



NEWS RELEASE

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ARBOR DAY TO COME EARLY IN COVINGTON

Covington, WA – This year, the observance of National Arbor Day is set for Friday, April 27. In Covington, however, the City is having a special event to mark its 10th year as a Tree City USA and will celebrate Arbor Day one month earlier to coincide with the annual Japanese exchange students' visit to Kentwood and Kentlake High Schools.

Covington's Arbor Day event will take place at Friendship Park, located at 15808 S.E. 254th Place, at 2:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 27. In addition to celebrating Arbor Day, the event will honor two other important occasions: the 10th year the City has achieved the Tree City USA designation from the Arbor Day Foundation and the 100th year celebration of the Gift of Trees as part of the National Cherry Blossom Festival.

A delegation of Japanese exchange students will join Covington parks and recreation commissioners in the planting of two large Yoshino cherry trees. The original design plans for Friendship Park included cherry trees, but they were inadvertently left out of the project. The City will use this opportunity to complete the original plans by planting the cherry trees while celebrating the friendship the city shares with the Japanese exchange student program.

Later that day, the Covington City Council will honor the Japanese exchange students and commemorate Arbor Day by presenting each with a proclamation at the regular city council meeting at 7 p.m. in city hall, followed by a dessert reception.

The public is encouraged to attend either or both events. For more information, please contact Covington Parks and Recreation Director Scott Thomas at stthomas@covingtonwa.gov or 253.638.1110.

The Tree City USA[®] program, sponsored by the Arbor Day Foundation in cooperation with the USDA Forest Service and the National Association of State Foresters, provides direction, technical assistance, public attention, and national recognition for urban and community forestry programs in thousands of towns and cities that more than 135 million Americans call home. There are 83 Tree Cities in Washington and more than 3400 communities nationwide that are currently a Tree City USA.

Each year, the National Cherry Blossom Festival commemorates the 1912 gift of 3,000 cherry trees from Mayor Yukio Ozaki of Tokyo to the city of Washington, DC. The gift and annual celebration honor the lasting friendship between the United States and Japan and the continued close relationship between the two countries. This year, the festival runs from March 20 to April 17 in the country's capitol city.

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