



NEW YORK RESTORATION PROJECT (NYRP) is a non-profit organization dedicated to reclaiming and restoring New York City parks, community gardens and open space. In partnership with the City of New York, NYRP is also leading MillionTreesNYC – an initiative to plant and care for one million new trees throughout New York City's five boroughs by 2017.

# GOODdirt

## Dear Friends

Everyone asks me, how does New York Restoration Project do all that it does... cleaning and maintaining four NYC parks, restoring and managing 55 community gardens, and introducing thousands of New Yorkers to environmental education and public programs each year? My answer is always the same – it's our talented and hard-working staff. I felt so proud standing amongst them on September 17 as we opened yet another NYRP community garden, this time with the support of Dr. Leslie D. Johnson. Each garden opening marks an extraordinary occasion for NYRP's already impressive and extensive history.

But what I particularly noticed this time, here and there in the crowd, was our staff clad in NYRP T-shirts, with each of their faces glowing and confident. Some of these staff members have grown up before my eyes. But there are also always new faces, often AmeriCorps members who serve their valuable terms of service with NYRP and then move on to new chapters in their lives.

What I'm most proud of when I look out at these devoted environmental soldiers is how hard they work and how much they've learned cleaning and greening New York for you and for me. Over NYRP's nearly 15 years, our staff has developed invaluable skills in the fields of horticulture, urban forestry, environmental education and garden design, as well as unique expertise in community relations and partnership building with other non-profit groups and city, state and federal agencies.

As the city's needs have grown, NYRP's staff has responded – taking on new projects as new needs for services have appeared. I believe the need for NYRP's mission is getting stronger in our city, and the reason we work so diligently is because we recognize there is still more for us to do – more parks to clean, more gardens to restore and more trees to be planted.

There are many generous and important people to thank at our garden openings. But standing proudly in the back, often with a shovel or rake in hand, are our hardworking NYRP staff members. They are on the front lines, often elbow-deep in dirt. They work for all of us, making New York City – especially in the neediest neighborhoods – a greener, cleaner and more beautiful place to live. And I am proud to stand next to them as we work together to make this city the greatest and greenest it can possibly be!

*Bette*  
Bette Midler,  
Founder



## Tree-mendous News: MillionTreesNYC Plants 250,000<sup>th</sup> Tree in Queens!

To celebrate the second anniversary of MillionTreesNYC, Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg joined NYRP Founder Bette Midler on October 5th in Queens, NY, to plant the initiative's 250,000th tree – a Southern Magnolia – at the home of St. Albans residents Sharon and Thomas Stony. The planting put the initiative 20 percent ahead of schedule and set the stage for expanded participation on the part of the city's 1.2 million homeowners.

"I'm overwhelmed that we are planting our 250,000th tree," said Bette Midler. "It just proves once again that New Yorkers are the strongest, toughest and most caring people in the world."

Since the initiative began in fall 2007,

NYRP has planted more than 10,000 trees on the lawns of New York City's public housing campuses throughout the five boroughs, with the help of contractors, hundreds of volunteers and hard-working staff. In addition to New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) campuses, NYRP has also planted thousands of trees on public schoolyards and playgrounds, college campuses, cultural institutions and hospitals. To give some perspective, NYRP is now planting more trees annually than any city parks department in the United States, with the exception of our MillionTreesNYC lead partner, the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation.

To continue growing the MillionTreesNYC movement, Mayor Bloomberg and





## Letter from the Executive Director



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BETTE MIDLER, Founder

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When I started with New York Restoration Project, I knew I was joining an organization with a strong mission and a respected record of service. In the past three years, we've increased the reach and impact of that mission throughout New York City by working more efficiently, strategically and creatively.

The other day, I was chatting with a neighborhood resident at the opening of NYRP's Target Bronx Community Garden. In thanking me, she exclaimed, "Can you believe how much NYRP has changed in the last few years?" She was speaking specifically about NYRP's presence on her block and the magnificent new urban farm we created for the community. But I took that occasion to reflect on how the entire organization has changed, expanded and deepened in recent years.

NYRP's work has become much more streamlined over the past few years. For example, our community garden restorations now take four months instead of four years, and we are completing three to four gardens per year. The total number stands at 27 gardens that NYRP has fully rebuilt from the ground up, providing maximum utility, innovative design and natural beauty to the residents of surrounding neighborhoods.

And NYRP's modest staff is currently working harder than ever. In the last year, we've introduced Nature in My Neighborhood, an entirely new environmental education program that not only teaches kids about being green, but also helps them develop essential life

skills. Additionally, we've dramatically expanded our community outreach through garden and cultural programs, community events and festivals, as well as networked our growing legion of community gardeners across the city so they can share expertise, best practices and sustainability tips.

In our spare time, we launched MillionTreesNYC, an ambitious urban tree-planting initiative that other cities are now looking to replicate. To accomplish these and other large-scale projects, we're growing our corporate volunteer program, one of the most rewarding intersections of private enterprise and public service.

We've done all of this in the past few years, and despite the tough economy. Our talented staff has stayed lean, spent wisely and worked intelligently to sustain our positive impact on the communities we serve. But, we've only been able to continue to grow because you have maintained your support for our expanding scope of work. We are so grateful for your commitment, and we invite you to keep pace with our growth in the coming years. NYRP has exciting plans on the horizon — as always, we'll only be able to accomplish them with your help.

To keep up with all that's going on at NYRP, I invite you to explore our brand new website at [www.nyrp.org](http://www.nyrp.org)!

Drew Becher  
NYRP Executive Director

**ON THE COVER:** NYRP Founder Bette Midler joins Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, Chief Service Officer Diahann Billings-Burford and members of the Stoney family in St. Albans, Queens, to plant MillionTreesNYC's 250,000th tree.

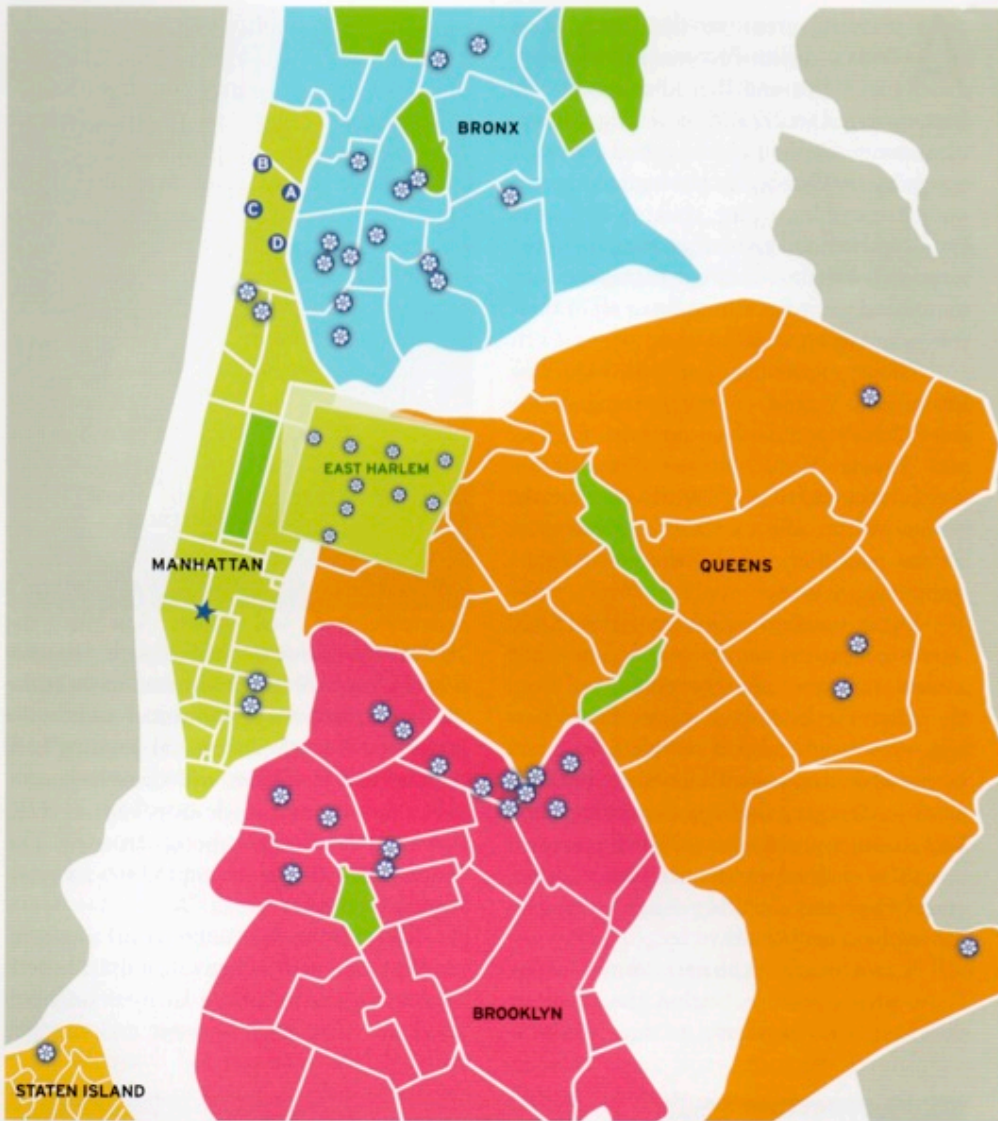
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# NYRP Parks and Community Gardens



### NYRP Parks

- A** Swindler Cove Park  
Sherman Creek Center
- B** Fort Tryon Park  
New Leaf Restaurant & Bar
- C** Fort Washington Park
- D** Highbridge Park

### NYRP Community Gardens

- Bronx - 14 community gardens
- Brooklyn - 21 community gardens
- Manhattan - 15 community gardens
- Queens - 4 community gardens
- Staten Island - 1 community garden

### NYRP Main Office

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New York, NY 10001  
(212) 333-2552  
info@nyrp.org

To learn more about NYRP's parks, community gardens, programs and events, visit [www.nyrp.org](http://www.nyrp.org).

### Swindler Cove Park

Harlem River Drive & Dyckman Street at 10th Avenue, New York, NY

- 1** Riley-Levin Children's Garden
- 2** Peter Jay Sharp Boathouse
- 3** Sherman Creek Center
- 4** Animal Estates
- 5** Cherry Tree Esplanade
- 6** Ann Richards Garden (planning stages)
- 7** Sherman Creek Trail







## Target Community Garden Brings Urban Farming to the Bronx

### Gardener Profile

#### NYRP Community Gardener – Gloria Roldan



For Gloria Roldan, working in the Target Bronx Community Garden has always been “about the kids.” Roldan knows the importance of having a place where families can work together to grow healthy organic food; where children can play; and neighbors can gather for barbecues, birthday parties, and games of cards and dominoes. “I have been involved in gardening my whole life, and I started working in the Anderson Avenue community garden in 1985,” said Roldan.

Since 2007, Roldan and other neighborhood gardeners have worked with NYRP to reclaim the space that is now Target Bronx Community Garden by clearing overgrown foliage, building raised beds, planting fruit trees and installing wooden gazebos. By making creative use of recycled materials and existing resources, Roldan and her fellow gardeners made this patch of green a place where the whole neighborhood could come together to garden, cook and share food.

In February 2009, when the Target Corporation stepped up to help NYRP fully realize the community’s efforts in the garden, Roldan took a leadership role, administering surveys to collect input for the garden’s new design and speaking on behalf of gardeners at an early visioning session. According to Roldan, the Target funding meant the neighborhood could finally make the garden the best it could be. “This garden has improved my life in many ways. It is a place to relax, to spend time with my friends and to teach my kids about the land.”



A cornfield grows in the Bronx! Residents of South Bronx are now marveling at this and the other exceptional features found in NYRP’s new Target Bronx Community Garden, which opened with a festive party on October 6. Having long been a site for vegetable growing, cooking, barbecues and neighborhood gatherings, the garden restoration has dramatically enhancing the community’s ability to continue doing all of these things and more.

“Target is proud to join with New York Restoration Project on the opening of the third Target-sponsored community garden,” said Laysha Ward, Target’s President of Community Relations. “We hope that the garden will become a welcoming green space for the neighborhood and the entire Bronx community to enjoy.”

Located on Anderson Avenue, this 15,500 square-foot garden was designed by renowned garden designer and horticulturist Sean Conway with the help of 18 local gardeners and other neighborhood residents, who had extensive discussions with Conway about the plans for the garden at community meetings held throughout the spring. NYRP presented images of trellises, canopy structures, decks, outdoor kitchens and other design options for the residents to consider.

“Community gardeners don’t always know what’s possible beyond the resources they have – it’s wonderful to show them op-

tions that expand their vision for the garden,” said Jared Vazales, NYRP’s project manager. “We encourage them to shoot for the moon, to be creative and innovative, and not limit themselves to what they immediately need.”

High on the gardeners’ wish list was an improved outdoor kitchen. As avid chefs, local residents had made do for years with a rough, but utilitarian cooking area, made of counter remnants and a rain-barrel-fed “gravity sink” for washing. Satisfying their wildest dreams, the new 9 by 11-foot, canopy-covered kitchen features a cooking surface with two gas burners, a large gas grill, bluestone counters, a sink with running water (now fed by a modern rainwater-capture system) and stainless steel storage units with drawers.

Unusually large for a community garden, Target Bronx boasts 1,350 square-feet of bed space. Use of the 18 raised growing beds, each roughly 5 by 15-feet, will be coordinated to meet the needs and abilities of individual and family gardeners. A single communal planting bed, measuring 5 by 32-feet, will allow large-scale urban farming of a single crop, such as corn, that the entire neighborhood can enjoy. The beds also feature permanent trellises for growing food vertically.

Target Bronx is also bountiful as a community space, with a large sun and shade deck made of recycled plastic; a lawn for neighborhood activities, such as yoga and outdoor



Above:  
Target Bronx Community  
Garden before restoration



Right:  
Target Bronx Community  
Garden after restoration



## Bedford-Stuyvesant Community Garden Grows Up... Literally



concerts; storage sheds made from recycled cargo containers; and compost bins. To ensure universal access to these amenities, the ADA-compliant garden features a gradually sloping ramp entrance that links to Woodycrest Street.

Like gardens, community participation requires cultivation. To accomplish this task and ensure NYRP's gardens grow and flourish alongside the residents they serve, NYRP staff circulate through neighborhoods, literally going door-to-door to invite residents to garden meetings, programs and events.

"We reach out to people and let them know what we're doing, so they aren't surprised when they see heavy construction going on," said Vazales. "We want them to know we're building a community space for them, not putting up condos."

Making the most of this brand new community space, NYRP presented its 3rd annual fall Harvest Festival at the Target Bronx Community Garden on October 10, with live musical performances and festive fall crafts and activities provided for free for the entire neighborhood. Attendees tried their hands at making homemade salsa, guacamole and tortillas; then toasted delicious dessert pies over our roaring fire pits. At the end of the event, local residents celebrated the opening of this beloved green space by harvesting their own vegetables straight from the garden's new planting beds.

With its flowering-vine columns, green walls and a friendly gate topped with colorful birdhouses, NYRP's newly opened Bedford-Stuyvesant Community Garden on Malcolm X Boulevard makes the most of limited space by using vertical design elements.

"This garden is beautiful," said Mildred McKenzie, a neighborhood resident since 1977. "There are countless ways we can use it! I want to plant callaloo, peas, thyme and scallions – creating a Jamaican garden."

Designed by Ken Smith, one of the nation's leading landscape architects, the 4,000 square-foot garden features 20-foot green walls surrounding the perimeter. These free-standing panels provide an innovative support for Virginia creeper, Boston ivy and other climbing plants whose green foliage will change into brilliant colors throughout the seasons.

The garden also features a rainwater harvesting system and pathways made out of recycled plastic decking and stone-shaped concrete reclaimed from construction sites. Interspersed among the zigzag beds of tomatoes, eggplant and cucumbers are plantings of lavender, oregano and strawberries. The garden restoration – NYRP's eighth in Brooklyn – was funded by Dr. Leslie D. Johnson, a forensic geneticist and CEO of Clinical Testing & Research, Inc.

"This garden is truly a story of a phoenix rising from an empty lot that was once a hardware store," said Dr. Johnson, standing alongside NYRP Founder Bette Midler and Brooklyn Borough President



Marty Markowitz at the garden opening on September 17. "We're here to celebrate the community who had the vision to reclaim this space, especially Lola Bryant, a Mississippi transplant who lived in Brooklyn for over seventy years and was the genesis and heart of this community garden. Lola passed away in 2006, but her commitment is embedded in this place forever." Dr. Johnson also thanked the St. Francis College women's basketball team and members of the Church of the Ascension for volunteering in the early stages of the garden's construction.

Next-door neighbor Verda Brimage attended the opening with her grandson Jamar Daniels, a freshman at NYC College of Technology. "We haven't had enough green space in this neighborhood," said Jamar. "Now, instead of concrete and broken sidewalks, we'll see flowers blossoming and vegetables growing. This garden will serve as a small park for the entire neighborhood." Ms. Brimage added that the garden will need watering and upkeep, "not just one person doing all the work, but the entire neighborhood coming together as one – a true team effort."

For longtime resident and community leader, Marcus Calcador, this green space is just what he's been waiting for. "You know that book *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* – I've been looking for that tree, and I finally found it!" said Calcador. "Because of this new green space, you see kids coming in to play and learn about nature. It's so exciting to see both children and adults as they learn where food comes from and literally watch it as it grows."







## NYRP Celebrates the Heritage of Manhattan... 400 Years and Growing!

Surrounded by New York City Housing Authority's Elliot-Chelsea Houses, the flourishing crops of corn, squash and beans may seem out of place in today's Manhattan, but 400 years ago, Lenape Indians cultivated these and other crops where high-rise buildings now stand. Connecting residents with New York City's historical and agricultural past is the goal of the Lenape Edible Estate: Manhattan – a garden collaboration between contemporary artist Fritz Haeg and conservation ecologist Eric Sanderson and supported by New York Restoration Project, the Hudson Guild and Friends of the High Line.

"The garden is a portal back in time," said Haeg, whose famous Edible and Animal Estates have sprouted up in cities across the country. Haeg's Animal Estates were most recently exhibited at the 2008 Whitney Biennial (a portion of which is now installed at NYRP's Swindler Cove Park). "I think of the garden as looking back and looking forward, and evidence of how green spaces can and do transform urban landscapes."

Located in front of the Hudson Guild's

community center on West 26th Street, Lenape Edible Estate: Manhattan features a berry patch, meadow and woodland plantings, as well as distinctive mounds of corn, squash and beans known as the "three sisters." Signage surrounding the garden identifies the native and Lenape-cultivated plants, telling the story of "Mannahatta" – the Lenape name for the island of Manhattan.

"We didn't know what to expect when the garden was first planted," said Hudson Guild Executive Director Ken Jocker, "but things started sprouting and the kids got to watch the garden grow all summer. We know that when children are involved in the growing and preparing of food, they become much more interested in healthy eating." The garden's opening on September 14 delighted scores of community residents and children with handmade corn cakes, succotash and other fresh dishes made from Lenape-inspired ingredients. Additional highlights of the celebration included the premiere of a short documentary about the garden and the area's agricultural history as told by Sanderson.



A neighborhood resident for over fifty years, Alice Mendez, said the garden "means a lot to the kids and adults who live here – nature means a lot to all of us." For more information about Lenape Edible Estate, which was generously funded by Gardenburger, visit NYRP's website at [www.nyrp.org](http://www.nyrp.org).

### Did You Know?

#### NYRP's Growing AmeriCorps Program

On October 1, NYRP welcomed a new crew of 37 AmeriCorps members beginning their half- and full-year terms of service, marking the 14th year that NYRP has participated in this federal grant program. Each year, NYRP has succeeded in providing half of the program's budget thanks to the support of our members, like you! AmeriCorps members assist NYRP in our community gardens and parks, in addition to helping with our environmental education and MillionTreesNYC programs and other special projects.



Working in small teams, AmeriCorps members are assigned to experienced NYRP staff, gaining skills across all departments. In an end-of-term survey, a Corps member commented: "I have learned a lot while working with NYRP staff during our volunteer days and in our community gardens. This experience has definitely opened many doors in my professional pursuit to become a garden landscaper."





## East Villagers Get Inspired with NYRP's Summer Sustainability Series

The East Village is one of the hippest, most progressive neighborhoods in all of New York City. To inspire its eco-conscious residents to green their everyday lives and engage in the life of our Toyota Children's Learning Garden on East 11th Street, NYRP presented its first-ever Summer Sustainability Series. Three lectures on green design, sustainable construction and gardening innovations drew in capacity crowds of community gardeners, homeowners and property developers. With its rainwater harvesting system, recycled construction materials and other sustainable design features, the lush and intimate Toyota Garden – opened in 2008 and designed by Michael Van Valkenburg Associates – was the perfect setting for this innovative series.

Lead designer of the garden, Sarah Seigel, led the series' first evening in July, taking visitors on a guided tour of the space's distinct plant habitats, grape arbors and art furniture made from locust branches. In August, Lori Gibbs (LEED AP) and artist/eco-designer Atom Cianfarani explained how to construct a green roof, from the bottom layers of rubber

and geotextiles to the top layers of soil, sedum, grass and wildflowers. The many benefits provided by green roofs include cooling roof temperatures by over 70 percent, dramatically extending roof life and diverting stormwater from city sewer overflows.

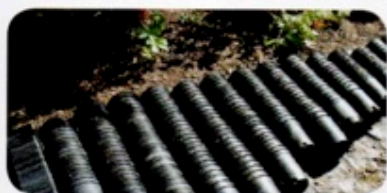


“A lot of the building types that are native to New York are over-structuralized, particularly historic buildings, so you don't have to do much retrofitting to create a green roof,” said Tyler Housholder of SAWA\_rchitects, who attended the garden talk. “Green roofs are financially beneficial and great for the city's environmental health.”

The series finished in early September with presentations on renewable energy by Chris Collins, executive director of Solar One, and Marni Horowitz, founder of Alive Structures, who described the construction and benefits of greens walls and vertical gardening, such as increased food production, biodiversity and bird habitat.

“I liked hearing Marni's discussion of the pros and cons of green walls, the importance of site-specific garden design and her use of trellis systems. The information will definitely be useful for me,” said Patricia Rogers, a sustainability designer and consultant. Attendees also enjoyed refreshments and a raffle drawing supported by organic restaurants and eco-friendly merchants in the East Village, including Angelica Kitchen, Sustainable NYC, Quintessence and Spina.

### Recycling Saves Green (\$\$\$)



Barrett Robinson, vice president of horticulture and construction, has organized a new strategy for saving money and helping the environment. When NYRP purchases trees from one of our major vendors, Hale and Hines Nursery, we now recycle the heavy-duty, Italian-made plastic containers the trees are grown and shipped in. Hale and Hines has agreed to buy them back, resulting in the reuse of 1,546 pots and a credit of \$4,370 to NYRP in 2009. Now, that's what we call green smarts!



### Random Acts of Greenness

NYRP applauds two Brooklyn residences that beautify and inspire their surrounding neighborhoods with extraordinary greening. Below is the lovely home of Ruthena Gamble, located on Cooper Street in Bushwick. Through the planting of various flowers and greenery on her front stoop, Rubena has helped beautify the landscape of her neighborhood – transforming her street scape into a lush, green oasis for all to share.



A few miles away in Crown Heights, former NYRP AmeriCorps member Noah Goldstein (below) is greening Pacific Street with his front stoop garden. Additionally, Noah is introducing neighbors to sustainable practices, with his backyard chicken coop and rooftop beekeeping.



Noah and neighbors have formed the Beeleafit collective and plan to host discussions and workshops on urban agriculture and sustainability in the future. Thank you, Ruthena and Noah, for your random (and generous) acts of greenness!

If you spot an act of greenness in your neighborhood that you think deserves recognition, please let NYRP know by emailing us at [nkusner@nyrp.org](mailto:nkusner@nyrp.org).







## NYRP Proves Community Festivals and Programs Do More than You Think!

In our almost fifteen years, NYRP has seen first-hand that community programming is a critical component of building and maintaining urban open space. Whether it's a smile on a child's face after discovering something new in nature or the relationships neighbors make after meeting for the first time, public festivals and events breathe life into communities and bring family and residents together in unique and significant ways.

As NYRP wraps up our fall Super Saturdays, we want to recap the busy season with some expert insights about the beneficial role of parks and green spaces in communities, compiled by the American Planning Association's City Parks Forum.

**Green residential spaces are gathering places where neighbors form social ties that produce stronger, safer neighborhoods... Barren spaces are more frightening to people and are more crime prone than parks landscaped with greenery and open vistas.**

Since 1995, NYRP has co-sponsored the annual **Little Red Lighthouse Festival** in Fort Washington Park – drawing hundreds of neighborhood residents down to the cleaned and restored banks of the Hudson River, where NYRP first got its start. This year, the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation again joined us to present the festival on September 19, with an afternoon of lighthouse tours, arts and crafts, hayrides, festive food, a reading of the children's classic *The Little Red Lighthouse and the Great Gray Bridge*, and musical performances by Hot Peas 'N Butter and John Oliver and the Distinguished.

On the east coast of Washington Heights, NYRP presented its annual **Swindler Cove Campout and Family Day** on September 26 – welcoming local families into the beautiful, five-acre park NYRP created on a former dumping ground on the Harlem River. By restoring the community's healthy connection to the river through NYRP's outdoor educational programming, community events, nature explorations and overnight campouts, children and families are able to safely explore the waterfront's diverse habitats and embrace the once-hidden natural beauty located right next door.



**Parks provide places for people to connect and interact in a shared environment... Parks channel positive community participation by getting diverse people to work together toward a shared vision.**

On October 17 and 24, NYRP hosted **community tree plantings** citywide, as part of MillionTreesNYC. In parks and on schoolyards, streets and NYCHA properties, these projects have been enthusiastically supported by local residents, students and community groups, who along with helping plant trees have committed to stewarding the growth of these green assets. Furthermore, not only has MillionTreesNYC transcended social and economic boundaries, it is helping to introduce a new generation of urban youth to green careers.

**City parks offer children the daily benefits of direct experience with nature and healthy, physical activity... City parks offer a vehicle for children's participation in community development, citizenship and democratic processes.**

On October 10, NYRP joined more than 300 community members to celebrate its 3rd

annual fall **Harvest Festival** at our newly opened Target Bronx Community Garden, with activities promoting healthy eating and nutrition, cooking and urban agriculture. With 15,500 square-feet of open space, the garden is essentially a neighborhood park, with all the added health and educational benefits of an urban farm – an extraordinary new resource for local residents, schools and community groups, who all came out to celebrate the fall harvest and their new green space.

And wrapping up our season of Super Saturdays on Halloween, NYRP's **Haunted Hike** at Swindler Cove Park is eagerly anticipated by Washington Heights youth, many of whom attended our annual Summer Camp in Swindler Cove Park or experience NYRP programs in their schools. The ghoulishly green Haunted Hike consists of an evening rove through the park's distinctive habitats, with frightfully fun points of learning about sustainable living and protecting the environment featured along the hike – a rare opportunity for city kids to safely explore and enjoy nature after dark.

NYRP is grateful to the REI Foundation for its support of the 2009 Super Saturdays festivals and programs.



## NYRP Offers a Green Stage for Arts Groups

Over the past year, New York Restoration Project has steadily increased its partnerships with local arts organizations, providing free use of our outdoor community spaces and expanding audiences for music, film, dance and the visual arts. These collaborations help share the city's creativity with neighborhood residents, while helping everyone stretch hard-earned funding dollars during these difficult economic times.

In late July, the 10th Annual New York International Latino Film Festival drew more than one hundred community members and visitors into our East 103rd Street Community Garden. Highlights from the event included free public screenings, such as the documentary *The Fania All Stars: Live in Africa*.

In Jamaica, Queens, The Public Theater's "Shakespeare Lab" on August 5 brought the Bard's immortal words to neighborhood youth and their families at our Curtis "50 Cent" Jackson Community Garden. The afternoon workshop included sonnet writing, a contemporary "Shakespeare Rap" and an evening performance for the community in the garden. "Teaching young minds that they can relate to Shakespeare and possess the courage to get up in front of others and speak his language proves the Bard's work does bring us together," said Jess Zweiman of The Public. "These kids were a



pure joy to work with – open, judgeless and loved to play!"

The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) has participated in a number of NYRP programs, including NatureMania and the Little Red Lighthouse Festival. Using leaves, twigs and other materials from nature, these arts and crafts activities provide children with an intimate, imaginative connection to their surroundings. "We love working with NYRP on large-scale outdoor festivals, bringing the joy of modern and contemporary art to a wide-range of people, many of whom have never visited the Museum before," said Calder Zwicky, MoMA's community outreach consultant. "By bringing our educators, art work and art activities outside of the Museum walls, we hope to change people's perceptions about the place art holds within their lives."

Other arts collaborations in NYRP's green spaces include poetry-writing workshops for teens with the Nuyorican Poets Café; community garden concerts with Arts for Art; and art activities with Northern Manhattan Arts Alliance (NoMAA) and Creative Arts Workshops for Kids (CAW). To underwrite an arts program in one of NYRP's community gardens or parks, contact Kristin Dougherty, chief development officer, at (212) 333-2552 or e-mail [kdougherty@nyrp.org](mailto:kdougherty@nyrp.org).



### Garden Grooves

This summer, hundreds of New York City families turned out to get their groove on as NYRP's community gardens were transformed into outdoor concert halls with our first annual Garden Grooves – a concert series featuring a variety of musical genres performed by local bands, up-and-coming talents and renowned artists. In June, Midori & Friends and the



Landmark High School Coalition Jazz Ensemble entertained neighborhood youth with a musical instrument workshop at our Target East Harlem Community Garden, followed by a salsa dance class for the community and concert by Bomba Yo! Garden Grooves continued in July with a performance by soul singer/songwriter Martin Luther at our Target Brooklyn Community Garden in Bedford-Stuyvesant.

Sean Conway's stylish and welcoming designs for NYRP's Target gardens provide the perfect atmosphere for these community concerts under the stars. Attendance to the outdoor concerts is free and open to all NYRP garden members and community residents. NYRP is currently seeking a sponsor to help expand the concert series in 2010.







## Tree-mendous News: MillionTreesNYC Plants 250,000<sup>th</sup> Tree in Queens!

Continued from page 1

Bette also announced that the next phase of the citywide tree-planting initiative would engage New York City homeowners to plant and care for trees in their front and backyards and would target economically challenged

communities with the lowest tree canopy. Trees planted by homeowners are essential to the program's success as MillionTreesNYC calls for 300,000 trees to be planted by private landowners.

To help achieve this ambitious goal,

NYRP announced the introduction of "Put Down Roots" – a community-based program that will have volunteers canvassing door-to-door in 16-block neighborhoods, signing up homeowners to plant trees, then supporting that commitment with tree giveaways and education. The "Put Down Roots" program is being piloted in St. Albans, Queens, this fall – with the goal of expanding the program to all five boroughs in spring 2010.

To further encourage private tree planting, NYRP has partnered with non-profit organizations across the city to sponsor tree giveaways – providing homeowners with up to two, free 5-foot-tall trees. To date, more than 4,000 trees have been distributed at community tree depots set up at green markets, schools, community gardens and botanical gardens.

### It Takes a Village to Plant an NYC Tree



After two years of planting thousands of trees across New York City's five boroughs, NYRP has learned one important lesson – it takes many people and many hands to ensure that each tree we plant grows strong and, as a result, strengthens the health and well-being of New Yorkers, their families and neighborhoods.

First, not a single tree NYRP plants would be possible without our donors – from the funds raised by students participating in the Penny Harvest program, to each and every \$100 or more tree donation, to our major corporate and individual donors. With this support, we've been able to plant thousands upon thousands of trees in the city's most under-served and under-canopied neighborhoods.

Once these all-important resources have been secured, NYRP's Tree Unit spends the winter and summer months identifying, securing and mapping out tree-planting opportunities; procuring and tagging quality trees from nurseries throughout the north-

east; and overseeing the ground excavation and final planting of the trees. Needless to say, it takes a significant amount of manpower to make each tree planting happen in a high-quality, environmentally conscious and cost-effective way.

And to get every tree in the ground, NYRP not only relies on contractors and staff but a growing corps of community and corporate volunteers. As we expand the initiative to private land, it's going to take 300,000 homeowners and landowners to help us achieve our one million tree goal!

Our work does not end once the tree is planted – in fact, we've only just begun. It is going to take thousands of students, renters, families and community gardeners to ensure our newly planted trees are watered during the hot summer months and protected from the often cruel urban elements. In an effort to mobilize tree stewards, NYRP and the NYC Parks Department partnered with six non-profits this summer to launch a corps of trained and informed New Yorkers – tree keepers – who pledge to adopt a tree and provide it with some much-needed "TreeLC."

Even if you do not have a front or backyard or a green thumb, there is a way for everyone to dig in and get involved in MillionTreesNYC.

Visit [www.milliontreesnyc.org](http://www.milliontreesnyc.org) today, and make a contribution to our "root cause" or commit to being a volunteer or tree keeper. In a city like New York, it's actually going to take more than a village!



"It's no platitude to say that achieving the goal of planting one million trees by 2017 will be impossible without the participation of New Yorkers – more and more, private-property owners will be the key to filling in the urban tree canopy," said Faisal Al-Juburi, NYRP's MillionTreesNYC director. "Through tree giveaways and the 'Put Down Roots' program, NYRP is taking a grassroots approach to getting local residents excited and engaged in tree planting and care. We've got to be creative and strategic in our approach to getting private landowners to dig in – demonstrating to homeowners the health, economic and community benefits a newly planted tree provides."



## NYRP Grows RespecTree Program



As the benefits of MillionTreesNYC begin to take root in neighborhoods throughout the five boroughs, New York City youth stand to gain the most from this tree-planting initiative. Growing up alongside their green-leafed neighbors, New York City kids have the opportunity to help new trees on their block and schoolyard survive to maturity, when trees start to provide their full range of benefits to the city. That's why NYRP's RespecTree and Talkin' Trees educational programs are targeting school kids – the thousands of potential tree stewards citywide!

Launched in 2008-09, RespecTree served ten schools and 270 fifth-graders in its first year. In 2009-10, the program is expanding to twenty schools (500-600 students), introducing fun, interactive instruction and creative new curriculum. Each school will receive six monthly visits from NYRP educators, who will engage students in learning about the biology of trees and the city's many varieties, the benefits of the urban forest and how students can actively care for and maintain trees in their neck of the woods.

"After describing RespecTree to students at a partner school, one participant said, 'So, we're giving things to the trees, like water, and

they're giving things back to us, like oxygen and shade.' This student's simple epiphany truly sums up the point of the program, and he got it on the first day," said Omari Washington, MillionTreesNYC education manager.

Sponsored in part by Citibank, RespecTree's fall and spring sessions will culminate in schoolyard plantings, and by spring next year, NYRP and the students will have planted close to 150 trees in total. As the "seniors" on campus, these graduating fifth-graders will pass the TreeLC torch onto their junior classmates – instilling all the pride and responsibility of caring for their newest green neighbors.

Additionally, for middle and high schools, NYRP has created Talkin' Trees, an entertaining and informative assembly presented for the entire student body. Sponsored by NBC Universal and debuting at thirty schools in 2009-10, Talkin' Trees is modeled on a game-show format, with students working in teams to answer questions that highlight tree benefits, planting steps and stewardship tools. For more information about RespecTree and Talkin' Trees, please contact Omari Washington at (212) 333-2552 or e-mail [owashington@nyrp.org](mailto:owashington@nyrp.org).



### NYRP Pens TreeLC Guide

This fall, NYRP introduced its much-anticipated TreeLC Handbook – an easy-to-use guide to tree care and maintenance that also introduces everyday New Yorkers to our city's diverse trees and explains the many benefits trees provide all of our city's residents. With the help of our lead, non-profit partners, the TreeLC Handbook was specifically



designed to be useful to New York City residents who are interested in adopting and caring for trees in their neighborhood. Under the banner of MillionTreesNYC, Brooklyn Botanic Garden, Greenbelt Conservancy, GreenThumb, The New York Botanical Garden, New York City Department of Parks & Recreation, Partnership for Parks, Queens Botanical Garden, TreesNY, and of course, NYRP will use this manual to help build a collaborative, community-based network of tree keepers across the city's five boroughs.

Activities highlighted in the guide include everything from how to properly adopt and care for a tree to the do's and don'ts of tree planting and maintenance. NYC residents can also use the guide to learn how to identify different tree species just by examining the leaves; how to install do-it-yourself tree guards; and how to become a certified tree pruner, among many other skills.

For more information on the guide or how you can obtain a copy, please contact Omari Washington, MillionTreesNYC education manager at (212) 333-2552 or e-mail [owashington@nyrp.org](mailto:owashington@nyrp.org).







## NYC GREENteens Want YOU!



**H**ow do you get teenagers excited about the environment? Ask the NYC GREENteens! This group of enthusiastic high schoolers interned with NYRP over the past year and are now taking their newfound love of the city's green open spaces to the streets, recruiting their peers for nature outings and volunteerism. The goal? To create a citywide, grassroots environmental action network for teens.

"We're showing our friends that New York City is not just a concrete jungle," said GREENteen Haydee Acosta, an 11th grader who plans to study marine biology. "There are so many green spaces you can explore – you don't have to stay up in your apartment watching TV."

To prepare their campaign, the teens participated in a five-week professionalism boot camp this summer, learning about business etiquette, cause marketing, social networking, office skills and professional communication.

This year, the GREENteens explored Wave Hill, Central Park, The New York Botanical Garden and The Cloisters museum & gardens. They conducted planting workshops with students at P.S. 5 and helped at NYRP's Campout and Family Day at

Swindler Cove Park, far exceeding the 100 hours of community service required to graduate from the High School for Environmental Studies, High School for Health Opportunities, City-As-School and other local schools.

"GREENteens is about empowering youth through exposure to nature and environmental practices, such as recycling and composting," said Akiima Price, NYRP chief of education and programs. "We blend fun with learning and give them the responsibility and trust to do things on their own. We then assess what each teen excels at – whether it is public speaking, arts or environmental education, we empower all of our teens to embrace the green leader within themselves."

With the help of a new Facebook page and growing membership, NYC GREENteens are bringing their message to classrooms, conducting workshops in community gardens and getting fellow teens excited about green jobs and careers, which they are quickly learning about through their experiences at NYRP. For more information about the NYC GREENteens, contact Akiima Price at (212) 333-2552 or e-mail [aprince@nyrp.org](mailto:aprince@nyrp.org).

## Scouts Dig In for MillionTreesNYC

**B**eginning this fall, the Greater New York councils of the Boy Scouts of America and Girl Scouts of the USA are official partners of MillionTreesNYC. Not only are these fine girls and boys steeped in the best traditions of nature conservation, they constitute a powerful network – the Scouting programs of Greater New York combined serve more than 80,000 youth with the help of more than 14,000 adult volunteers.



"Just imagine the potential!" said Omari Washington, MillionTreesNYC education manager. "If each New York City scout planted only ten trees, we'd have our million trees in the ground."

Tree Scouts will have the opportunity to earn colorful patches in a three-part program that includes an activity guide, tree plantings and tree care lessons for the summer, when immature trees are the most vulnerable and require 20 gallons of water a week in the hottest months. Scouts will be able to adopt trees block-by-block in their neighborhoods, and next spring we'll be providing them with trees they can plant in their yard or neighbors' yards. Over the past two years, Boy Scouts from across the city have already been busy planting trees in parks, on streets and at William H. Pouch Scout Camp in Staten Island, as well as assisting in their care and maintenance.

Thanks to The Home Depot Community Grant Program, NYRP was able to enlist EARTHNEXT, a non-profit environmental education organization with experience working with the Scouts, to develop a MillionTreesNYC curriculum and program for Scouts. For more information, contact Omari Washington, MillionTreesNYC education manager, at (212) 333-2552 or e-mail [owashington@nyrp.org](mailto:owashington@nyrp.org).



## Work-In-It! Summer Camp Spotlights Green Careers



Washington Heights youth eagerly returned to Swindler Cove Park in July for NYRP's 2nd annual Summer Camp – this time inspiring kids to think about careers in the natural and environmental sciences.

With twice as many campers, the free, six-week program provided more than thirty 3rd through 5th graders with full days of field trips, science experiments, team building exercises, gardening, fishing, and even a campout upstate. When asked what they enjoyed most, Shabazz Simpson, a ten-year-old from P.S. 194, summed it up in one word: "Everything!"

Led by NYRP educators and high-school interns, Summer Camp kicked off with "big picture" activities – campers explored the habitats of Swindler Cove Park, learned about urban planning as they explored the Queens Museum of Art's New York City panorama and designed plans for their own sustainable cities with materials found in nature.

"Biology Week" acquainted campers with professions in ecology, zoology, botany and entomology, or as ten-year-old Salima Tou Cisse said, "respect for everything around us." On a field trip to the Greenburgh Nature Center in Scarsdale, participants enjoyed a forest hike and a menagerie of rescued wildlife. They logged their observations of plants and animals in Swindler Cove, performed water testing in the Harlem River and played charades with props from biology careers.

Sustainable farming was the focus of week 3 and included field trips to Stone Barns Center for Food and Agriculture and the Queens County Farm Museum. In Inwood Hill Park, campers studied agri-history of the



Lenape Indians and foraged for sassafras. They visited a farmers market, made salsa and harvested broccoli from NYRP's Riley-Levin Children's Garden, located in Swindler Cove Park.

Campers learned about animal care providers in Week 4, with field trips to the Alley Pond Environmental Center in Queens and the American Museum of Natural History. As veterinary technicians, they donned rubber gloves to identify and measure animal skeletons, while learning the differences between vertebrates and invertebrates. Camper highlights were meeting Blondie, a Burmese python, and a furry sugar glider named Chocolate.

In the final week, campers learned firsthand what it is like to be an environmental

educator, taking NYRP staff on guided tours of Swindler Cove Park, explaining planting and harvesting techniques in the Riley-Levin Children's Garden and giving lessons in animal care.

"I was blown away by how much information they retained," said NYRP AmeriCorps member Adele Bryan.

Summer Camp wrapped up with a three-day trip to Baker Camp on Lake Sebago, near Bear Mountain, the first campout ever for many of the kids. The campers returned with stories of hiking in the woods, a beaver sighting and s'mores around the campfire.

They shared these and other eco-inspired accounts with their families at a graduation barbecue, where the kids received certificates as Junior and Senior Naturalists – officially naming them docents of their neighborhood Swindler Cove Park.

NYRP's Summer Camp gave each participant a chance to interact up-close with a range of science- and environment-related careers and professionals, planting new seeds of potential for their own future development. Read more about Summer Camp on NYRP's Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/nyrpgreen](http://www.facebook.com/nyrpgreen).

And a special thank you to NYRP's individual members, who responded enthusiastically to Bette Midler's spring appeal and made Summer Camp 2009 possible through their donations to this program.



### "Look, I found a dinosaur!"

cried a summer camper on discovering this big fella, a common snapping turtle (*Chelydra serpentina*) found on July 24 in Swindler Cove Park's wetland habitat. AmeriCorps member Kevin Belle picked it up so the kids could get a closer peek, but campers had to watch out – the turtle lived up to its name!





## You Gotta Have Friends...

*Bette Midler is a force of nature, but she can't be in all places at all times. In this new feature, Good Dirt salutes our steadfast friends who pitch in, going above and beyond to support the work of New York Restoration Project.*

### Suze Orman Digs In on Earth Day

This past Earth Day, April 22, NYRP collaborated with City Year New York and volunteers from across the city to plant hundreds of trees in East Harlem. Our founder, Bette Midler, invited her generous friend and avid supporter of NYRP, Suze Orman, to lead this momentous event. The financial guru, author and host of *The Suze Orman Show* happily grabbed a shovel and dug in. Suze brought her dynamic personality and can-do spirit to East 104th Street and 2nd Avenue, where she emceed the day's tree-planting activities of hundreds of volunteers, helped plant trees herself and reported on the accomplishments

on CNBC's *Power Lunch* program.

Suze Orman has been a tree-mendous supporter of MillionTreesNYC from the get-go. Attending NYRP's Hulaween benefit last year, she purchased \$50,000 worth of trees for the citywide initiative in our live auction. This year, when a call-in guest on Suze's popular show on CNBC asked whether she could afford tickets to Hulaween 2009, Suze delivered one of her signature reality checks - "No, you are DENIED." Suze immediately called her back to share that NYRP's Hulaween is a great event that supports an important cause, and that she was sending the caller two tickets to this year's gala fundraiser.

Like Bette always says, "you gotta have friends"... and NYRP has some of the best ever. Thank you, Suze!



### Remembering Robert Isabell



New York Restoration Project lost our great and dear friend Robert Isabell in July. As the designer of some of the most celebrated events of the last quarter century, including NYRP's Hulaween, Isabell was a legend in the star-studded world of benefit galas and party planning. He will be sadly missed not only for his

brilliant design and flawless good taste, but also for his warm smile, soft-spoken manner and loyal friendship. NYRP Founder Bette Midler first approached Isabell in 2005 to plan NYRP's 10th Anniversary Hulaween gala, which also celebrated her 60th birthday. Isabell generously designed the next three Hulaweens.

"Robert was a big believer in [the notion] that if you make something beautiful, people will become beautiful and will behave beautifully... he would give the best party you could possibly have for whatever money you could afford," reflected Midler to *Women's Wear Daily*.

Isabell's events were elegant occasions that integrated the total surroundings into a harmonious design, from color schemes and flower arrangements, to inventive décor and party favors, to lighting that embraced and

flattered guests. To Isabell, a party table was a blank canvass on which to create a masterpiece, and chief among his many talents was the ability to transform the unlikeliest of spaces - a CBS studio, the Park Avenue Armory or a public swimming pool - into the most beautiful and welcoming of dreamscapes.

NYRP was extremely privileged to work with such a sought-after figure, but what was so special about the relationship was Isabell's desire to work with NYRP. An avid supporter of NYRP's mission, Isabell believed that what he was able to accomplish in his professional life - creating beautiful designs for all to use and enjoy - is what NYRP is doing every day in green spaces throughout New York City. NYRP mourns the loss of this beloved artist and true gentleman.

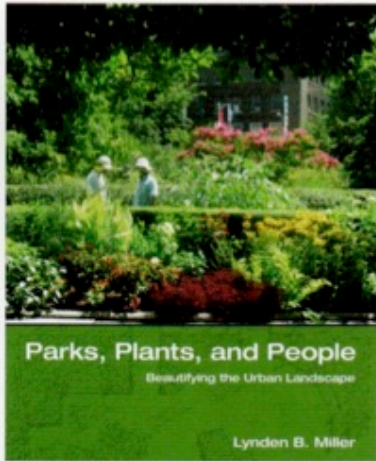




Bette's Book Corner

**Parks, Plants, and People: Beautifying the Urban Landscape**

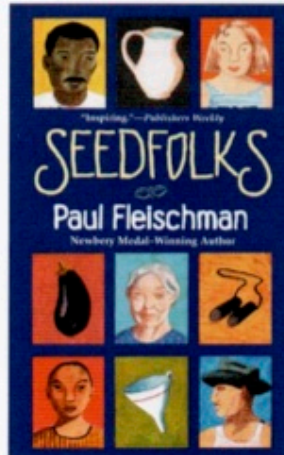
By Lynden Miller



As the "Godmother of New York City's public green spaces," Lynden Miller has led the creation or restoration of some of the city's most beloved gardens, including the Conservatory Garden in Central Park and Fort Tryon Park's Heather Garden. In this insightful and inspiring book, Miller recaps her high-profile projects to illustrate strategies for successful public green spaces, including such essentials as year-round horticultural interest, maintenance, volunteerism, advocacy and public/private partnerships. In the words of Bette Midler, "This book is a 'must-read'... it clearly demonstrates the healing power of nature and the economic boon to the welfare of cities." Miller has most recently provided a beautiful design for NYRP's Ann Richards Garden to be built adjacent to Swindler Cove Park along the Harlem River.

**Seedfolks**

By Paul Fleischman



This young-adult novel by Newbery Medalist Paul Fleischman tells the profoundly hopeful story of a blighted, abandoned lot in Cleveland and the immigrant residents who transform it. Among them are a Haitian boy, a British nurse and Kim, the Vietnamese girl who plants a few lima beans that inspire the community to pull together for its common good. This wonderful book recommendation comes from Diane Brownstone, who with her husband, Clyde, supported NYRP's first community garden restoration, Maggie's Garden, in Harlem. NYRP is currently giving this book to each of our Junior Naturalists to further inspire their creativity in greening New York City's open spaces.



On September 17, the posh new condominium 311 E 11: Village Green teamed up with Young Real Estate Professionals of New York (YREP) to toast and support NYRP's Junior Committee, The Buds. Guests enjoyed cocktails and live music, while networking and combining their passions in art and environmentalism. A silent art auction

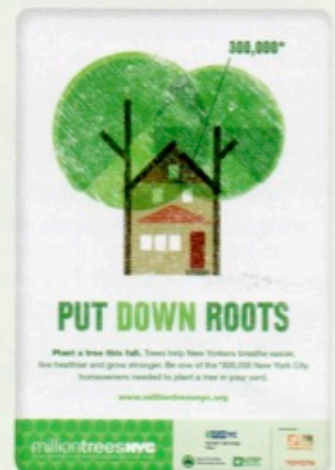


raised nearly \$2,000 for NYRP, all of which will go towards the MillionTreesNYC initiative to plant and care for one million new trees in New York City by 2017. While this was the first collaboration between NYRP and YREP, NYRP's dedication to green design and environmental friendly building promises it will not likely be the last!



**BEYOND BELEAF!**

This fall, MillionTreesNYC launched a city-wide public service announcement campaign that calls on New Yorkers to get involved in the initiative. The BEYOND BELEAF campaign celebrates the initiative's milestone of planting 250,000 trees, while inviting homeowners and residents to plant a tree, water newly planted trees, volunteer or donate at [www.milliontreesnyc.org](http://www.milliontreesnyc.org). The campaign gives an organic look to the MillionTreesNYC brand and can be seen throughout October and November in subway cars and buses and on subway platforms and bus shelters.







## Ways to Support NYRP...

### Give the Holiday Gift that Keeps on Growing

The most meaningful gift you can give this upcoming Hanukkah and Christmas season is the gift of green – have a tree planted for a family member, friend, co-worker or in honor of a loved one. Every tree gift will be part of the MillionTreesNYC initiative to plant and care for one million new trees throughout the five boroughs by 2017.

With each gift of \$100 or more, you receive a festively packaged, personalized certificate – signed by Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg and NYRP founder Better Midler – that is ready to place in your office grab bag or holiday stocking. And even the certificate itself is helping our environment – plant the

enclosed formulated seed paper in a backyard or window box and watch your flowers grow.

Your holiday tree gift will provide many benefits – cleaner air and water, reduced energy costs and more beautiful streets and neighborhoods. It is truly a gift that keeps on giving to both the recipient and to all New Yorkers. To gift a tree, visit [www.nyrp.org](http://www.nyrp.org).



### A Little Green Every Month Makes a Big Difference

Greening New York City is a team effort, and you can help by becoming a member of NYRP's Green Team. Our new online giving program makes it quick and easy for you to donate by having automatic payments deducted monthly from your credit card – allowing you to support NYRP's cleaning and greening efforts year-round and in a bigger way. Just \$20/month (\$240/year) will provide educational materials for an entire classroom, tools for a community garden or buy and plant a large tree! Become a Green Team member today by signing up online at [www.nyrp.org](http://www.nyrp.org).

**NYRP  
GREEN  
TEAM**

Join NYRP's online community and follow us as we green New York City... one block at a time!



Discover NYRP's parks and gardens, community programs and events at: [www.nyrp.org](http://www.nyrp.org)

**facebook**

Follow NYRP on Facebook at: [www.facebook.com/nyrpgreen](http://www.facebook.com/nyrpgreen)

**twitter**

Connect with NYRP on Twitter at: [www.twitter.com/nyrp](http://www.twitter.com/nyrp)

### Dine at New Leaf Restaurant & Bar



restaurant & bar

Dining at NYRP's renowned New Leaf Restaurant & Bar is just another way you can support NYRP's restoration and greening efforts citywide. Located in Northern Manhattan, the restaurant's net proceeds help NYRP clean and maintain our 55 community gardens and four NYC parks.

This autumn, come enjoy Fort Tryon Park's fall colors and Executive Chef Scott Campbell's acclaimed Saturday and Sunday brunch, as well as his lunch and dinner signature dishes. Each fall and winter season, New Yorkers make a special trip to this forested destination to enjoy Campbell's famous Valrhona hot chocolate. Visitors are also drawn each weekend to the New Leaf for its complimentary live jazz performances, offered each Friday evening.



For reservations, call 212.568.5323  
One Margaret Corbin Drive, Fort Tryon Park  
Free parking; For directions or more information, visit [www.nyrp.org/newleaf](http://www.nyrp.org/newleaf)

Lunch: Tuesday through Friday, 12:00 noon to 3:30 p.m.  
Dinner: Tuesday through Saturday, 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.  
Sunday, 5:30 to 9:30 pm  
Brunch: Saturday and Sunday, 11:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.