



The Conservation Corner

April 2009



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A publication developed to highlight conservation efforts, programs and events throughout Hamilton County
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Arbor Day April 24, 2009

The History

Arbor Day is a celebration of tree planting and care, originating in the late 1800s. Nature enthusiast and pioneer J.

Sterling Morton moved from Detroit to Nebraska in 1854 with his wife, and they planted a variety of trees, flowers, and shrubs on their land. As editor of a Ne-

braskan newspaper, Morton published stores concerning agriculture and trees. He understood the tremendous importance and countless uses of trees that could be planted for windbreaks, to prevent soil erosion, or harvested for fuel and building materials, not to mention shade.

Morton was instrumental in establishing the first

Arbor Day, held on April 10, 1872 in Nebraska. Prizes were awarded to people who planted great numbers of seedlings, and

more than 1 million trees were planted across the state. In 1885, April 22, Morton's birthday, was selected as the day for a legal holiday in the state of Ne-

braska. That year, students celebrated by planting trees, and parades were organized.

Morton's passion for trees spread throughout the country, and today, National Arbor Day is the last Friday in April, with many states celebrating on different days depending on planting seasons.

How to Celebrate

- Raise the flag, strike up

the band, organize a parade

- Hold a beautification project in your home town
- Recycle paper
- Organize a tree identification hike
- Enjoy the outdoors and plant a tree!

First Annual Arbor Day

Poetry Contest

The HCSWCD is holding its first annual Arbor Day Poetry Contest for 7th and 8th graders living in Hamilton County. This year's theme is How Are Trees Important to Me. Entries will be judged on originality, relevance to theme, style, spelling and grammar. Submit poems by fax or mail by April 17, 2009. Certificates of Merit will be awarded to all students, and prizes will be awarded for first, second, and third place. See website for details.





Firewood Restrictions

As of March 18, 2009, the firewood regulation was made permanent in the State Registrar to prevent the movement of invasive species into New York State (NYS) forests via untreated firewood. The possession, sale, and movement of untreated firewood originating in NYS has been restricted by the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). Campers are encouraged to purchase wood from local sellers less than 50 miles from their destination, or buy wood at campgrounds.

Invasive species, such as the Sirex Woodwasp, Emerald Ash Borer, and Asian Longhorn Beetle are transported to new locations in firewood. By limiting the movement of this high risk vector, steps are taken to prevent infestation of our forests.

Millions of dollars are spent removing infested trees to prevent the spread of invasives, and billions are spent re-planting trees. Economic downfalls of forest infestation by invasives include adverse impacts to the maple syrup industry, baseball bat manufacturers, lumber, and tourism. Help keep our forests healthy and don't move firewood.

For more information, visit <http://www.dec.ny.gov/regulations/2359.html>

Don't Flush Your Drugs

The DEC, pharmacies, and other organizations across New York are working to raise awareness of large amounts of pharmaceuticals in lakes, rivers, and streams. Results of an Environmental Protection Agency study concluded that the presence of drugs in our waters is harming aquatic organisms. Hormones impact male fish and studies have shown egg production in males. Anti-depressants and beta-blockers impact spawning and reduce fertility in aquatic organisms. Drug resistant microbes may begin to emerge with exposure to antibiotics.

Protect water quality and do not flush unused drugs down your toilet. Instead, dispose unused or expired portions in the trash. The DEC recommends disguising the drugs to prevent misuse by adding water, salt, ashes or coffee grounds to containers. Place drugs in a sealable bag, box or plastic tub to

prevent discovery and removal from trash and abuse. Do not disguise in food as pets or wildlife may consume drugs. For more information, visit these DEC websites: Don't flush your drugs campaign: www.dec.ny.gov/press/53042.html Proper disposal: www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/45083.html



Recycling Program

Since January 2009, Hamilton County offices in Lake Pleasant and Indian Lake



have recycled approximately 705 pounds of paper. Ink Jet cartridges are also recyclable. Thank you to our Indian Lake volunteers, and all our recyclers!