

Third-graders plant trees in Clinton



CLINTON — Since 1993, every third-grader in the city of Clinton has planted a tree. The students look forward to this Clinton Trees Forever program that allows them to learn about trees, pot their own special seedling and take that seedling home to plant.

Now in its 23rd year, the program will allow 286 students to plant a Douglas Fir tree.

This year's program was coordinated by Clinton Trees Forever member Carolyn Tallett. She contacted every public and private elementary school and worked with the third-grade teachers in setting the dates, establishing the tree-planting curriculum that will be covered and determining where the children will do the planting. The schools involved include Eagle Heights, Jefferson, Bluff, Whittier and Prince of Peace.

Retired teachers and Clinton Trees Forever members instruct the students on the benefits and care of trees. The children then go outside to pot their tree with the help of long-time volunteer Don Johnson. In Johnson's instructions, he asks the students to name their tree to encourage ownership and gives them detailed directions on how to water and care for their tree.

Each year Clinton Trees Forever selects the species of tree for the project and orders them to arrive right before the planting project. The Douglas Fir selected for this year is a conifer tree that grows to a height of 40 to 70 feet and a spread of 12 to 20 feet at maturity.

Volunteers from Clinton Trees Forever, teachers and staff, especially the grounds crew from the Clinton School District, have a delightful time teaching and assisting in the project. Volunteers work both inside and outside the classroom. Since students learn the importance of trees and how to care for them, there is less vandalism to trees on school grounds and around the city of Clinton.

The Clinton Trees Forever mission is to plant and care for trees and the environment by empowering people, building community and promoting stewardship. Visit the Clinton Trees Forever Facebook page for more photos of this year's third-grade project.