



Life. Well Crafted.

Date: April 8, 2013
Contact: Dana Kaminske
Communications Specialist
828-261-2289
dkaminske@hickorync.gov

Celebrate Earth Day/Arbor Day with two local events in one at the S.A.L.T. Block

HICKORY - What does it mean to "be green?"

Learn more about what it means to "be green" during the fifth year of "Growing a Green Future" event. In addition to "Growing a Green Future," this year, the Catawba County Partnership for Children will be hosting their 17th annual Family Fair in conjunction with this event. This combined event will be held on Saturday, April 20, between 10 a.m. - 2 p.m., on the "Green" between the Arts and Science Center and the Patrick Beaver Memorial Library, 375 3rd Street, NE, Hickory. The rain date is Sunday, April 21 from 1 p.m. - 4 p.m.

More than 20 groups will be represented at "Growing a Green Future" and they will be providing educational information, and demonstrations, focusing on preserving the earth, supporting nature, or any environmental product, practice or service offered in the area.

"Our community is a green community and we want to enhance the status and educate all citizens, organizations and businesses about the importance of protecting our environment," said Maria Goldstein with GoGreen Hickory. "City agencies, civic clubs and organizations, retail and wholesale vendors all come together to celebrate Earth Day and Arbor Day in April in hopes of making every day earth day."

This year's Family Fair is being held in honor of the nationally recognized Week of the Young Child. Family Fair provides a wide variety of fun, FREE activities for all families in the community. Many agencies and organizations will provide information about their services as well as fun activities for children of all ages. There will also be roamers, face painting, games, and dancing.

The Catawba County Partnership for Children works collaboratively with other child serving agencies to ensure that children start school healthy and prepared for success. A nonprofit agency since 1995, the Partnership for Children is located at Sweetwater Early Childhood Education Center in Hickory.

Greenway Public Transportation will be offering shuttle service for this combined event from 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Pick ups will occur roughly every 15 minutes. The park and ride is at the City Hall parking across from City Hall, as well as from the S.A.L.T. Block to the City Hall bus stop located at 76 North Center Street, Hickory. There will be directional signs posted, during the event. Additionally, Greenway Public Transportation will be providing a free fare on the fixed route bus service in the cities of Conover, Hickory and Newton on Monday, April 22, which is a great opportunity for the community to ride the bus for free and for Greenway Public Transportation to do their part to reduce the carbon footprint.

Many organizations come together to bring this event to the community, including The City of Hickory, the Catawba Science Center, the Catawba County Partnership for Children, Catawba County, Greenway Public Transportation, Keep Catawba County Beautiful, Hickory Museum of Art, and Republic Services.

In the weeks leading up to "Growing a Green Future", and the celebration of Arbor Day, the City of Hickory's landscape division has placed price tags on trees around City Hall, Ivey Arboretum in Carolina Park, and the green area located at the S.A.L.T. Block. These tags were donated to the City by the North Carolina Urban Forest Council to enable people to see the monetary benefit of trees and to understand the environmental and economic value that trees provide the community. These tags will be visible along the walk from City Hall to the S.A.L.T. Block. The back side of the tree tag shows proper mulching techniques and each side has a QR code that a Smartphone can read. This code is for the ISA 'Trees Are Good' site which lists the benefits of trees.

Another unique tool that the community can use to calculate the basic approximation of how this particular tree benefits the environment on a yearly basis is The National Tree Benefits calculator, located at www.treebenefits.com, which allows someone to type in the zip code, and then choose the tree species, size and location. For example, a 27-inch diameter, white oak, located in a park, will provide a benefit of \$233.00 per year. This calculated amount is then further broken down into specific detail. If you click on the tabs for storm water, it will show that this oak saves \$106.00 by intercepting 3,943 gallons of water runoff by holding rain on the leaves, branches and bark and reducing erosion by slowing rainfall before it hits the ground.

Trees reduce energy costs by providing shade in the summer months, especially those located on the east and west sides of buildings. Trees planted on the southern side of the building should be deciduous, lose their leaves in the winter, to allow for solar warming in the winter and cooling in the summer. This particular 27-inch oak tree will provide \$70.00 in electrical and natural gas savings per year.

Air quality improvement and the reduction of carbon in the atmosphere is another benefit of trees. Also, a healthy mature tree will increase property value and the larger the tree the higher the value. This is especially important for resale and will increase yearly as the tree grows.

All of these reasons should be an incentive to plant trees. By keeping mature tree healthy by proper pruning and not topping trees, not only will it increase the value of a property and save money on energy costs, but, it, also, helps provide a benefit of

cleaner air and reductions in storm water problems. The community is encouraged to stop by the City of Hickory's booth at the "Growing a Green Future," to pick up a tree seedling, including Green Ash, Water Oak, and Crape Myrtle. These seedlings are provided by the City of Hickory Community Appearance Commission and Landscape Services.

For more information on the City of Hickory's Landscape Services or the City's Community Appearance Commission, go to hickorync.gov. For more information about Catawba County Partnership for Children, call 828-695-6505 or go to www.catawbakids.com. For more information about Family Fair, please call 828-695-6506.