

*From the*



*December 2014*

## **Conservation Montgomery holds “Home Tree Care 101” Seminar in CCW**

*By Lauren Fernandez  
Chevy Chase West*

With Fall well underway, a dozen CCW residents gave their leaf rakes, pruners and other outdoor gardening implements a rest recently to learn a little bit more about the trees in their yards. *Conservation Montgomery*, a coalition of civic and environmental organizations that addresses a broad spectrum of environmental and quality of life issues in our County, came to CCW to hold a “Home Tree Care 101” Seminar on Saturday, November 22<sup>nd</sup>.

This particular Seminar, coordinated by CCW resident and former Tree Committee co-chair Lauren Fernandez and *Conservation Montgomery’s* Caren Madsen, was dedicated to the memory of CCW resident Terry Dammann, who passed away suddenly on October 12, 2014. A long-time CCWer, Terry was an avid gardener and horticulturalist, and a dedicated volunteer. She served on the Board of the Chevy Chase West Neighborhood Association as Tree Committee Chair, overseeing the planting of scores of new trees in our community. In addition to her contributions to CCW, Terry volunteered her time and expertise at the U.S. Botanic Garden and at the National Arboretum Fern Valley Native Plant collection for over 10 years.

Coffee, donuts and conversation on the front porch of the Fernandez house were a welcomed start to the Seminar, which happened to take place on one of our coldest mornings yet! After a brief welcome and tribute to Terry by Lauren Fernandez, Caren Madsen and Arborist Andrew Driscoll along with *Conservation Montgomery* Board Member Arlene Bruhn, led the seminar. Topics discussed were many and varied, and included the importance of the tree canopy to our County and how the canopy contributes to our environment by cooling and improving air and water quality. Various elements of tree care and maintenance were demonstrated, including proper mulching techniques, light pruning techniques, and the safe and proper use of common garden tools for home tree care.





Our group was undaunted by the cold weather, and enjoyed moving from house to house to see demonstrations of tree care, and to discuss when to do-it-yourself or when to call in the professionals! Although many tree care tasks can be performed by the average home gardener, Caren and Andrew stressed the importance of calling in licensed tree experts when the job is too large. Too often homeowners entrust the care of their trees to amateurs who may offer cheap services, but lack the skill and safety knowledge necessary for large-

scale or even small-scale tree work. A visit to Jane Dealey's (Chevy Chase Boulevard) very large American Elm tree was a good example. For instance, removing Boston Ivy from climbing the base bark of Jane's tree was something she can do herself. However, tightening the support cables high up in the tree is best left for a professional arborist.

Planting, mulching and light pruning are also common tasks that homeowners can do themselves, however they often do it wrong. Andy showed how to properly mulch a tree in front of Lauren Fernandez (DeRussey Parkway) house. Andy encouraged using hardwood bark mulch, and stressed the importance of mulching to a maximum depth of three inches and keeping the mulch away from touching the very base of the tree. A visit to Rocinta Chandler's (DeRussey Parkway) Dogwood tree provided an opportunity to see light pruning techniques in action. Andy removed a few small branches and showed us how to make the cuts to prevent tearing the bark. Stopping by at Joan Barron's (Morgan Drive) house gave attendees the opportunity to see a tree that was initially planted too deeply. Although attractive, this tree had not grown to optimal height and never would, due to the base of the trunk being too deeply embedded in the earth.



In the two-hour seminar, our CCW seminar attendees learned a tremendous amount about the importance of trees to our environment, and how to care for and maintain their trees safely and effectively. And, they had a great time getting to know each other as well! *Conservation Montgomery* would be delighted to come back to CCW for a future seminar. If you have an interest in joining one, please contact Lauren Fernandez. Or, if you would like to know more about *Conservation Montgomery*, check out their website at [www.ConservationMontgomery.org](http://www.ConservationMontgomery.org).

**From Conservation Montgomery: Many thanks to Lauren Fernandez for organizing the Chevy Chase West HTC 101 class and for contributing to the Conservation Montgomery newsletter.**