



# ARBOR DAY

## P L A N N I N G G U I D E

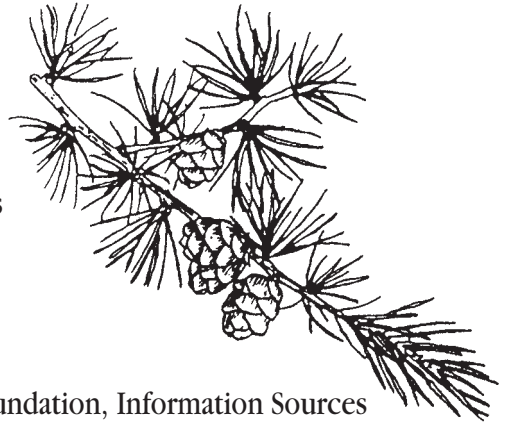
Plant A Memory, Plant A Tree. Do It Today! For Tomorrow.  
*Planta Un Recuerdo. Planta Un Arbol. ¡Hazlo Hoy! Para El Mañana.*  
Native Trees Are The Answer. *Arboles Nativos Es la Respuesta.*

February 2008



# ARBOR DAY PLANNING GUIDE

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## Poems About Trees

### TREES

I think that I shall never see  
 A poem as lovely as a tree  
 A tree whose hungry mouth is pressed  
 Against the earth's sweet flowing breast;  
 A tree that looks at God all day  
 And lifts her leafy arms to pray;  
 A tree that may in summer wear  
 A nest of robins in her hair;  
 Upon whose bosom snow has lain;  
 Who intimately lives with rain.  
 Poems are made by fools like me,  
 But only God can make a tree.  
 — Joyce Kilmer



### AN ARBOR DAY TREE

*(for four small children)*

ALL: "Dear little tree that we plant today,  
 What will you be when we're old and gray?"  
 FIRST: "The savings bank of the squirrel and mouse,  
 For the robin and wren and apartment house."  
 SECOND: "The dressing room of the butterfly's ball,  
 The locust's and katydid's concert hall."  
 THIRD: "The school boy's ladder in pleasant June,  
 The school girl's tent in the July noon."  
 FOURTH: "And my leaves shall whisper right merrily,  
 A tale of children who planted me."  
 — Author Unknown

### BLESSING THE NEIGHBORHOOD

What does he plant who plants a tree  
 He plants, in sap and leaf and wood,  
 In love of home and loyalty,  
 An far-cast thought of civic good  
 His blessing on the neighborhood.  
 — Charles Lathrop Pack



### TREES OF THE FRAGRANT FOREST

*(For six small children. As they take their places upon the stage, those in seats recite the first stanza.)*

ALL: Trees of the fragrant forest,  
 With leaves of green unfurled,  
 Through summer's heat, through winter's cold  
 What do you do for our world?  
 FIRST: Our green leaves catch the raindrops  
 That fall with soothing sound,  
 Then drop them slowly, slowly down;  
 It's better for the ground.  
 SECOND: When, rushing down the hillside,  
 A mighty freshet foams,  
 Our giant trunks and spreading roots  
 Defend your happy homes.  
 THIRD: From burning heat in summer  
 We offer cool retreat,  
 Protect the land in winter's storm  
 From cold, and wind, and sleet.  
 FOURTH: Our falling leaves in autumn,  
 By breezes turned and tossed,  
 Will rake a deep sponge-carpet warm,  
 Which saves the ground from frost.  
 FIFTH: We give you pulp for paper,  
 Our fuel gives you heat;  
 We furnish lumber for your homes,  
 And nuts and fruit to eat.  
 SIXTH: With strong and graceful outline.  
 With branches green and bare,  
 We fill the land through all the year,  
 With beauty everywhere.  
 ALL: So listen! From the forest  
 Each one a message sends  
 To children on this Arbor Day:  
 "We trees are your best friends!"  
 — Primary Education

*"We did not inherit this land from our parents; rather, it is on loan to us from our children."*

— Anonymous



# What Is Arbor Day?

**A**rbor Day is an annual observance that celebrates the role of trees in our lives and promotes tree planting and care. As a formal holiday, it was first observed in 1872, in Nebraska, but tree planting festivals are as old as civilization. The tree has appeared throughout history and literature as the symbol of life.

## J. Sterling Morton and the First Arbor Day

The idea for Arbor Day in the United States originated in Nebraska City, Nebraska. Among the pioneers moving into the Nebraska Territory in 1854 was Julius Sterling Morton from Detroit. He and his wife, Caroline, were lovers of nature, and the home they established in Nebraska was quickly planted with trees, shrubs, and flowers.

Morton was a journalist and soon became editor of Nebraska's first newspaper. Given that forum, he spread agricultural information and his enthusiasm for trees to a receptive audience. His fellow pioneers missed their trees and needed them for wind-breaks, fuel, building materials, and shade from the hot prairie sun. A visit to Nebraska today wouldn't disclose the state was once a treeless plain, yet it was the lack of trees there that led to the founding of Arbor Day in the 1800's.

Morton wrote and spoke about environmental stewardship and the interrelatedness of life. He encouraged everyone to set aside a specific day to plant trees.

In 1872, The State Board of Agriculture accepted a resolution by J. Sterling Morton "to set aside one day to plant trees, both forest and fruit." The Board declared April 10, Arbor Day and offered prizes to counties and individuals that properly planted the largest number of trees on that day. More than one million trees were planted in Nebraska on the first Arbor Day. With this first tree planting holiday observance, J. Sterling Morton became known as the "Founder of Arbor Day."

## The Spread of a Good Idea

Shortly after this 1872 observance, other states passed legislation to observe Arbor Day each year with appropriate ceremonies. By 1920, more than 45 states and territorial possessions were celebrating Arbor Day. Today, Arbor Day is celebrated in all fifty states.

Throughout the world, people of all ages are planting trees, caring for them, and learning their value.

- In the United States, this tree planting festival is called Arbor Day.
- In Israel, it is called the New Year's Day of the Trees.
- Korea has a Tree-Loving Week.
- Iceland has a Student's Afforestation Day.
- Yugoslavia holds an Arbor Day in the spring and an Afforestation Day in the fall.
- India celebrates a National Festival of Tree Planting.

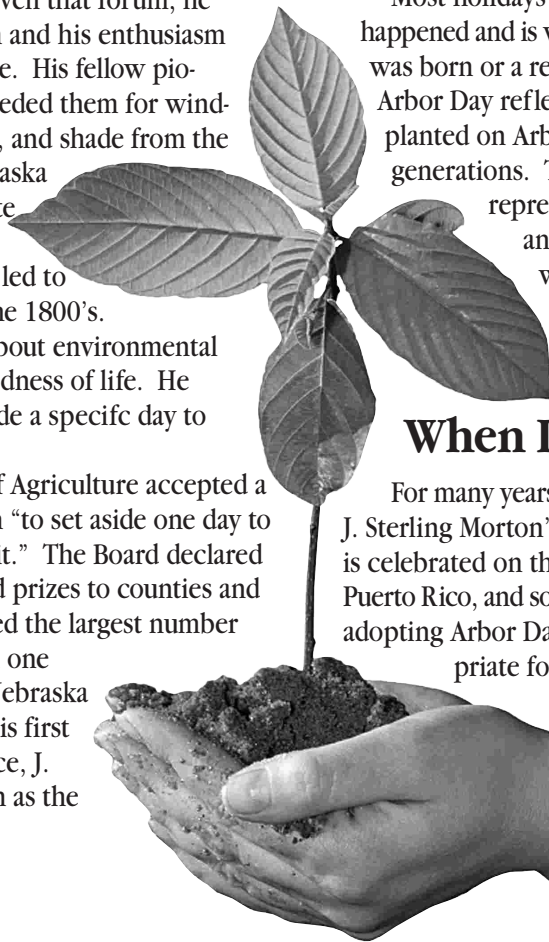
Most holidays celebrate something that has already happened and is worth remembering like the day someone was born or a religious holiday celebrating a past event. Arbor Day reflects a hope for the future. The trees

planted on Arbor Day show a concern for future generations. The simple act of planting a tree represents a belief that the tree will grow and, some day, provide wood products, wild life habitat, erosion control, shelter from the wind and sun, beauty, and inspiration for ourselves and our children.

## When Is Arbor Day?

For many years, Arbor Day was celebrated on April 22, J. Sterling Morton's birthday. Today, National Arbor Day is celebrated on the last Friday in April. All fifty states, Puerto Rico, and some U.S. territories have passed legislation adopting Arbor Day which is celebrated on a date appropriate for tree planting in their region.

Due to our location and climatic conditions, communities in the Lower Rio Grande Valley celebrate All Valley Arbor Month during the entire month of February.



# Celebrate Arbor Day!

**I**t has been more than 100 years since J. Sterling Morton founded Arbor Day. His simple idea of setting aside a special day for tree planting is now more important than ever... so have an Arbor Day celebration!

Raise the flag, strike up the band, make Arbor Day fun. Make it memorable. Organize a fun run. Make it a real event. See if a local business will donate prizes. Have a poster contest, or a poetry contest. Get the local PTA to sponsor a children's pageant or play. Organize and train volunteers to help you carry out Arbor Day ceremonies in your schools.

Get people excited. Show them things they've never seen before. Tell them things about trees they've never heard. Launch a thousand helium balloons with Arbor Day greeting inside offering a free tree to anyone who finds and returns the message.

Fill the air with music. Have an Arbor Day concert of songs about trees, or with tree names in their titles.

Get people into action. Ask a civic or service group to promote a paper drive to gather paper to be recycled and save a tree. Use the proceeds to buy a special tree to plant in a park or other special public place. Ask a local radio station to sponsor a tree trivia contest and give away trees to winners. Conduct a tree search. Ask people to find large, unusual or historic trees in your community. Tell people to take a hike—a tree identification hike—and have girl scouts or boy scouts act as guides.

Dedicate a forest, or a tree, or a flower bed in a park, and make it an occasion to talk about stewardship. Get a local nursery or garden center to hold an open house or field day. Organize an Arbor Day Fair.

Get people together. Ask retirement homes to invite children to plant a tree on their grounds and give the residents a chance to tell the kids about Arbor Day when they themselves were children. See if neighborhood organizations will hold block parties and get their members to adopt and care for street trees in front of their homes. Pass out buttons. Give away trees.

Make Arbor Day a real holiday. Make it special, and make it an occasion to look forward to. Make it a day of wonderful memories, and fill it with the promise of newly planted trees.

Celebrate Arbor Day in a personal way by planting a tree yourself. It is an act of optimism and kindness, a labor of love and a commitment to stewardship.

Anyone can do it. Start a tree seed in a cup, or a seedling in a pot. If you have no place to set it out later, give it to someone who does, and then watch it grow. Find a place to plant a seedling or a sapling or the largest tree you can handle alone.

Each and every tree which is planted stands as a living reminder that we all bear responsibilities of stewardship. We are living links in a chain of humanity stretching from the dimmest past into an unknown future. We can each help make that future more certain by performing a simple act—by planting a tree.



# Arbor Day Proclamation

*Whereas,* In 1872, J. Sterling Morton proposed to the Nebraska Board of Agriculture that a special day be set aside for the planting of trees, and

*Whereas,* the holiday, called Arbor Day, was first observed with the planting of more than a million trees in Nebraska, and

*Whereas,* Arbor Day is now observed throughout the nation and the world, and

*Whereas,* trees can reduce the erosion of our precious topsoil by wind and water, lower our heating and cooling costs, moderate the temperature, clean the air, produce oxygen and provide habitat for wildlife, and

*Whereas,* trees are a renewable resource giving us paper, wood for our homes, fuel for our fires and countless other wood products, and

*Whereas,* trees in our city increase property values, enhance the economic vitality of business areas, and beautify our community, and

*Whereas,* trees, wherever they are planted, are a source of joy and spiritual renewal,

**NOW, THEREFORE, I** \_\_\_\_\_ Mayor of the City of  
\_\_\_\_\_, do hereby proclaim  
\_\_\_\_\_ as

## *Arbor Day*

in the City of \_\_\_\_\_, and I urge all citizens to  
celebrate Arbor Day and to support efforts to protect our trees and woodlands,  
and


*Further,* I urge all citizens to plant and care for trees to gladden the heart and promote the  
well-being of this and future generations.

Dated this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ in the year \_\_\_\_\_

Mayor \_\_\_\_\_



# Recommended Trees For The Lower Rio Grande Valley

COMMON AND BOTANICAL NAME		TREE TYPE	MATURE HEIGHT	CROWN SPREAD	GROWTH RATE
	<b>Anaqua</b> - <i>Ehretia anacua</i> - N	E	40'	40' - 60'	Slow
	<b>Ash, Rio Grande or Fresno</b> - <i>Fraxinus berlandieriana</i> - N	D	45'	30' - 50'	Fast
	<b>Bald Cypress, Montezuma or Ahuehuete</b> - <i>Taxodium mucronatum</i> - N	E	50'	30' - 50'	Med.
	<b>Ebony, Texas or Ebano</b> - <i>Pithecellobium ebano</i> - N	E	40'	40' - 60'	Slow
	<b>Elm, Cedar or Olmo</b> - <i>Ulmus crassifolia</i> - N	D	50'	40' - 60'	Med.
	<b>Guajillo</b> - <i>Acacia berlandieri</i> - N	D	15'	20' - 25'	Med.
	<b>Guayacan or Soapbush</b> - <i>Guaiacum angustifolium</i> - N	E	15'	20' - 25'	Slow
	<b>Hackberry, Sugar or Palo Blanco</b> - <i>Celtis laevigata</i> - N	D	50'	40' - 60'	Fast
	<b>Mesquite, Honey</b> - <i>Prosopis glandulosa</i> - N	D	25'	20' - 40"	Med.
	<b>Oak, Live or Encino</b> - <i>Quercus virginiana</i> - N	E	50'	40' - 60"	Med.
	<b>Persimmon, Texas or Chapote</b> - <i>Diospyros texana</i> - N	D	20'	30' - 40'	Slow
	<b>Retama</b> - <i>Parkinsonia aculeata</i> - N	D	25'	20' - 30'	Fast
	<b>Soapberry, Western or Jaboncillo</b> - <i>Sapindus drummondii</i> - N	D	50'	30' - 40'	Fast
	<b>Tenaza</b> - <i>Pithecellobium pallens</i> - N	D	15'	20' - 25'	Slow
	<b>Tepeguaje or Great Lead-tree</b> - <i>Leucaena pulverulenta</i> - N	D	40'	40' - 60'	Fast
	<b>Texas Mountain Laurel or Frijolillo</b> - <i>Sophora secundiflora</i> - N	E	25'	25' - 30'	Slow
	<b>Wild Olive or Anacahuita</b> - <i>Cordia boissieri</i> - N	E	20'	20' - 30'	Slow
	<b>Palm, Chinese Fan or Palma China</b> - <i>Livistona chinensis</i>	E	25'	30'	Slow
	<b>Palm, Mexican Fan or Palma Alta</b> - <i>Washingtonia robusta</i>	E	60'	30'	Slow
	<b>Palm, Texas Sabal or Palma De Micharos</b> - <i>Sabal texana</i> - N	E	50'	30'	Slow

D - Deciduous, E - Evergreen, N - Native to Lower Rio Grande Valley

# BENEFITS OF TREES

*Trees provide us with the following economic, health, and aesthetic benefits:*

## **IMPROVED QUALITY OF LIFE**

Research has shown that trees and green spaces have a positive psychological impact on humans living in our urban society. A well-forested community is a more inviting place to live, work, and shop. Studies show that people linger and shop longer along tree-lined streets.

## **INCREASE PROPERTY VALUE**

A well planned landscape including healthy trees, shrubs, groundcovers, and flowers can increase residential property value up to 15 percent. A well-landscaped house will attract more potential home buyers and may be easier to sell because of its increased beauty.

## **MODIFY LOCAL CLIMATE**

Vast amounts of concrete, steel, asphalt, and glass in cities increase air temperature several degrees compared to the surrounding countryside. Trees lower air temperature through shade and leaf transpiration, reduce glare on sunny days, and reduce wind speed, creating a more pleasant surrounding.

## **SAVE ENERGY**

Trees produce shade which can reduce air conditioning cost up to 30 percent when strategically placed on the west and south sides of a building. Use evergreen trees on the north side to intercept and slow winter winds. This will save from 10 to 50 percent energy used for heating. By conserving energy, less electricity for heating and cooling is required to be generated. With lower demand for electricity, burning of fossil fuels which releases CO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere will decrease.

## **REDUCE SOIL AND WIND EROSION, CONSERVE WATER**

Trees reduce surface runoff by contributing organic matter to the soil surface which allows the water to soak in and not run off. They break the impact of falling rain and the roots help hold soil and increase the ability of soil to absorb water. With increased absorption of water, less irrigation is needed. Trees make excellent windbreaks, slowing the wind speed, thus reducing erosion and human aggravation created by constant, strong wind.

## **CONSERVATION OF RARE SPECIES**

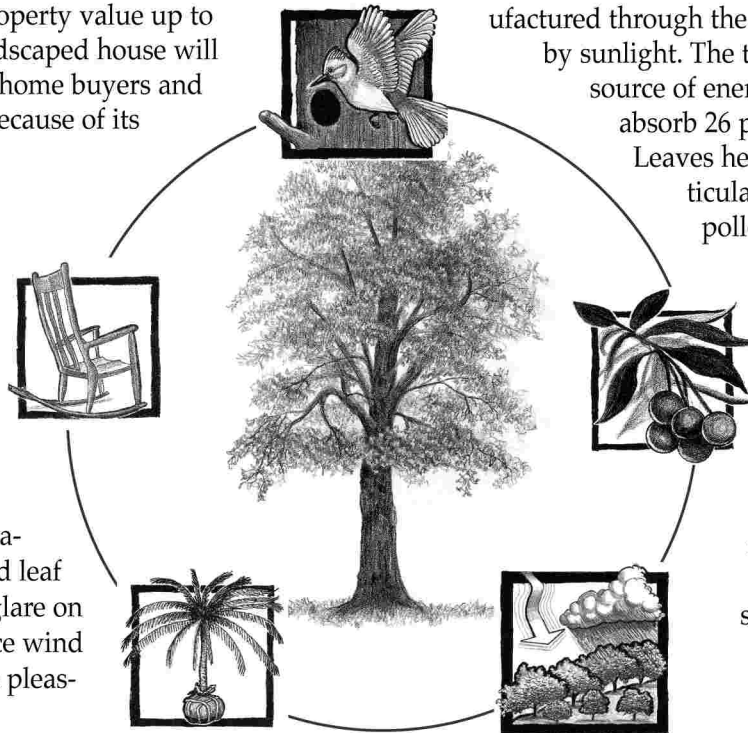
Rare trees planted in landscaped areas help conserve rare species and provide seed sources for revegetation efforts.

## **REDUCE AIR POLLUTION**

Trees remove carbon from carbon dioxide, which is harmful to humans, and replenish the atmosphere with oxygen for us to breathe through a process called photosynthesis. In this process, carbon is stored in the trunk and sugars are manufactured through the use of energy provided by sunlight. The tree uses the sugar as its source of energy. An average tree can absorb 26 pounds of CO<sub>2</sub> per year. Leaves help to trap and hold particulate pollutants (dust, ash, pollen, and smoke) that can damage human lungs.

## **WILDLIFE – FOOD AND HABITAT**

Trees provide shelter for birds and small mammals and food like nectar, pollen, berries, seeds, leaves, twigs, and bark for wildlife.



# Sample Program

## *Program Back Cover Sample*

*What does he plant who plants a tree  
He plants, in sap and leaf and wood,  
In love of home and loyalty,  
And far-cast thought of civic good  
His blessing on the neighborhood.  
– Charles Lathrop Pack*

### **Special Thanks to the following:**

Calvary Baptist Church  
Marine Military Academy  
Mayor Rodriguez  
James Matz  
Texas Forest Service  
Girl Scout Troops 438 & 295

### **City of Harlingen:**

Parks & Recreation Staff  
Public Buildings Staff  
Public Works Staff  
Sylvia Treviño, City Secretary

### **Harlingen Proud Board of Directors**

Ruthie Ewers, President  
Adam Treviño, Vice-President  
Sue DeBrook, Secretary  
Mia de la Garza, Treasurer  
Debra Warner, Past President

Scott Alex, Director  
Mia de la Garza, Director  
Paul Johnson, Director  
Dr. Jim Rowe, Director  
Juan Salas, Director  
Ana Zamora, Director  
Mandy Key, Executive Coordinator

Curtis Bonner, Director  
Michael Garza, Director  
Rebecca Lozano, Director  
Connie Salas, Director  
Paula Vargas, Director  
Cheryl LaBerge, Ex Officio

## *Program Front Cover Sample*



**Harlingen Proud**  
KEEP HARLINGEN BEAUTIFUL

February 15, 2007

## **Arbor Day Tree Planting Ceremony**

Honoring the  
Arroyo Colorado Audubon Society  
&  
Texas Master Naturalists

**Ramsey Nature Park  
Harlingen, Texas**



*“Winner Governor’s Achievement Award”*

P. O. BOX 3353 • HARLINGEN, TEXAS 78551 • 956.216.5302



Celebrate Arbor Day

# Sample Program

## *Inside Program Information*

### **Program**

#### **Master of Ceremonies**

*Mandy Key, Executive Director, Harlingen Proud*

#### **Welcome**

*Ruthie Ewers, President, Harlingen Proud*

#### **Presentation of Colors**

*Marine Military Academy Cadets*

#### **Pledge of Allegiance**

*Girl Scout Troops 438 & 295*

#### **Invocation**

*John Swedlund, Pastor, Calvary Baptist Church*

#### **Proclamation**

*Mayor Rick Rodriguez*

#### **Trees and Our Environment**

*Paul Johnson, Texas Forest Service*

#### **Poetry Reading - What Trees Teach Us**

*bt Helen O. Hoyt*

*Girl Scout Troop 438 & 295*

#### **The Importance of Arbor Day**

*Jamez Matz, Chairman,  
Valley Proud Environmental Council*

#### **Announcement of Honorees and History of their service**

*Jeff Lyssy, Public Services Director, City of Harlingen*

*Singing of "America The Beautiful"*

#### **Poetry Reading: What Do We Plant**

*by Henry Abbey*

*Girl Scout Troop 438 & 295*

#### **Ceremonial Tree Planting**

*Community Leaders*

#### **Closing Remarks**

*Ruthie Ewers, President of Harlingen Proud*

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Congratulations and thank you to the:  
**ARROYO COLORADO AUDUBON SOCIETY**  
and the  
Texas Master Naturalists

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#### **What Do We Plant**

*by Henry Abbey*

*What do we plant when we plant the tree? We plant the ship which will  
cross the sea; We plant the mast to carry the sails; We plant the planks  
to withstand the gales, The kneel, keelson, and beam and knee  
We plant the ship when we plant the tree.*

*What do we plant when we plant the tree? We plant the house for you  
and me; We plant the rafters, the shingles, the floors. We plant the  
studding, the lath, the doors, The beams, and siding, all parts that be;  
We plant the house when we plant the tree.*

*We plant the house when we plant the tree? A thousand things that we  
daily see; We plant the spire that out-towers the crag, Plant the staff for  
our country's flag, We plant the shade from the hot sun free;  
We plant these when we plant the tree.*





### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Valley Proud Environmental Council, a non-profit 501 (c-3) organization, is to preserve the natural beauty and environment of the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas and Mexico, by promoting education and public awareness projects, including those that encourage proper tree planting and maintenance, solid waste management and responsible behavior by all those who live and visit here.

We fulfill our mission by forging partnerships between grassroots volunteer organizations and the public and private sectors, which support our projects and result in improving the quality of life, enhancing economic development and tourism, and which conserve public and natural resources.

513 East Jackson, Suite 304, Harlingen, Texas  
(956) 412-8004 / Fax: (956) 412-8008  
www.valleyproud.org / vpec@sbcglobal.net

### **THE MEADOWS FOUNDATION**

#### **Mission**

The Meadows Foundation exists to assist people and institutions of Texas improve the quality and circumstances of life for themselves and future generations.

#### **Vision**

The Meadows Foundation strives to exemplify the principles of its founder in addressing basic human needs by working toward the elimination of ignorance, hopelessness and suffering, protecting the environment, providing cultural enrichment, encouraging excellence and promoting understanding and cooperation among people.

3003 Swiss Avenue - Dallas, TX 75204  
(214) 826-9431 - (800) 826-9431

### **Information Sources for this Publication**

The National Arbor Day Foundation  
100 Arbor Avenue, Nebraska City, NE 68410  
1-888-448-7337 www.arborday.org

Valley Proud Environmental Council - A Guide to Growing Healthy Trees in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas; Third addition, 2007

Valley Proud Environmental Council - A Guide for Selecting and Planting Native Cacti, Ground Cover, Wild Flowers, Shrubs and Trees on South Padre Island and in the Laguna Madre Area; 1999, 2004

Valley Proud Environmental Council - A Guide for Selecting and Planting Native Cacti, Groundcovers, Shrubs, Trees, Vines and Wildflowers in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas and Mexico; 1999, 2007

*“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world.  
Indeed, they are the only ones that ever have.”  
—Margaret Meade*

### **VALLEY PROUD SPONSORS**

American Electric Power • Bank of America • Bargain Book • Brownsville Herald • Cameron County Parks & Recreation • City of Brownsville  
City of Harlingen • City of McAllen • City of San Benito • City of Weslaco • Coastal Current • H-E-B • BMP Radio  
James A. “Buddy” Davidson Charitable Foundation • KGBT-FM • KFRQ FM/ KKPS-FM/KVLY-FM • KMBH-TV/FM/KHID-FM • KGBT-TV  
KNVO-TV • KRGV-TV • KTLN-TV • KVEO-TV • Time Warner Cable • L & F Distributors • La Feria News • Lamar Outdoor  
Lone Star National Bank • Long, Chilton, LLP • Los Fresnos News • Dr. & Mrs. M.M. MacRae • The Meadows Foundation • Mid Valley Town Crier  
Red River Service Corporation • Rio Grande Valley Sugar Growers • Rio Hondo News • San Benito News • Port Isabel/SPI Press  
Town of South Padre Island • Texas Forest Service • Texas General Land Office • Texas Commission On Environmental Quality  
The Home Depot • U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service • Valley Baptist Health Plans • Valley Morning Star



Celebrate Arbor Day