

Trees New York Turns over a New Leaf after Fifty Years

Fall Mixer overlooking Central Park caps a milestone anniversary as Trees New York gets ready to take its urban mission across the city for City of Forest Day

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, October 1, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Fifty years after New Yorkers first came together to protect the city's trees during one of its most challenging eras, Trees New York marked the conclusion of its golden anniversary celebrations with a Fall Mixer at The Arsenal overlooking Central Park on September 23rd and turned its attention toward the next generation of New Yorkers who will care for the city's urban forest.

The evening brought together supporters, volunteers, Citizen Pruners, community partners and friends of Trees New York to celebrate an organization that has spent five decades planting, preserving and protecting New York City's trees through education and community participation.

Founded in 1976 as a volunteer response to severe city cutbacks in forestry and tree-related community services, Trees New York has grown into one of the city's leading tree stewardship and advocacy organizations. During its 50-year history, it has trained more than 13,500 Citizen Pruners and 9,000 young people in tree care and stewardship. In the past decade alone, the organization says it has planted more than 5,000 trees in underserved communities across New York City.



Trees New York 50th Logo



KCC Team and City of Forest Day (Photo Credit: Neha Gautam)

The anniversary celebration also highlighted the distinctly New York idea at the heart of the organization: Caring for the urban forest is not solely the job of arborists and government agencies. Residents can become active stewards of the trees outside their homes, businesses and schools. Trees New York remains the only institution designated by NYC Parks to train and license New Yorkers to legally prune city street trees through its Citizen Pruner program.

That community-driven mission now moves from celebration back into action with the fifth annual City of Forest Day on Saturday, October 3rd, 2026 a citywide celebration designed to raise awareness of New York City's urban forest, and the role residents can play in caring for it. Presented by Forest for All NYC in partnership with the Parks and Open Space Partners coalition and NYC Parks, the day will feature activities throughout the five boroughs.

"City of Forest Day is New York City's largest celebration of trees," said Nelson Villarrubia, executive director of Trees New York. "The event brings thousands of New Yorkers together to spend the day under the city's tree canopy. Trees are vital to the health, resilience and vitality of our city, and all of us at Trees New York are excited to connect with our incredible volunteers and Citizen Pruners. City of Forest Day is the perfect moment to shine a spotlight on the power of trees — and to invite all New Yorkers to roll up their sleeves, have fun and explore the urban forest."

Trees New York will help bring that mission to life through events in neighborhoods around the city.

In Carnegie Hill, Trees New York and Carnegie Hill Neighbors will host Plant, Learn & Care for Carnegie Hill from 11:00am to 1:00pm at the Carnegie Hill Neighbors Pocket Park at East 97th Street and Park Avenue. The family-friendly gathering will include bulb planting, tree care



Nelson Villarrubia Trees New York Fall Mixer (Photo Credit: Neha Gautam)



Margaret, Doug and Rodney (Photo Credit: Neha Gautam)

information, children's activities and an opportunity to meet members of the neighborhood's Tree Pruning Team. Carnegie Hill Neighbors will also make 275 daffodil bulbs available through the Daffodil Project to small buildings and local businesses to support neighborhood tree pit gardens.

Across the East River in Brooklyn, Trees New York will invite participants to see the urban forest through an arborist's eyes during a guided tree walk at The Evergreens Cemetery, an ArbNet Level II Arboretum. Led by Trees New York Board Certified Master Arborist Sam Bishop, the approximately 1-mile walk will explore some of the cemetery's distinctive trees and identify species to watch as New York's fall colors emerge. The walk runs from 10:00am to 11:30am and advance registration is required.



Carnegie Hill Neighbors City of Forest Day (Photo Credit: Neha Gautam)

Later that afternoon, the celebration reaches Roosevelt Island's Lighthouse Park, where iDig2Learn and Main Street Theatre & Dance Alliance will welcome choreographer Jody Sperling and the Time Lapse Dance ensemble for a 2:30pm performance connecting movement, nature and environmental change. The 45-minute program includes "Arbor," exploring the hidden intimacy of trees; "Plastic Harvest," examining society's relationship with plastic and waste; and "Rise," a work in progress considering humanity's changing relationship with water.

Trees New York is also participating in additional City of Forest Day activities, including neighborhood tree stewardship in Boerum Hill and other community-based programs, extending the celebration from appreciating the urban forest to actively caring for it.

For Trees New York, City of Forest Day provides an appropriate bridge between a milestone anniversary and what comes next. The organization that began with volunteers responding to a city in crisis in 1976 enters its second half-century with the same fundamental idea: New York's trees are essential infrastructure, but their future also depends on New Yorkers willing to care for them.

For more information about the City of Forest Day, please visit: <https://forestforall.nyc/city-of-forest-day/>

About Trees New York:

Celebrating their 50th anniversary in 2026, Trees New York (TreesNY) is a 501(c)3 environmental nonprofit organization. TreesNY's mission is to plant, preserve and protect New York City's urban

forest through education, active citizen participation and advocacy.

For more information, please visit: www.treesny.org

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