



How to Spruce Up Your Arbor Day

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BULLETIN

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Arbor Day is opportunity. It is a time to add more trees to our communities that are so much in need of expanded green canopies and the benefits they provide. It is a time to bring people together for a cause that crosses all boundaries of politics, religion or social status. It is the opportunity to educate children and adults about trees and tree care. And for tree boards and professionals in the green industries, it provides priceless exposure to what we do and why.

Few remember the deeds of J. Sterling Morton as Secretary of Agriculture in the administration of President Grover Cleveland. And few care about the fiery editorials he wrote while at the helm of the *Nebraska City News*. What we remember about J. Sterling Morton is his visionary idea for a day set apart to plant trees. Arbor Day is his monument, and nothing would please him more.

The idea Morton presented to the Nebraska State Board of Agriculture in 1872 resulted in one million trees being planted later that year on the first Arbor Day. More than that,

Arbor Day became an annual event that quickly spread to all corners of the nation and even overseas. Today, thousands of Tree City USA communities celebrate the holiday and undoubtedly many others that have not yet attained a Tree City USA award.

Arbor Day is a true grass roots idea and not something promulgated from the halls of Congress. It is a community event ranging from a small gathering of school children to week-long celebrations involving thousands of people with side events featuring artists, musicians, and all the flair of a tourism promotion.

There is no right or wrong way to celebrate Arbor Day, the only 'requirement' being that trees are planted. The Arbor Day Foundation honors and appreciates each and every event. However, in this edition of the Bulletin, we issue the challenge to think of how you might do something different next year. Change may not come easy, but a fresh look at your event may result in greater participation and renewed interest. Here are some ideas about how to make a good event even better.



Arbor Day Foundation®
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