

## **Florida Arbor Day is Celebrated in January**

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Most National Holidays reflect on events and people of the past. There is one National Holiday which looks to the future and asks us, through our actions, to make the world a greener place for the next generation. That holiday is National Arbor Day.

Why do we celebrate National Arbor Day? Its history dates back to 1872 when J Sterling Morton proposed a tree planting holiday called Arbor Day. This came after nearly 20 years of promoting the importance of planting trees in the State of Nebraska. J Sterling Morton moved to Nebraska from Michigan in 1854. He and his wife immediately began planting trees around their pioneer home. In his job as a journalist and newspaper editor, he used every opportunity to share his enthusiasm for trees with his readers. As individuals, civic organizations and groups embraced this message and began planting trees, J Sterling Morton recognized the need to designate a day for this. The first Arbor Day was celebrated on April 10, 1872 in Nebraska and National Arbor Day is now observed on the last Friday in April.

The 1945 Florida Legislature designated the third Friday in January as our official State Arbor Day as this is the optimal time for planting trees in Florida. Many communities have tree planting ceremonies and other activities in celebration of Arbor Day.