

NEWS

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FEBRUARY IS ARBOR MONTH IN THE RIO GRANDE VALLEY NEW THREE MILLION TREE GOAL IS SET FOR THIS AREA.

Thanks to grant funding received from the Meadows Foundation, the Texas Forest Service, and contributions from Valley Proud members, the Valley Proud Environmental Council is launching a major effort to encourage tree planting and Arbor Month ceremonies during the month of February in some 25 cities throughout the four county Rio Grande Valley.

Arbor activities are scheduled earlier in the Rio Grande Valley than the rest of the country due to the fact that February has ideal climatic conditions for tree planting. To facilitate Arbor Day activities, Valley Proud has prepared and is distributing a comprehensive guide for planning and holding Arbor Day ceremonies. The guide is available free of charge from Valley Proud

“If each person in South Texas and nearby Northern Mexico would plant just one tree during the next eight years, by the year 2015 we can add about three million trees to improve the quality of life and celebrate Valley Proud’s 25th anniversary,” said James Matz, Chairman of the Valley Proud Environmental Council, during the launching of Phase Two of the Trees of Friendship/Arboles de Amistad project.

“I’m confident we can do it,” Matz added.

The Valley Proud Environmental Council coordinates Arbor Month activities and has published three planting guides; a Tree Planting Guide, in both English and Spanish, for the Lower Rio Grande Valley; and two Native Tree, Shrub and Plant Guides, one for the Lower Laguna Madre area and one for the entire Lower Rio Grande Valley and northern Mexico. The Tree Planting Guide recommends trees to plant in this area and stresses the fact that native trees are preferred since they are best able to resist

drought, disease, and freezing. The Shrub and Plant Guides recommend native shrubs and plants that can be planted on South Padre Island and anywhere else in the Rio Grande Valley.

“Now that almost 95% of the original native trees, shrubs and plants have been destroyed to accommodate development, it is more important now than ever that we take advantage of Arbor Month to plant native trees and shrubs,” Chairman Matz added..

“It is now a well documented fact that ecotourism is growing and positively impacts our economy. This will continue only if we recognize that the preservation and creation of habitat makes it possible for the animals and birds that tourists come to see, to survive and multiply,” Matz said. “If everyone does just a little-plants one tree-together we can accomplish a lot. Why not ‘Plant-A-Memory, Plant- A-Tree? Do it Today for Tomorrow’ “

Copies of allValley Proud publications, including the Arbor Day Planning Guide, as well as a list of cities that are participating in Arbor Month activities and the persons to contact are available by calling Valley Proud at 956-412-8004, or at our website (www.valleyproud.org) or e-mailing vpec@sbcglobal.net
