

State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources



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Alaska to celebrate 50th anniversary of Arbor Day

(Anchorage, AK) – Alaska will celebrate its 50th anniversary of Arbor Day on May 16, thanks to a class of fourth-grade students from Kodiak.

In 1966, Alaska was the only state in the Union without an official Arbor Day. A group of Kodiak fourth-graders asked their state senator, Al Owen, to do something about it, and he did. Soon, Gov. Bill Egan was signing Alaska Arbor Day into law and in May 1966 he used a golden shovel to plant a ceremonial tree near the Juneau Library.

From the beginning, Arbor Day has been a community celebration with a special emphasis on youth. In 1907, President Theodore Roosevelt addressed his Arbor Day Proclamation to "the school children of the United States." In 1966, with help from the U.S. Forest Service, the Juneau Garden Club potted up a tree for each one of those Kodiak fourth-graders who planted the seed for Arbor Day in Alaska and the U.S. Coast Guard delivered them.

A broad range of events are planned for communities around the state to celebrate Alaska's 50th anniversary of Arbor Day. A calendar of Alaska Arbor Day events in Alaska is located on the Alaska Division of Forestry website at <http://forestry.alaska.gov/community/news>, along with materials to help organize an event.

For more information or to have your event posted on the Arbor Day calendar, please contact Stephen Nickel at stephen.nickel@alaska.gov or 907-269-8466.

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