

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## PETERSHAM ARBOR DAY TO KICK OFF YEAR OF TREES

Trees are in the spotlight in Petersham this month, and the celebration will continue all year.

Petersham was one of only eight towns to be awarded an Urban and Community Forestry Challenge Grant from the Mass. Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) this month. The grants help towns leverage trees to enhance the social, economic, and environmental quality of their community.

The new grant awards \$14,114 to the Petersham Forest & Shade Tree Committee for gateway tree plantings, public workshops, school programs, and invasive plant removal. All grant funds must be matched by donations and in-kind support.

“We’re thrilled,” says Melissa LeVangie, Petersham Tree Warden. “The Petersham Forest and Shade Tree Committee has worked incredibly hard over the past year to raise community awareness of the importance of our town trees. And we’re just getting started!”

Arbor Day will kick off the year of programming. All events are free and open to the public. They include:

- Friday, April 22, 7pm: “**Mushrooms, Forests, & You: Demystifying the Fungal Kingdom**” – a seminar by Matthew Shreiner, at the Petersham Memorial Library.
- Saturday, April 30, 10am to 2pm: **Arbor Day Celebration on the Petersham Common**. Family-friendly activities will include tree planting, a tree-themed relay race, an ask-the-arborist table, invasive plant and insect activities, and tree-themed games and snacks. Come join the fun, and receive a free tree seedling!
- Throughout the month of April at the Petersham Memorial Library: See how Center School 5<sup>th</sup> graders illustrated the Arbor Day theme “Trees Grow with Us and for Us” for a state-wide **Arbor Day poster contest**. The contest followed a presentation by The Center School winner and runners-up will be announced at Arbor Day on the Common.
- A new **Tree Tour for the town of Petersham** highlights 15 significant trees throughout town, selected by a community nomination process. Maps will be available at Arbor Day and at [townofpetersham.org](http://townofpetersham.org). The Tree Tour is made possible by a grant from the Petersham Cultural Council.
- One-of-a-kind **reusable tote bags** will be available starting Arbor Day at the Country Store, Petersham Library, and Art Center. Bags were hand-sewn this winter by local volunteers in an event hosted by local artisan Sylvia Brown. At Arbor Day on the Common, bags will be filled with firewood from the local Wood Bank, for a \$15 donation to the Petersham Tree Fund.

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Photo captions/credits:



Petersham Tree Warden Melissa LeVangie works with committee member Steve Herzog to plant a butterfly magnolia on the Common for Arbor Day 2015. Photo by Clarisse Hart.



Community members try out the tree games at Arbor Day 2015. Photos by Clarisse Hart.

For more information or questions, contact Clarisse Hart, Petersham Forest & Shade Tree Committee secretary: 978-724-0285, cmhart9@gmail.com