*We invite you to participate in our*

“Plant a Legacy” Program

*….. to restore and sustain plant diversity within our Park.*

The majestic old trees of Governor Dick Park lure us to walk among them, to rest awhile, to breathe deeply of the woodland scent. Many species of wildlife find refuge here. It is a wonderful place for recreation of various kinds. These natural resources are protected and conserved, a gift to the community long ago by Clarence Schock.

The managers of the forest resources at Governor Dick Park are committed to keeping the land forest forever. However, the Park has many challenges. Our large old trees are doing what old trees do – they die. Several trees species within the Park have fallen prey to invasive insects. For example, our white ash trees are falling prey to the **emerald ash borer**. We will likely lose most of this species within the Park soon because there is no viable cure to save them, not within the Park, not within our entire state, nor beyond.

The **spotted lanternfly** is our newest threat. (*Google* highlighted terms for more information.)

When a tree dies, sunlight can reach the forest floor, inviting species of invasive plants to compete with our natural flora and fauna. Sunlight encourages acorns and other tree seeds to sprout and grow, but our deer browse those seedlings and kill them. The chance for natural regeneration within the Park under these conditions is grim.

In response, Governor Dick Park is taking on a new initiative to renew and sustain the health of our forest by planting substitute species for those which we are losing. *We invite you to participate in our* ***“Plant a Legacy” Program*** *with the goal of restoring and sustaining plant diversity within our Park.* With this program, we hope to plant, with your help, 10,000 conifers within Governor Dick Park. The endeavor may take a while, but in the end we may all enjoy a legacy of reaping what we sow.

Governor Dick Park is making available white spruce *(Picea glauca)* seedlings for you and your family to plant at Governor Dick. Why plant this species?

* For more than a decade an invasive insect called the **hemlock woolly adelgid** has killed off nearly all the majestic hemlock trees which once were found at Governor Dick. By planting these white spruce seedlings, we are attempting to introduce a substitute conifer tree to the Park to once again provide nesting opportunities, shelter and food for a wider variety of wildlife.
* The nature of white spruce is to grow slowly and persist under the canopy of the older trees until an opportunity is created for them to flourish in newly found sunlight provided by the canopy opening.
* White spruce can tolerate the presence of deer as deer usually will not eat them, and there are a lot of deer at Governor Dick!
* Wildlife prefers a “buffet” with choices for shelter, nesting sites, and food. Diversity of tree species will bring a diversity of wildlife species.
* These growth traits and advantages mean that white spruce can be planted virtually anywhere within the Park with a high probability of survival.

***Where to plant:*** (Please plant anywhere you desire using the following suggestions)

* Our governing forest management plan suggests planting seedlings within 50 feet of either side of any trail located here at Gov. Dick. Please take a few steps (and more) off the trail before planting.
* If planting a group of seedlings: Clustered groups of 10 to 50 seedlings can be planted randomly from 6 to 20 feet apart. Variable seedling densities allow wildlife to pick what is best for them.
* Plant under the biggest trees you can find in the forest. These large trees are more likely to succumb to mortality sooner than others thus creating a huge void in the canopy when they die and fall.
* Try to imagine your seedling as a fully grown, big, beautiful tree 30 or more years into the future. This is your legacy tree…. YOU planted it…. YOU know where it is…. maybe your family and friends know where it is…. maybe your future children will someday know where it is. That is the beauty of sharing in the legacy
* program at Governor Dick. YOU participated…. YOU are a part of it!
* Making a donation for the Legacy Program will help us defray our expenses.

***How to plant:*** (Plan the event in advance if possible.)

Tools? For 1 to 20 seedlings, find a stick from the woods, or bring a small hand spade.

**Planting Steps:**

STEP 1: Remove the duff or leafy/humus layer to expose the bare soil about 1 foot in diameter.

STEP 2: Dig/punch a hole as close to the size of the seedling plug (i.e. root or dirt mass size) as possible in the exposed soil.

STEP 3: Insert seedling into the ground to the root collar leaving no roots/dirt plug exposed above ground. Do not plant deeper that the root collar.

STEP 4: Firm soil with your fingers and hands around the root collar and

below it making sure that no air space remains in the planting cavity.

STEP 5: Water seedling if planted in dry or hot conditions such as mid-summer. Watering is usually not necessary in the spring and fall seasons at Governor Dick.

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THEN, WATCH IT GROW WITH EVERY VISIT!!!

\*The seedlings are located at the Environmental Center’s parking lot in the oval of trees between the two lots.

(Contact us if you would like your large group to participate in a planting project.)