

Your Help Needed for Arbor Day



The photo is by Tom Haxby and was taken at a previous Arbor Day

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This year's Arbor Day planting will be along the St. Mark's Trail. In case you don't know, the St. Mark's Trail is a 14 mile paved trail used for bicycling, skating, jogging, and walking. The trail starts on the south side of Tallahassee and goes all the way to the coast where it ends in the town of St. Marks . The section that we will be planting will be along the trails northern end from Gaile Avenue (four points) to the intersection of Capital Circle and Woodville Highway . The date chosen for this event will be Saturday, morning January 22.

The St. Mark's Trail began in 1837 as a wooden railroad with mules pulling the railroad cars. Eventually the railroad was abandoned and in 1985 private citizens organized the Tallahassee-St. Marks Rails to Trails Coalition. Through their efforts the trail was opened in 1988. If you wish to learn more about the St. Mark's Trail there is a web page at <http://www.bigring.com/Trail/trail.html>

Private citizen help is what we are asking for to help beautify the trail. This will involve planting 55 large maturing trees and 169 shrub/small trees. The design is in clusters of 5 or 6 plants, each with space between clusters, which is part of a larger design that will be completed by Leon County staff. FAMU's Landscape Design Program assisted with the plan. The planting starts at 9:00 A.M. Bring shovels, gloves, and drinking water.

The planting project is Tallahassee 's way of celebrating Arbor Day. So plan to bring the whole family. If enough of you participate, we will easily have the trees planted in a few hours.

Besides families, this is also an excellent activity for youth groups to help their community. Youth group participation at our Arbor Day plantings has been growing over the last few years and it always gives me a good feeling to see our youth participating in such a worthwhile project.

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Types of trees planted this year will be a variety of native trees including turkey oak, live oak, flowering dogwood, tree sparkleberry, yaupon holly, and longleaf pine. All the trees are in 7 and 15 gallon pots and are purchased with funds from the Leon County Tree Bank.

The Leon County Tree Bank is a system designed to help keep our community well forested. Before a piece of land is going to be developed the trees are inventoried. The developer is then expected to replace the trees that he/she removes. If the developer is unable to do this, he/she has to donate money to the tree bank. Some of this money then becomes available for community projects like this and the Adopt a Tree Program.

After the trees are planted, Asplundh Tree Service volunteers, under the direction of City of Tallahassee Electric Utility Forester Perry Odom , will generously unload and spread mulch. They do this every year, so be sure to thank them.

It takes work and commitment to have a place with as many wonderful trees as we have here in Tallahassee . So please come and be a part of this very worthwhile community project at 9:00 A.M. on Saturday, January 22.

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