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2012 Plant for the Planet! Local Tree Give-Away for Kentucky Arbor Day

Louisville, KY (April 7, 2012) – The Belknap, Deer Park, Upper Highlands, and Highlands-Douglass Neighborhood Associations (NA), Metro Council Districts 8 & 9, individual donors, and community businesses are celebrating Kentucky Arbor Day on Saturday April 7, 2012. Volunteers will give away 1,500 trees from the Kentucky Division of Forestry to anyone signing the United Nations Environment Programme's (UNEP) pledge to plant and nurse the trees to adulthood. These are 12 to 24-inch, bare-root seedlings. Understory species (up to 30') include Gray Dogwood, Washington Hawthorn, and American Hazelnut. Canopy species (70' to 120') include Black Cherry, American Persimmon, Yellow-Poplar (200), Black Oak, Shumard Oak, Swamp White Oak, White Oak, White Pine (200), Sycamore and Black Walnut. The supply depends on availability.

The Douglass Community Center at 2305 Douglass Boulevard, 40205, four blocks east of Bardstown Road, is the site of the joint Highlands tree give-away from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. (or later), rain or shine. Additional parking is adjacent to the Division 5 Police Sub Station and along Douglass Boulevard. The event offers wrapped trees, light refreshments and plenty of information from the Master Gardeners with the Jefferson County Cooperative Extension Service/UK College of Agriculture, as well as expert advice from the forest ranger, arborists, tree huggers, and area naturalists.

Stephen R. Spanyer – local organizer of Plant for the Planet! since 2007, originally through the Belknap NA – is spearheading the 2012 Arbor Day event for the expanded joint Highlands effort. Since 2007 the UNEP Billion Tree Campaign has seen over 12 billion trees planted globally, and the local event has grown from 300 seedlings in its first year to some 5,750 seedlings handed out. This translates into a large variety of trees and more community involvement. The tree give-away continues to aid canopy recover following the losses from the hurricane Ike windstorm and the 2009 ice storm. About 1,600 trees have benefited the Highlands zip code 40205 over the last five years, with the balance planted throughout the city and nearby counties by home and property owners, with extras planted in Metro parks by volunteers with the Olmsted Parks Conservancy.

Previous participants have included many neighbors and friends, the Boy Scouts, CES Master Gardeners, Highlands' neighborhood association board members, foresters with the KY DOF, the Bellarmine Biology Club, the city arborist, Louisville Metro Council, and local businesses.

For additional information, check out these websites:

Global sponsor: <http://unep.org/BillionTreeCampaign> facebook: UNEP "billion tree" tab
Local tree give-away info & maps: <http://HighlandsArborDay.info>

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