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## Another green year for Red Hook

By: James J. Skeggs , Staff Reporter

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RED HOOK - The Village of Red Hook has been named a Tree City, USA community by the National Arbor Day Foundation for the fifth year in a row. The recognition is to honor Red Hook's commitment to community forestry.

Red Hook had to meet four standards to be recognized as a Tree City, USA community. Those standards include incorporating a tree board or department, a tree care ordinance, a comprehensive community forestry program, and an Arbor Day observance.

"Trees in our cities and towns help clean the air, conserve soil and water, moderate temperature and bring nature into our daily lives," said John Rosenow, president of the National Arbor Day Foundation, in a prepared statement. "Tree City, USA designation recognizes the work of elected officials, staff and citizens who plant and care for the community forest."

The Village of Red Hook's tree board, the Village Green, is dedicated to beautifying and ensuring the ecological health of the village. A total of 135 trees have been planted throughout Red Hook since Village Green was formed in the spring of 2002.

"We pride ourselves in our trees," explained Jen Melitski of the Red Hook Village Green Committee. "We try to plant about 45-60 trees each year, depending on how many trees we have to replace."

According to Dutchess County Legislator David Seymour (R-Red Hook), approximately 30 trees have to be cut down this year because of disease or other liability issues.

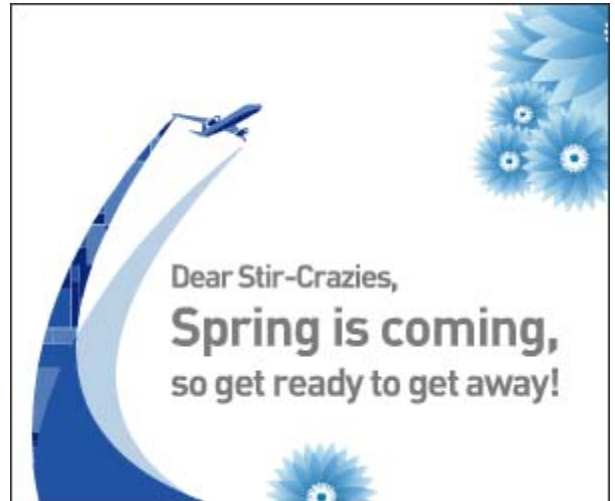
"We have an old tree population and are faced with this dilemma every year," said Seymour. "It's a never-ending battle, but we can't have diseased trees, and if we do they have to be dealt with in a very timely manner."

Even though they have to face these challenges, the Village of Red Hook has still maintained the ability to be recognized as a Tree City, USA for five years straight. Seymour says for the village to earn the recognition again next year, they have to continue to get out and plan, organize, and plant.

The Village Green organizes two plantings each year, one in the spring and one in the fall.

To learn more or get involved with the Village Green, visit their Web site at [www.redhooknyvillage.org/villagegreen](http://www.redhooknyvillage.org/villagegreen), or e-mail Jen Melitski at [jmelitski@yahoo.com](mailto:jmelitski@yahoo.com).

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