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News Release

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For immediate release

### Columbus County Celebrates Arbor Day

The cities of Chadbourne, Tabor City, and Whiteville along with N.C. Museum of Forestry and Southeastern Community College will celebrate Arbor Day on Wednesday, April 22 at 11 a.m. on the college campus near the parking lot of T-Building. The celebration is free and open to the public, and the N.C. Forest Service will be giving away free trees for planting.

The celebration will include an awards presentation by the N.C. Forest Service as well as several special presentations. Whiteville has been designated a Tree City USA. This award will be presented to Mayor Dial Gray. Recertifications of this designation for Chadbourne and Tabor City will be presented to Mayor Kenneth Waddell and Mayor Royce Harper, respectively. Southeastern Community College has been designated a Tree Campus USA and this will be presented to Randy Britt, chair of the college's Board of Trustees.

The dignitaries from the participating cities and the college will participate in a special tree planting on the college campus.

Alan Moore, Urban Forest Specialist, will talk about "The Importance of Trees in the Community." In addition, the N. C. Division of Forest Resources will have an informative display on Urban and Community Forestry.

Whiteville joins Tabor City and Chadbourne with Tree City USA designation. Tree City USA is a powerful force for the promotion of tree care and urban forestry.

According to the National Arbor Day Foundation, "The Tree City USA program has caught the imagination of citizens, elected officials and urban tree professionals. Over 2,800 communities now fly the flag of accomplishment, a composite area that is home to some 107 million Americans."

To date, Southeastern Community College and Duke University are the only higher education institutions in North Carolina to be named a Tree Campus USA college or university. Tree Campus USA, a new national program launched by the Arbor Day Foundation, honors colleges and universities and the leaders of the campus and surrounding communities for promoting healthy urban forest management and engaging the campus community in environmental stewardship. John Robards, instructor for Forest Management Technology, and his students were instrumental in earning this special designation for the college.

The North Carolina Forest Service Urban Forestry Program promotes the trees, forests, watersheds and wildlife where people live, work and play in urban, suburban and rural communities. Urban Forestry is the management of all these urban forest resources. Taking care of these resources benefits the environmental, social, and economic health of your community.

For more information about this event, contact Harry Warren, director of the N.C. Museum of Forestry, at 914-4185. Direct inquiries about the Forest Management Technology program at Southeastern Community College to John Robards at 642-7141, ext. 232 or at [jrobards@sccnc.edu](mailto:jrobards@sccnc.edu).