



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Since 1981, West Lafayette Tree Friends (WLTF) together with the City of West Lafayette has been dedicated to planting and maintaining street trees, ensuring a greener, healthier community.

Our Impact in 2024

- 95 new trees planted (25 in spring, 70 in fall)
- 2400 street trees pruned
- Expanded efforts to protect and grow our urban canopy

Looking Ahead: New Initiatives

A More Engaging Annual Report

Our donor drive remains the heart of our fundraising. In 2024, we introduced a spring fundraising push and an updated, more visual annual report to better connect with supporters like you.

Tree City USA Recognition

2024 marked our 33rd consecutive year in the program! We proudly partnered with West Lafayette Parks to install seven "Tree City USA" signs at major city entry points.

Scaling Up Our Watering Program

Young trees need consistent care! Last summer, we launched a watering program with a 100-gallon tank, pump, and hose to support trees along sidewalks and trails. In 2025, we're expanding with larger tanks, longer hoses, and city trucks to reach even more trees. WLTF also co-funds watering bags to boost survival rates.

Get Involved: Volunteer & Make a Difference

Our work thrives on community support! If you'd like to help, email chair@wltreefriends.org to join our volunteer team.

Community Engagement & Outreach

This year, WLTF expanded its reach through education, partnerships, and events:

- Hosted a DNR Tree Stewardship Program with West Lafayette Parks
- Celebrated Arbor Day & Earth Day with local businesses
- Engaged the public at RiverFest, Farmers' Markets, and Leadership Lafayette's Volunteer Expo
- Partnered with the GreenSpace Team on an IDNR Community & Urban Forestry Assistance Grant

We also introduced tree-focused articles for our members. Stay informed! Follow us on social media and [visit our website](#).

A heartfelt thank you to all our volunteers, donors, and supporters. Your dedication is growing a stronger, greener Community.

Paul Brennan, Chair
West Lafayette Tree Friends



The West Lafayette Tree Friends honor Helen Lillich's legacy through the Lillich Lecture Series, bringing the community together to learn about our urban forest. In 2024, these sessions sparked important conversations about tree care, challenges, and ways to protect our vital green spaces.

LILLICH LECTURE SERIES

On November 7, 2024, the West Lafayette Tree Friends hosted the Lillich Lecture Series at the Dennis Wellness Center bringing together experts and community members to explore key topics in urban forestry.

This year's theme **"To a Healthier Urban Forest"** featured two outstanding speakers:

Cliff Sadof (Emeritus, Purdue Entomology Professor)

- Provided an insightful and timely presentation on *Managing pests in urban forestry*, highlighting strategies to protect our city's trees.

Bill DeBoer (Production Manager, Woody Warehouse)

- Delivered an engaging talk on *The crucial role of native trees in creating sustainable urban forests*, emphasizing their environmental benefits.

With 24 attendees, the event was an opportunity to learn, connect, and strengthen our shared commitment to a greener, healthier West Lafayette.

Thank you to everyone who joined us, we're excited to keep growing together!

-Becky Fry, Vice Chair

Honoring the legacy of Helen Lillich - Founder of West Lafayette Tree Friends



WEST LAFAYETTE TREE FRIENDS 2024 FINANCIAL REPORT

	<u>2024 BUDGET</u>	<u>2024 ACTUAL</u>	<u>2023 ACTUAL</u>
<u>INCOME</u>			
Donations to General Fund	\$29,000	\$20,776	\$24,857
Donations for Tribute Trees	800	3,330	400
Lillich Lecture	-	170	519
Investment principal on available Funds	7,200	6,830	8,325
Disbursement from Endowment	11,000	11,217	7,494
TOTAL INCOME	\$48,000	\$42,323	\$41,595

<u>EXPENSE</u>			
Operation ReLeaf	\$20,000	\$19,978	\$18,293
Fundraising	3,100	4,022	3,205
Communications (Lillich Lec,D/Reception, website, newsletter and workshops)	1,575	2,816	2,320
Tribute Trees	200	24	53
Lillich Lecture		43	-
Special Projects (Tree watering equipment)	15,000	1,302	1,312
Other (pruning equipment, refreshments, tools and shelving,)	2,000	1,692	-
Endowment Fund Investment	6,000	6,000	3,000
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$47,875	\$35,877	\$28,183

FUND BALANCE		\$101,183	\$103,933
WEST LAFAYETTE TREE FRIENDS ENDOWMENT FUND			
End of year total	(+\$21,303)	\$300,417	\$279,114
Donations made to the fund that year		4,732	4,979

Bill Evers, Treasurer

“An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” – Benjamin Franklin

STAYING TRUE TO OUR MISSION - WITH YOUR SUPPORT

In 2024, the West Lafayette Tree Friends, together with the City of West Lafayette, made a powerful impact, turning vision into action with a steadfast commitment to accountability. Through a blend of innovative strategies and time-tested efforts, we transformed donations into thriving trees, greener streets, and a healthier community, ensuring every dollar made a lasting difference.

Planting, pruning and a new focus on watering, to ensure tree health and longevity.

2400

trees pruned in 2024

95

trees planted

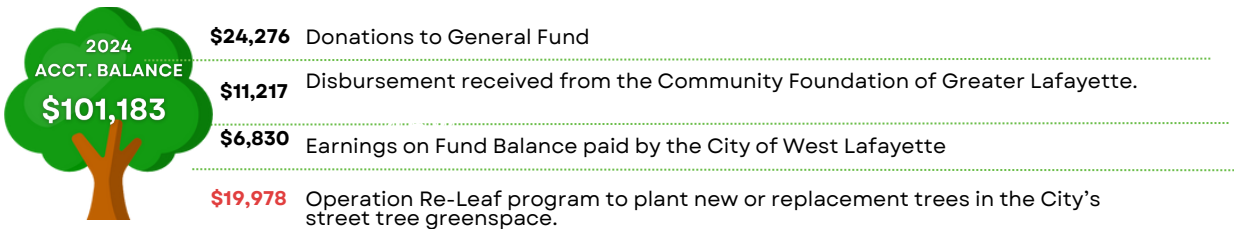
25

spring

70

fall

FINANCIAL REPORT



WEST LAFAYETTE TREE FRIENDS ENDOWMENT FUND

Administered by The Community Foundation of Greater Lafayette

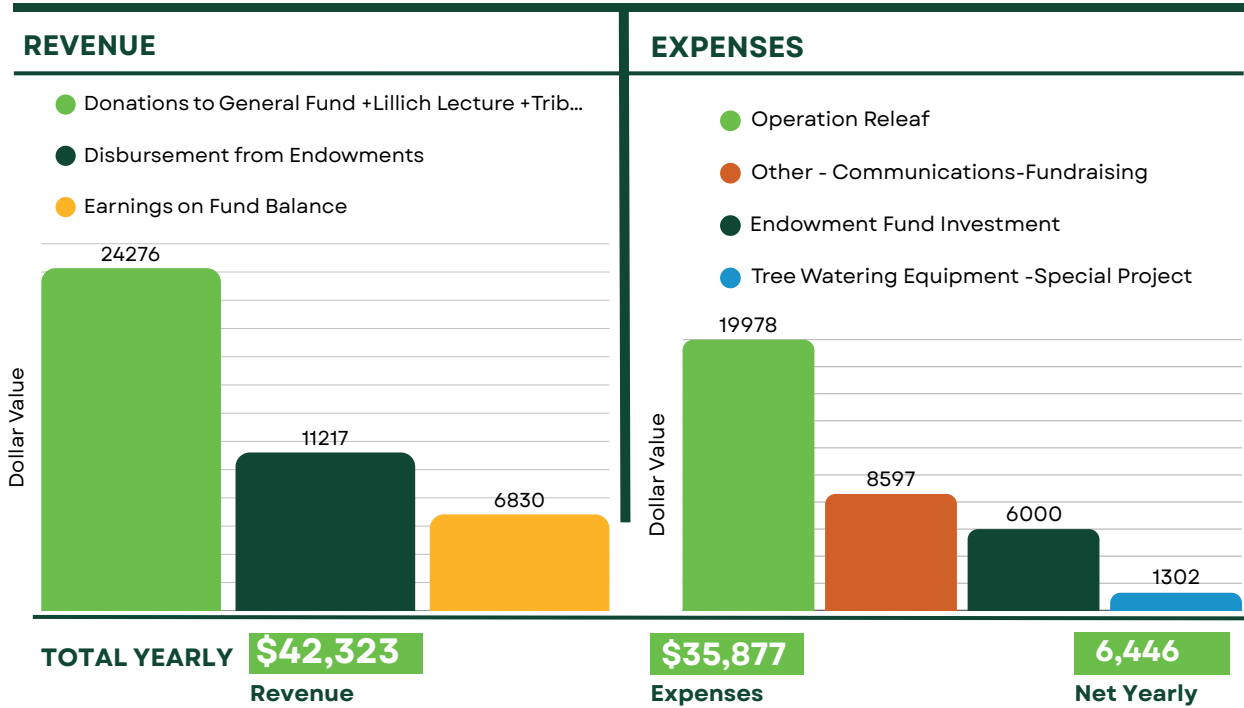
NET ASSETS

Q4'23 \$279,114
Q4'24 \$300,417

+ \$21,303

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE ENDOWMENT FUND

\$3250 | Donations Received and Forwarded to Community Foundation
\$1482 | Donations Directly Received by Community Foundation
\$6000 | Contribution by WLTF
\$ 10,732



Donor Reception

On October 23, 2024, the West Lafayette Tree Friends gathered for a special evening to celebrate our incredible donors!

For the past three years, Dennis and Sharon Schlott have generously opened their home for this event, creating a warm and welcoming space for us to connect and express our heartfelt gratitude.

With 40 wonderful attendees, the evening was filled with great conversations, appreciation, and a shared passion for growing a greener West Lafayette.

Thank you to everyone who makes this work possible—your generosity is helping our trees and community thrive!

This year, we were especially excited to showcase our new tree watering program with the watering equipment (including a watering tank named in Honor of Judy Pellissier) that was proudly displayed in the front yard during the Donor Event.



-BECKY FRY, VICE CHAIR



Judy Pellissier

March 28, 1939 - March 25, 2025

Honoring a Cherished Leader

We want to take a moment to recognize Judy Pellissier, whose passion and dedication have been the heart of our watering program. As a guiding force in our efforts, she helped ensure young trees had the care they needed to thrive. Her kindness, leadership, and unwavering commitment have left a lasting impact on our community. As we remember her, our thoughts are with her loved ones. Her legacy will continue to grow with every tree that flourishes because of her work.



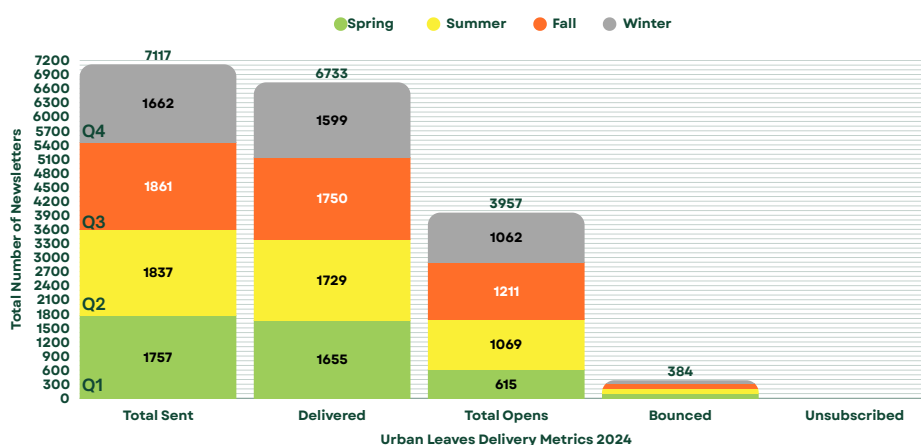
Communications/Urban Leaves - Cliff Sadof

The Communications Committee ensures continuity and support for WLTF communications, as outlined in our strategic plan. In 2024, we focused on strengthening donor engagement and community outreach.

Key Initiatives

- Lillich Lecture Series
- Urban Leaves newsletter

Urban Leaves Delivery Metrics for 2024



A sincere thank you to Judy Pellissier for her years of dedication as Editor of Urban Leaves. Her leadership, insight, and passion for trees and community engagement have made a lasting impact, and we are deeply grateful for all she has given.

We also appreciate Mary Campbell and Diane Schlegel for guiding Cliff Sadof, our new Editor. Thank you, Jonah Fish, for your support. Looking ahead, Cliff will integrate the Communications Committee's efforts with Urban Leaves to enhance our outreach.

Thank you to everyone who helps make our mission a success!

"People don't buy into your mission because of the words you say, they buy into it because they feel your passion." - Unknown

Fundraising Report

In 2024, West Lafayette Tree Friends successfully launched fundraising initiatives to raise revenue, engage the community, and promote urban greenery.

We are incredibly grateful to everyone who contributed their time, effort, and resources. Your dedication whether through direct support, behind-the-scenes efforts or donor data and mailings has been invaluable in strengthening our urban canopy.

Major Fundraising Events

- Earth Day Recycling
- WLTF's Donor Reception
- Donor Drive

Thanks to your support, 2024 was another successful year of growing and sustaining West Lafayette's urban forest!

New Initiatives: Expanding Our Impact

- Tree Watering Campaign – Every newly planted tree now receives its own water bag for the season, ensuring a stronger start and higher survival rates.
- West Lafayette's New Tree Nursery – The city has broken ground on a game-changing tree nursery! This major step will support long-term urban canopy growth.

Volunteers will have opportunities to participate in training events and assist during peak planting seasons, stay tuned to get involved!

West Lafayette Tree Friends continues to grow, and we're excited for what's ahead in 2025!

BILL GASS

**"The creation of a thousand forests is in one acorn."
– Ralph Waldo Emerson**



Tribute Tree Program Update

The West Lafayette Tree Friends continue to honor and celebrate those who have made a lasting contribution to our community.

This year, Tree Friends proudly recognized Judy Pellissier and Bryce Patz for their unwavering dedication and countless hours of hard work in support of West Lafayette Tree Friends. Their passion and commitment have made a lasting impact, and we are deeply grateful for all they have done.

Five other Tribute Tree donations were made by private individuals. All seven trees will be planted in Spring of 2025.

While no new Tribute Trees were planted in 2024, we are grateful for the continued support that allows us to fund future plantings.

With newly funded trees included, the **total number of Tribute Trees now stands at 72** each serving as a living testament to the individuals they honor.

We also extend our heartfelt appreciation to Suman Harshvardhan who has dedicated time and effort to the Tribute Tree Program. In September, Lise Schools stepped into the role of Tribute Tree Coordinator, ensuring this meaningful program continues to grow and flourish.

Thank you to everyone who supports this initiative, each Tribute Tree enriches our urban forest and keeps the spirit of those we honor alive.

- Lise School

A tree planted in tribute is a legacy of love, its roots honor the past, its branches embrace the present, and its leaves whisper to the future. -Sita Esaak

Green Space

2024 brought significant changes to the City's urban forestry program with the departure of Bryce Patz a key leader and advocate. To meet growing needs, the City hired Green Space Administrators Jennifer Gardiner and Brandon Hall, with John Muller stepping in as Interim Administrator.

Tree Friends Highlights:

- Sponsored an IDNR Tree Stewardship Program in April, covering planting, pruning, pest management, and tree ID.
- Launched the first street tree watering program, watering 350 trees over seven times during dry weeks.
- Contributed 726 volunteer hours across 13 pruning sessions, with Tree Friends, AmeriCorps, Purdue students, and City staff pruning over 2400 young street trees.

Operation ReLeaf:

- West Lafayette Tree Friends and the City of West Lafayette together planted a total of 95 street trees, primarily in neighborhood areas. Additionally, Bennett's Greenhouse generously donated 12 trees in the fall of 2023. Of these, four were planted at Blackberry Farms in the fall, and the remaining eight were planted in the spring of 2024 in celebration of Arbor Day. We're grateful for their support in growing our urban canopy!
- We also continued offering the resident-requested street tree application.
- Continued offering the resident-requested street tree application.
- Removed 25 trees from public rights-of-way.
- Expanding Our Impact:

A \$25,000 CUF Grant, match by \$11,000 from Tree Friends, will fund the planting of 25 trees annually in 2025 and 2026. Special thanks to Carl Huetteman and Racheal Bingaman for securing this funding. Additional investments include essential tools, safety signage, pruning equipment, and watering bags.

Upcoming Training:

- Spring 2025: A 2-day tree pruning seminar led by Lindsey Purcell.
- Spring 2026: IDNR training on tree planting and maintenance.

Together, we're strengthening West Lafayette's urban canopy and ensuring a greener future.

Thank you for your continued support!

-Jennifer Gardiner

"Urban trees and green spaces are not just amenities they are necessities for a healthy and happy life." – Unknown

Helping Hands, Stronger Trees, Greener Community!

Thank you, volunteers for your time, effort, and dedication! Your hard work in planting, pruning, and protecting our trees makes a lasting impact on our community and the environment. Because of you, our city is greener, healthier, and more vibrant. We couldn't do it without you!

Join Us, Every Tree Needs a Friend!



"A tree is known by its fruit, a person by their deeds. A good deed is never lost, one who sows courtesy reaps friendship, and one who plants kindness gathers love." – Saint Basil

Thankful to our Donors for making our Actions possible!

A year of connection, generosity and impact! Through community outreach, donor drives, and volunteer celebrations, we strengthened our roots and grew together. Your support made stewardship events, educational programs, and social gatherings possible, bringing people together to care for our urban forest. Thank you for making this year meaningful and memorable!



"When people come together, the possibilities are endless."