



## ***RICHLAND SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT***

2020 Hampton Street, Room 3063A  
Columbia, SC 29204  
(803) 576-2080 - Fax (803) 576-2088  
[soilandwater@rcgov.us](mailto:soilandwater@rcgov.us)

### **Board of Commissioners**

John V. Green, Chairman  
Mark Huguley, Vice Chairman  
Kenneth Mullis Sec. /Treas  
Hemphill Pride, III  
H. Heath Hill

### **Associate Commissioners**

Mary Burts  
Jeff Laney  
Jim Rhodes

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

### **Richland County Arbor Day Celebrated at Forest Heights Elementary**

*Richland County, SC – December 2, 2011* Thanks to an Arbor Day celebration sponsored by the SC Soil and Water Conservation Society (SCSWCS) and the Richland Soil and Water Conservation District (RSWCD), fourth- and fifth-grade students at Forest Heights Elementary have a better understanding of the importance of trees and will have shade in their outdoor classroom next spring.

During the celebration, Councilwoman Gwendolyn Davis Kennedy (District 7) recognized the many benefits of trees, urged the protection of trees and woodlands, and presented Forest Heights with a special Arbor Day Proclamation. RSWCD Associate Commissioner, Jeff Laney, recognized Forest Heights fifth-grader Najiah Marshall for bringing Richland County Arbor Day to her school. Najiah's essay about why Arbor Day is important to her and to her classmates earned a \$120 tree grant from the SCSWCS. Educational entertainer Tim Womick, with help from several Forest Heights students, explored the many uses of trees with a dynamic, interactive presentation that inspired even the adults in the audience to clap and sing along.

After the presentation, Najiah's class planted a 12' white oak near the school's wildlife habitat and school garden in an area teachers plan to use as an outdoor classroom.

Arbor Day was begun by J. Sterling Morton in Nebraska in 1872. In South Carolina, Arbor Day falls on the first Friday in December. For more information about this story, contact the RSWCD at (803) 576-2080.

###

Chanda L. Cooper  
Education Program Coordinator  
Environmental Planning Division  
Richland County Planning & Developmental Services Department  
2020 Hampton Street, Room 3063 A  
Columbia, SC 29204  
(w) 803-576-2084  
(f) 803-576-2088  
[cooperc@rcgov.us](mailto:cooperc@rcgov.us)



Clockwise from top left: The Richland Soil and Water Conservation District (RSWCD) coordinated the planting of a white oak tree at Forest Heights Elementary during a special Arbor Day Celebration on December 2, 2011. Funding for the tree was provided by a grant from the SC Soil and Water Conservation Society. Fourth and fifth grade students attended an Arbor Day program sponsored by the RSWCD featuring Principal Frank Robinson, Councilwoman Gwendolyn Davis Kennedy, RSWCD Associate Commissioner Jeff Laney, and Educational Entertainer Tim Womick. Fifth grade students assisted with the planting of the tree in an area that will become the school's outdoor classroom.

