rolls into the next day seamlessly. His annual tree planting program of distributing seedlings to hundreds of town residents has been especially effective. His efforts in encouraging control with the over building



Tree Warden of the Year, Blair Crane, and Ed Olsen, outgoing MTWFA president.

that upsets the balance of our environment is equally as important. As this is only the tip of the iceberg with his actions and potential impact with maintaining a healthy tree/human relationship, I strongly encourage he be considered the leading candidate for this award."

"I am a Norfolk town citizen and have been impressed continuously with the commitment and responsiveness Mr. Crane shows to the town. He is very active on the Community Facebook page keeping us informed with all the tree-related activities and plans. He assisted me with a dangerous tree situation involving neighbors and provided great insight, resulting in a safe outcome."

"During the past year, Blair has continued and expanded the Arbor Day celebrations with tree plantings and an increase of seedling giveaways of more than 200, for a total of over 500 during the past three years. In addition to those outstanding accomplishments, Blair also had the incredible opportunity to work with residents on planting donated full and vibrant mature trees in a few public locations, which will continue to enhance our canopy for decades."

Congratulations, Blair! The Mass Tree Wardens will be celebrating with Blair later this spring in Norfolk.

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Professional Development Series

Western Mass Tree Wardens Dinner Meeting

Monday, March 20, 2025 5:00 - 7:30 p.m. | Northampton



AGENDA	
5:00 - 5:15	Registration and gathering
5:15 - 5:45	2025 Municipal Forestry Institute's immersive week-long training opportunity with Leah Grigorov
5:45-6:15	Dinner
6:15 - 7:15	The 2024 MA wildfires and post-fire risk mitigation on public and private lands, with Dave Celino
7:15 - 7:30	Wrap-up and evaluations

Municipal Forestry Institute Training Opportunity Longmeadow's Tree Warden and Conservation Agent, Leah Grigorov, will discuss the exciting, high-level training opportunity provided by the Institute. This intensive week-long training helps you master the leadership and management tools needed to take your program to the next level.

Massachusetts 2024 Wildfire Overview and Post-Fire Risk Mitigation. DCR Chief Fire Warden, David Celino, will discuss the historical impacts of wildfire in Massachusetts and the very active 2024 wildfire season. How post-fire mitigation of fire-damaged trees adjacent to roads, trails, and other passive recreation areas became a significant issue in 2024.

Credits: 1 MQTW Credit, 1.5 ISA CEUs Pending, 1.5 MAA Education Credits Pending. \$40.

First Aid, CPR, and AED with Stop the Bleed

Monday, March 24, 2025 8:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. | Falmouth

Do you need to get your CPR, First Aid, and AED certificate, or do you need to renew? This class is for you! Don't miss this chance to get your American Heart Association Certificate. This course will be taught by Heart Start CPR. 4 CEUs are pending. Limited to 30 participants. \$105 Member, \$125 Non-Member.

Proper Tree Planting

April 16, 2025 | 11:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. | Sandwich

Successful tree establishment depends on proper planting. Adherence to industry best management practices (BMPs) will result in fewer girdling roots, better plant performance, and higher survival rates. Sign up now to learn what you need to know to ensure a good start for trees on urban sites. Limited to 40 participants. Member \$45, Non-Member \$55.



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Mass Tree Wardens
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Updates from MA DCR

Arbor Day Poster Contest

The DCR Arbor Day Poster Contest is going on now! The 2025 theme is Trees Around the World. The contest is open to 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders across Massachusetts. The deadline for the Arbor Day Poster Contest is March 15. For complete rules and how to enter, go to www.mass.gov/dcr/ucf.



Drought

The drought status for several parts of Massachusetts has been elevated:

Following several weeks of below-normal precipitation, Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) Secretary Rebecca Tepper declared the Central and Northeast regions have been raised to a Level – 3 Critical Drought. The Southeast, Cape and Islands regions have been elevated to a Level – 2 Significant Drought. The Connecticut River Valley and Western regions still have their previous statuses: Level 2 – Significant and Level – 1 Mild Drought.

Over the past month, most of the state received between 1-2.5 inches of rain and snow, which is 1-13 inches below normal. Overall, most of the state has been in an 8-13 inch deficit since August. The Cape and Islands region is experiencing a 3.8-6 inch deficit in precipitation. Streamflow and groundwater have worsened in nearly all regions, and recharge that typically occurs at this time of the year to reservoirs and groundwater is lagging.

Read the complete press release at www.mass.gov/info-details/drought-status.

Champion Trees

For many years, the national Champion Tree list was housed at American Forests. The list is now housed at the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture at <https://nationalchampiontree.org/>.

Starting February 28, the National Champion Tree Program will be accepting nominations for new champion trees. DCR will be going through its own list and submitting state champions for consideration on the national list.

A black and white advertisement for Favreau Forestry FFI. The background is a misty forest scene. In the center, there is a large oval logo containing the text "FAVREAU FORESTRY FFI" in a stylized, outlined font. To the left of the logo is a silhouette of a tall evergreen tree. The text "From a single branch..." is on the left, and "To the whole forest." is on the right. Below the logo, it lists services: "Hazardous Tree Removal, Crane Removals, Tree Pruning, Storm Debris Reduction/Removal, 24-hour Emergency Response Services." At the bottom, it provides the website "FAVREAUFORESTRY.COM", phone number "978.706.1038", and location "STERLING, MA". On the right side, there are two certification logos: "CTSP" (Tree Care Industry Association) and "ISA" (International Society of Arboriculture). Below these is the text "ISA CERTIFIED ARBORIST NE-6934A MASS APPROVED CONTRACTOR".

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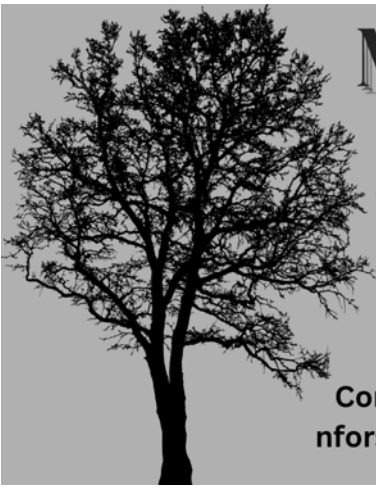
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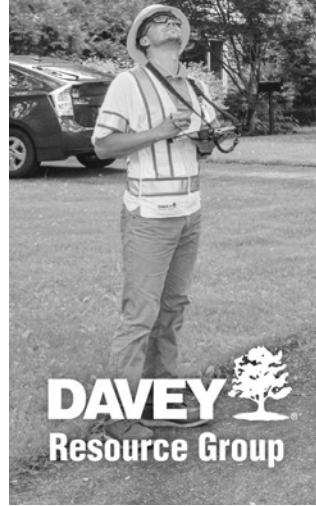
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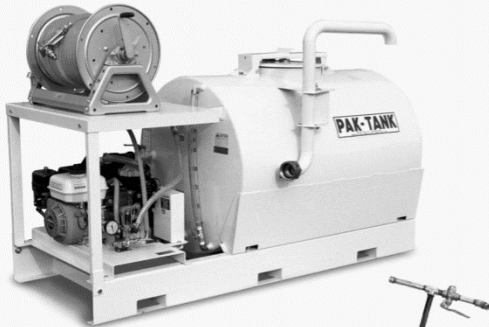
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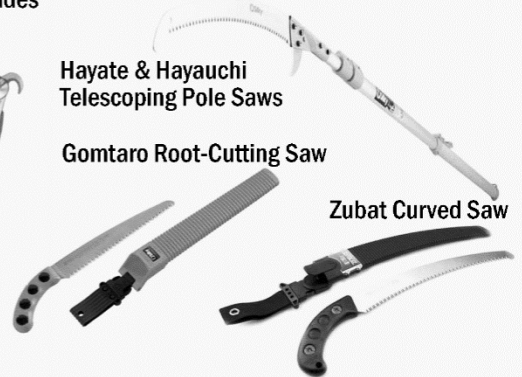
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Scenes from the 112th Annual Conference



Conference attendees enjoying lunch.



The winner of the chainsaw



Dr. Christine Carmichael presenting.



Ana Nenshati, winner of the battery-powered blower donated by M&H Equipment Sales.



Professor Pricklethorn teaching conference attendees about how trees grow.



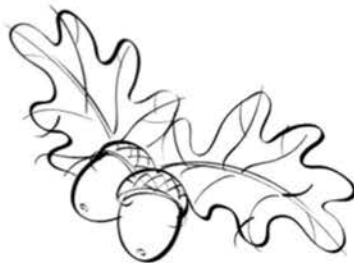
Outgoing MTWFA President, Ed Olsen (right), and incoming president Rich Parasiliti, Jr. (left).

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2025 MTWFA Scholarship Recipients

The Association is pleased to announce the winners of 2025 scholarships. Funding for the scholarship program comes from the proceeds of the annual Arbor Day Seedling Program.

Five scholarships bear the names of the following Association members who have made major contributions to the organization and the industry, one is a President's Award, and additional General Scholarships may be awarded. Additionally, the Association shares a scholarship honoring Dr. Dennis Ryan, with the Massachusetts Arborist Association.

Congratulations to all the 2025 recipients!

Recipient	School	Scholarship
Logan Quinn	University of Maine	Seth H. Swift
Keely Zuber	University of Massachusetts	Professor Gordon S. King
Dante Filadoro	University of Massachusetts	MTWFA General Scholarship
Chloe Espinal	University of Massachusetts	Fred C. Burk
Taylor Sirois	Paul Smiths College	Louis J. Casasanto
Gabriella Carvahlo	Paul Smiths College	MTWFA President's Award
Brady Hamm	Norfolk County Agricultural High School	MTWFA General Scholarship
James Poirier	Essex North Shore	Dr. Malcolm A. McKenzie
Owen McKinley	Belmont High School	MTWFA General Scholarship
June Moulis	University of Massachusetts	MAA-MTWFA Dennis Ryan Award



June Moulis, winner of the Dennis Ryan Outstanding Arboriculture Student Scholarship, presented by the MAA and MTWFA.



2025 SEEDLING VARIETIES



Pre-Bagged	Size	Age	Price/100
Fraser Fir	3 to 6	2-0	\$287
Canaan Fir	3 to 6	2-0	\$287
Balsam Fir	3 to 6	2-0	\$287
White Spruce	3 to 6	2-0	\$287
Bareroot	Size	Age	Price/100
Black Walnut	12-18"	1-0	\$214
Douglas Fir-Lincoln	8-12"	2-0	\$141
Serbian Spruce	6-12"	2-0	\$147
White Oak	12-18"	2-0	\$210

Bareroot (cont'd)	Size	Age	Price/100
White Spruce	8-12"	2-0	\$142
Bald Cypress	7-14"	1-0	\$196
American Sweetgum	6-12"	2-0	\$211
Chokecherry	5-10"	1-0	\$208
Dawn Redwood	5-10"	2-0	\$166
Eastern Redbud	5-10"	2-0	\$284
Holly Winterberry	18-30"	5-0	\$279
Old Fashioned Lilac	6-12"	3-0	\$215
Paw Paw	4-8"	2-0	\$260
Swamp White Oak	3-6'	1-0	\$205

Arbor Day Seedling Program

The seedling sale is on now! Proceeds support the MTWFA Scholarship Fund, which assists students enrolled in arboriculture and urban forestry programs.

Important Dates

March 15, 2025 - First Delivery Date*

April 11, 2025 - Last Date to Order

May 2, 2025 - Last Delivery Date

Pay online with credit card or check.
For invoice, call 781-894-4759

*based on availability due to spring weather



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This credential is a relaunch of the Municipal Specialist credential. ISA worked with the Urban and Community Forestry Society (formerly Society of Municipal Arborists) on the rebranding of the credential so that it better reflects "the needs of the public, industry, employers, and the professional target audience for the program." Find out more about the credential at isa-arbor.com.

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The Bark is made possible by a U.S. Forest Service grant, facilitated through Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation Urban and Community Forestry Program.

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- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov

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Massachusetts Tree Wardens'
and Foresters' Association
P.O. Box 5141
Norwell, MA 02061

Calendar of Events

March 4	UMass Community Tree Conference	ag.umass.edu/
March 6	Urban Forestry Today Webinar: Urban Woodland Management	www.urbanforestrytoday.org
March 20	Western Mass Tree Wardens Dinner Meeting, Northampton	www.masstreewardens.org
March 24	PDS - First Aid, CPR, and AED with Stop the Bleed	www.masstreewardens.org
April 10-11	Tree Decay-Testing, Biology, Bio-Mechanics	www.newenglandisa.org
April 11	Last day to order MTWFA Arbor Day Seedlings	www.masstreewardens.org
April 16	PDS - Proper Tree Planting	www.masstreewardens.org

Find out more about these and other events at www.masstreewardens.org