

**TREE MUSKETEERS
FINAL REPORT
FOREST SERVICE GRANT NO. 04-DG-11052021-105**
Period covered by this report: July 1 through September 30, 2005

Issued to: Tree Musketeers
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Abstract

TREE MUSKETEERS published *Marcie the Marvelous Tree: An Autobiography* in English and Spanish. The 32 page hardcover book is intended to be read by 1st - 3rd graders and as a picture book by younger children, though it is enjoyed by all ages. While it is somewhat unusual for a tree to write its life story, you will quickly learn from the book that Marcie is no ordinary sycamore. The colorful illustrations awaken a new awareness in young readers of trees while informing about urban forestry and inspiring youth to take action in their communities. A glossary explains key environmental and urban forestry terms.

The second part of this project produced How-To Kits packed with leadership and urban forestry information for national youth groups. Each Kit is outfitted with a customized grid to demonstrate how members can satisfy badge requirements and advance in their group in the course of conducting urban forestry projects. The goal is to help busy leaders incorporate urban forestry into the group activities for large numbers of youth nationwide.

Project objectives:

This project was certainly a great adventure! We learned more than we ever wanted to know about the publishing game, politics among the large national youth groups, and data management. We also learned that our dreams of publishing Marcie's book and the Badge Kits were well founded in a public need. In spite of several bumps in the road, the project came in on time with no shortcomings and even a few embellishments.

Marcie the Marvelous Tree: An Autobiography has been enthusiastically received well beyond our expectations. While only a small percentage of the report card style evaluations have been returned thus far, the book has been "graded" quite highly. Of the 506 check marks on report cards received, 13 were C's, 86 were B's, and 407 or 80% were A's. See attached evaluation summary.

Project objective: Publish 4,000 copies: 3,000 in English and 1,000 in Spanish
Actual Results: With printing overage, 1,140 Spanish and 3,020 English books were printed.

Project objective: Distribute 1,000 copies of the book to 50 Urban Forestry Councils, 50 Urban Forest Coordinators, 300 tree groups and local libraries; promote book via readings and speaking engagements.

Actual Results:

- ☺ 1,093 books were distributed to 301 tree groups, Urban Forestry Councils, Urban Forest Coordinators, State Foresters, NUCFAC members, and others listed on TreeLink; 147 educators; 196 libraries; and people related to the project in all U.S. states and territories during the grant period.
- ☺ A major fiasco occurred in August when our data base crashed. Repair by volunteers failed, so the file spent a week at the computer hospital. Data was safely restored, but not in a format we could use. Another huge delay in finalizing the mailing list occurred while we waited for help from the volunteer who constructed the data base for us. In the interim, one of our youth interns was able to import the forms necessary from a back up.
- ☺ Books were primarily distributed in sets with one of each version. English versions of the book were stuffed with a report card, Count On Kids insert, cover letter, and Baby Marcie seed packets. Spanish versions contained only the seed packet which was also in Spanish. We had a little mishap with a volunteer who inadvertently mailed perhaps a dozen books from the wrong box that had not been stuffed.
- ☺ 14 classroom, public library and church group readings took place during the grant period along with 3 speeches at public meetings. See attached calendar of events. 3 Spanish version books will go to the impoverished town of Guyamas, Mexico for each of their school libraries. This is El Segundo's Sister City, and our Mayor has pledged to present the books during a February visit with a reading to local children.

Badge How-To Kits seemed like a good idea to us, and four of the five target groups think so too. As word oozed out that Kits were in progress, requests began coming in even from Campfire groups whose national headquarters had opted out of the project.

Project objective: Produce 500 urban forestry Badge How-To Kits designed specifically for Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, 4-H, FFA and Campfire.

Actual Results:

- ☹ Materials for 500 kits are on hand, but we only assembled the first 100 since we do not know how many of each group are going to request them. The remainder will be prepared on an as needed basis.
- ☹ Headquarters staff for Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, 4-H and FFA all welcomed the idea of an urban forestry kit geared to fit their particular advancement program. Campfire ultimately decided that they did not want outsiders interpreting their programs, but invited a generic kit that they will help promote. To that end, we updated the Hometown Forests Kit not only for Campfire, but Y-Guides and others.
- ☹ We were late getting the kits out due to the data base fiasco, so no report cards have yet been received.

Objectives met successfully: Additional items added to the timeline below are in *italics*.

- ✓ Firm up timeline with collaborators
- ✓ Strategy for book artwork class
- ✓ Order youth group badge books
- NOVEMBER**
- ✓ Convert book manuscript into MS Word
- ✓ Contact national youth group headquarters
- ✓ Youth Management Team review and guidance
- DECEMBER**
- ✓ Update book
- ✓ Research for book glossary
- JANUARY**
- ✓ Conduct book art classes
- ✓ Book manuscript to reviewers
- ✓ Research for badge kits
- ✓ *NUCFAC Interim Report*
- FEBRUARY**
- ✓ Select art for book illustrations
- ✓ *Conduct book art classes*
- ✓ Edit book manuscript per reviewer feedback
- ✓ Develop book glossary
- MARCH**
- ✓ Book to editors for final review
- ✓ *Additional round of reviewer feedback*
- ✓ *Meet with designers about layout*
- ✓ *Consultations with the printer*
- ✓ *Groups of children review book*
- ✓ *Group think on layout*
- ✓ Revise/finalize book art
- ✓ *Conduct book art classes*
- ✓ Gather scientific information for badge kits
- ✓ Begin writing materials for badge kits
- APRIL**
- ✓ NUCFAC Interim Report
- ✓ *Book pagination*
- ✓ Finalize book manuscript
- ✓ *Identify translator*
- ✓ Spanish translation of book
- ✓ Create book mockup

- ✓ Groups of children review book
- ✓ Format draft materials for badge kits
- ✓ *Define Historic Tree Nursery partnership*

MAY

- ✓ Book pre-printing production
- ✓ Design/print Count on Kids book insert
- ✓ Design book evaluation instrument
- ✓ Identify outreach channels for badge kits
- ✓ Badge kits to arborist for edits/feedback

JUNE

- ✓ Marcie Book to printer
- ✓ Promote book in tree-related media
- ✓ Badge kit materials to printer
- ✓ *Research and register for ISBN number*

JULY

- ✓ Four Marcie book events
- ✓ Compile mailing list for free book copies
- ✓ Volunteers assemble badge kits
- ✓ Build badge kit web page
- ✓ *NUCFAC Interim Report*
- ✓ *Receive seed packets*

AUGUST

- ✓ Build Marcie Book web page
- ✓ *Distribute books at CA ReLeaf retreat*
- ✓ Four Marcie book events
- ✓ Compose book cover letter
- ✓ Compile book promotion mailing list
- ✓ Badge kit web page goes live
- ✓ Send sample kits to groups/contacts

SEPTEMBER

- ✓ Marcie book web page goes live
- ✓ Two Marcie book events
- ✓ Mail free Marcie books
- ✓ Follow up on sample kits and pursue promotion by each group

OCTOBER

- ✓ NUCFAC final report

Objectives not met: All objectives have been achieved.

List the major research or policy findings of your project? n/a

If not apparent in the above, or if your project did not involve research, how did the project increase the knowledge we have about urban forestry? How did (will) the public benefit?

This project was designed to increase the public's knowledge about urban forestry, specifically among young people who want to help their communities and the environment. Through the dramatic tale of Marcie the Marvelous Tree's journey to self-fulfillment, young readers learn the important roles trees play in our global and community ecosystems, while they receive the message that even young children can be active in urban forestry. The Spanish version is an effective outreach and education mechanism for the Hispanic community. How-to kits take the involvement a step further by helping youth learn, step by step, why trees are a significant natural resource and how they can grow and nurture urban forests through their own action.

We believe that youth is a key, though under-represented, demographic for urban forestry. By helping young people understand the issues, we improve public awareness. Beyond that, our goal is to inspire young people to expand their urban forests and take care of the trees in their communities. To the extent that this happens, the public benefits from growing, healthy urban forests.

What recommendations might you make for community foresters or others who might benefit from your project?

We hope that the urban forest community will use Marcie's book as a means to engage and educate young children, and enrich Arbor Day activities. It is also hoped that a heightened level of consciousness will evolve for tree groups as to the potential for youth leadership. Children are a powerful force in families, and by extension, in communities. Statisticians say that children influence 80% of purchases in this country, including large items such as cars. It only makes sense that well informed young citizens will add power to the local and national urban forestry cause.

Attach copies of reports, publications, or videos. If your work has been published (journals, popular press, etc.), provide where they have been published or reported and how copies can be obtained.

Copies of both the English and Spanish versions of the book have been mailed to NUCFAC members. Enclosed please find:

- How-To Kits (Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, 4-H, FFA and Hometown Forests)
- Count On Kids card, Baby Marcie seed packet, cover letter and report card stuffed into books distributed thus far.
- News release
- News story

How were your results disseminated to the public?

Enclosed please find a book distribution list and calendar of book events. How-To Kits have been sent to national youth group headquarters, Los Angeles area councils for the various groups, and leaders who have requested them. The availability of both is highlighted on our web site.

What are the logical next steps or future direction of your project/research?

Remaining Kits will be on hand for distribution as requests come in resulting from both internal and external promotion and outreach. This subject for the book will be taken up by our Youth Management Team in the near future who will present their plan to our Board of Directors in December.

List the active partners (key individuals or organizations) involved in the project:

- Thomas Ogren, author of numerous books including children's books, taught landscape gardening in a CYA prison, and worked with the Cooperative Extension.
- James Fazio, Associate Dean of the College of Forestry at the University of Idaho is a widely published author of books, papers and articles who holds a special interest in youth programs and environmental education.
- Francziska Steagall, Assistant Principal and Dean of Enrichment at Kayne Eras Center, where students have special needs ranging from physical to emotional and behavioral.
- Stacia Costa, librarian for Meadows Elementary School in Manhattan Beach, California, and an avid environmentalist.
- Historic Tree Nursery produced Baby Marcie seed packets in both English and Spanish to be inserted into the books distributed during the grant period.
- Andy Trotter of West Coast Arborists is not only a certified arborist, but also a lifetime Boy Scout who consulted on the Kits.
- Group 22 is a high-end communications firm that performed pre-production on the book pro bono with the exception of hard costs.
- Northrop Grumman provided a matching gift of \$15,000.
- The Boeing Company provided a matching gift of \$7,500.

Photo or Illustration: If possible, please provide a photo or illustration for our use that summarizes or represents the project. Indicate how this illustration should be credited.

Photos have been forwarded electronically. All should be credited "courtesy of Tree Musketeers."

If a no-cost time extension was granted for this project, why was it needed? n/a

How would you evaluate the grant process? What changes, if any, would you recommend?

Suzy del Villar, Sandy Macias and Nancy Lollar were all fabulous facilitators for our project. The grant process was smooth and efficient until the grant payment transition to Albuquerque. I assume the kinks will be worked out there in short order.

Comments considered of importance but not covered above:

The original vision of how this project would unfold only included volunteers for artwork and stuffing kits. As it turned out, volunteers were engaged most every step of the way from researching to reviewing, book events, mailing, data management, and outreach. This and additional staff time explains in large part the additional \$12,000 in matching funds.

This report was prepared by:

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Date: October 7, 2005