

SWCD marks Earth Day with its annual tradition: the Green Arbor Program

Special to The Odessa File

WATKINS GLEN, April 22, 2017 -- The Schuyler County Soil and Water Conservation District held its 37th annual Green Arbor Program distribution of bare root seedlings and transplants on Saturday, April 22 -- Earth Day.

A total of 135 residents purchased trees and shrubs, rain barrels, and bluebird boxes this year. Over a million conservation plants have been planted locally since the program began in 1980.



“These plants are often used for streambank stabilization, windbreaks, erosion control, living snow fences, and to create wildlife habitat. They also add value to property, conserve energy, and lessen noise pollution,” said Rebecca Smith, District Technician. “The Green Arbor Program is set up to meet the needs of all county landowners, whether they have a small parcel or hundreds of acres.”

Dan Lewis, age 11, from Montour Falls came with his father and when asked how they hope to use their trees, he said, “We are planting for a future Christmas tree.”

Steve Smolen of Hector has been buying trees from the Green Arbor program since 1989 and he has planted, so far, over 1,500 trees and shrubs on his 65 acres.

Taylor Kane and Emily Chaffinch of Montour Falls came with Emily’s mother, Billee, and they are planting a hedgerow around part of the Chaffinch property.

Regina Westervelt of Watkins Glen, her brother Dwayne Simpson and his granddaughter, Kaydance, 6, of Beaver Dams will be planting some fruit trees. Regina will be giving the cherry trees to her daughter who has recently purchased property in the Town of Dix.

Diane Buglion-Mannion, owner of Rasta Ranch winery in Hector, is planting more butterfly bush in gardens near her winery. “The butterflies love them, especially the butterfly moth, which is as big as a hummingbird and looks extraterrestrial,” she said.

Established in 1940, the Schuyler County Soil and Water District provides farmers, homeowners, organizations and municipalities with technical assistance to help conserve natural resources and be good stewards of the land. Services include conservation practices to protect water quality, erosion and sediment control, stream stabilization, land drainage, assistance in obtaining state and federal permits, conservation education, map making and much more.



If Schuylers residents want to be added to the Soil and Water District mailing list to receive a tree order form in the mail in January, or to learn more about soil and water programs, visit the website www.schuylerswcd.com or the Facebook page www.facebook.com/SchuylersWCD

A fish stocking program continues and the deadline for ordering for the spring program is May 1. Visit the website for an order form or call the District at 535-0878 for more information.

Photos in text:

Top: Taylor Kane, Emily Chaffinch and Billie Chaffinch of Montour Falls.

Middle: Dwayne Simpson, his granddaughter Kaydance, 6, and Dwayne's sister, Regina Westervelt.

Bottom: Diane Buglion-Mannion with her recently purchased butterfly bush transplants. (*Photos provided*)