

**Tree planting and dedication of
Cladrastis kentukea Yellowwood Tree
Ornamental and Native Tree Walk**

**Bon Air Park, Arlington
May 25, 2012, at 12 noon
In honor of**

John Bottum

Biography

- Born 1935.
- Raised on a general commercial livestock farm in central South Dakota in the heart of the Depression and the center of the Dust Bowl.
- Graduated from South Dakota State College in 1957 with BS in Ag Economics and Animal Husbandry.
- Worked briefly with the USDA Crop & Livestock Reporting Service in Lafayette, Indiana before entering Purdue University as a full-time grad student in the fall of 1957.
- Earned his Master's and PhD in Ag Economics from Purdue.
- Served on the faculty of Ohio State University from 1962 to 1970, spending the first 4 years as a Professor of Ag. Policy and Rural Development and the next 4 as the State Leader for Community Resource Development with the Ohio Extension Service.
- Moved to Virginia in 1970 to become USDA's first Assistant Administrator for Rural Development.
- The creation of that new position made Rural Development equal for the first time to the other 3 pillars of Extension – Agriculture, Home Economics, and 4-H.
- After 12 years as the Asst Administrator, became the Deputy Director for Planning and Evaluation, which involved helping to develop plans in all 50 states.
- That led into additional Strategic Planning projects and his ongoing work to promote and value diversity.
- He became an advocate for gay and lesbian equal rights within USDA.
- And he was one of 13 people appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture to work on addressing past injustices to African American farmers - to not only study the issues and hold hearings but to make recommendations and implement them. All 92 of their recommendations were adopted.
- John retired from USDA in 2000, but stayed on another year part-time to help implement these recommendations and rewrite the regulations.
- During retirement, in addition to his active participation in the Master Gardeners and Tree Steward programs, and the Extension Leadership Council, John has also enjoyed sailing and traveling with his family, as well as volunteer activities with his Church, the Arlington Committee of 100, several local theaters, and various political campaigns.
- John and his wife, Cherie, celebrated their 50th Anniversary last year, and they have two children, Angela and Stephen.

***Cladrastis kentukea* Yellowwood** (photo Ginny Sheller)





Proposed stone and memorial plaque in honor of John Bottum next to Yellowwood tree planted May 2012

Location in Bon Air Park

Yellowwood planted in honor of John Bottum May 2012
Site of stone and proposed memorial plaque

Yellowwood planted in honor of John Bottum May 2012



View from the trail:
Bon Air
Native and Ornamental
Tree Walk



Proposed location:
stone with memorial
plaque next to
Yellowwood Tree



Proposed wording on
the memorial plaque:

THIS NATIVE YELLOWWOOD
(*Cladastris kentuckea*)
WAS PLANTED IN MAY 2012

In Honor of

JOHN S. BOTTUM
CITIZEN ACTIVIST AND
COMMUNITY LEADER

DEEPLY COMMITTED TO VOLUNTEERING WITH
MASTER GARDENERS OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
TREE STEWARDS,
ARLINGTON COMMITTEE OF 100,
AND OTHERS TO MAKE ARLINGTON COUNTY
A MORE VIBRANT COMMUNITY

1935 - 2012

Natural Resources agents, and volunteered in the Bon Air Park, at the Master Gardener Demonstration Gardens: the Sunny Garden and the Shade Garden.

While working at the grassroots level in Arlington, John also volunteered on the State Extension Leadership Council and on the Arlington & Alexandria Extension Leadership Council. He was active as the State Advocacy chair for Extension, asking legislators to continue funding for Extension throughout the state and locally here in Arlington.

In May 2012, John and his family with characteristic generosity hosted pruning sessions at their home so that Master Gardeners and Tree Stewards could meet, enjoy the company, the beautiful garden and learn to prune.

John's colleagues already have worked with the County to plant a tree in John's honor. "John's Tree" is a native yellowwood planted in Bon Air Tree Garden on May 25, 2012 overlooking the Rose Garden. Thanks to Patrick Wegeng (County Landscape specialist) and others for enabling the tree-planting.

We, the Arlington & Alexandria Extension Leadership Council and representatives from Tree Stewards and Master Gardeners and other supporters, have the honor now to request approval from the County Board, Department of Parks and Recreation, the Park and Recreation Commission and others that a plaque also be placed near the yellowwood tree in living memory and tribute to John Bottum for his many significant contributions to our community.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Mary Van Dyke (sponsor)
Chair, Arlington & Alexandria Extension Leadership Council

Details of memorial plaque and stone at Bon Air Tree garden in John Bottum's memory.

The place selected for the stone is next to the Yellowwood tree that has already been planted in John Bottum's honor in the Bon Air Tree Garden overlooking the Four Mile Run stream with a view to the Bon Air Rose Garden.

John Bottum's widow, Mrs Cherie Bottum, has generously agreed to fund the cost of the memorial plaque. Plaque to be bronze, single border, "leather-look" background and stud-mounted onto stone.

The Department of Parks and Recreation has agreed to provide a stone from their supply.

Bronze plaque (10" x 12" portrait size) from A & R Engravers, Arlington

Funded by Mrs Cherie Bottum: \$ 525

Time from order 4 - 6 weeks

County installation cost estimated to be: \$ 500

Total estimated cost: \$ 1025

Proposed wording for the plaque:

THIS NATIVE YELLOWWOOD
(Cladrastis kentukea)
WAS PLANTED IN MAY 2012
IN HONOR OF
JOHN S. BOTTUM
CITIZEN ACTIVIST AND
COMMUNITY LEADER

DEEPLY COMMITTED TO VOLUNTEERING WITH
MASTER GARDENERS OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
TREE STEWARDS,
ARLINGTON COMMITTEE OF 100,
AND OTHERS TO MAKE ARLINGTON COUNTY
A MORE VIBRANT COMMUNITY

1935 - 2012

Copy attached of Tree Planting and Dedication notes in honor of John Bottum, May 25, 2012

Location Site Plan and Photos for the Proposed Memorial Plaque and Stone online at:
<https://docs.google.com/file/d/0BwBQ0686r6g-S3czcFV0Qzd0Nnc/edit>



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From:

Arlington & Alexandria Extension Leadership Council
% Virginia Cooperative Extension
3308 S Stafford Street
Arlington
VA 22206

To:

Arlington County Park and Recreation Commission
Historical Affairs Landmark and Review Board
Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee
Bluemont Civic Association

Cc:

Arlington County Department of Parks and Recreation
DPR staff and staff liaison

Date: October 28, 2013

Request for Approval: Memorial Plaque in honor of John Bottum (1935 - 2012)

Dear Commissioners, Board, Committee and Association Members

The Arlington & Alexandria Extension Leadership Council (ELC) is pleased to sponsor a memorial plaque on a stone at Bon Air Tree Garden in honor and memory of John Bottum, in recognition of his many contributions to the Arlington community. The enclosed provides details regarding this request.

I, Mary Van Dyke, am the Arlington & Alexandria Extension Leadership Council's point of contact for this request. You may contact me at 571 425 5278 or via email at maryvandyke4@gmail.com.

Sincerely

Mary Van Dyke
Chair, Arlington & Alexandria Extension Leadership Council

Enclosures

cc: Department of Parks and Recreation
Ms Diane Probus
Mr Patrick Wegeng



**Virginia
Cooperative
Extension**

Virginia Tech
Virginia State University
www.ext.vt.edu

John S. Bottum (1935 - 2012)

John Bottum's contribution to our community, at local, state and national level was significant, and continues to benefit many people in Arlington every day. John worked for the Extension Service of the USDA for 41 years, and in 1982 became Deputy Director for Planning and Evaluation. John helped to develop strategic plans in all 50 states to promote diversity and he vigorously led efforts to advocate for equal rights for lesbian and gay people within USDA.

Further, the Secretary of Agriculture appointed John to a new task force addressing past injustices to African American farmers. The task force not only studied these issues and held regional hearings around the country, they also delivered 92 recommendations all of which were adopted.

Local Community Service Contributions

Following his retirement in 2000, John traded community service on a national scale for hands-on involvement in many organizations making a difference at the local level.

Committee of One Hundred: John brought his attention to detail and outreach skills to the organization of Committee of One Hundred meetings. Arlington's principal forum for citizen education in local and regional public affairs since its founding in 1954, the Committee strives to build bridges between our many socio-economic, business, cultural and educational groups. In response to Arlington's ever changing needs and diverse population, the members and speakers discuss local, regional and state issues at monthly dinner meetings in an atmosphere that permits communication to replace conflict. John with charm and efficiency contributed to this spirit.

Rock Spring Congregational United Church of Christ: John was an advocate and active leader in his church, especially in areas relating to social justice. He was a member of the Open and Affirming Committee, educating the congregation so that they voted to become an Open and Affirming Church, welcoming of all people, inclusive of sexual orientation.

Theatre: John also enthusiastically volunteered for many years at the Signature and Studio Theatres.

Local Politics: John played an active role in Democratic campaigns.

Cooperative Extension, Extension-sponsored Programs and Extension Leadership

Councils: John, on retirement from the USDA and the national Extension Service and with his expertise in strategic planning, capacity for community outreach and research-based knowledge of natural resources and agricultural practices made his "second career" with our local Cooperative Extension and Extension-sponsored programs. John trained as a Master Gardener in 2000, and as a Tree Steward in 2002, and he continued until the time of his death to contribute to the Arlington community, donating countless hours of volunteer work in these Cooperative Extension programs. John could often be found on a Saturday morning at the Courthouse Farmers' Market answering questions from the public at the Master Gardener clinic table. He then did much of the liaison work to help establish a Tree Stewards table at these Saturday markets. John also served as an excellent and appreciated mentor to our Agriculture and