



**For Immediate Release**

**April 4, 2012**

Contact Rob Pahl

Tree Lafayette Vice President

765-491-5499

[pahlrc@gmail.com](mailto:pahlrc@gmail.com)

Greg Shaner

Tree Lafayette Arbor Day Project Manager

765-447-2880

[gregory\\_shaner\\_454@comcast.net](mailto:gregory_shaner_454@comcast.net)

**Tree Lafayette Receives Grant from the Alcoa Foundation for Arbor Day, 2012**

Tree Lafayette received \$17,250 from the Alcoa Foundation to purchase trees for its annual Arbor Day tree planting and program, which will be held this year on Saturday, May 5, 2012, at Jefferson High School and at Tecumseh Junior High School in Lafayette. Trees will also be purchased to plant at several other Lafayette schools this spring. The event begins at 9 a.m. under the tent in the flagpole area of Tecumseh Junior High School.

The organization needs 200 volunteers for tree planting from the community for Arbor Day, and can include supervised children, teenagers, and young adults. The event is a great family activity, and a wonderful learning opportunity for young people. Sign up online to volunteer at <http://tinyurl.com/tree-lafayette-arbor-day> or contact Matt Green, who is Chairman of the Arbor Day event at [mgreen@heritage-interactive.com](mailto:mgreen@heritage-interactive.com). Volunteers are asked to watch the video "How to Plant and Maintain Trees," in the education section of the Tree Lafayette website ([www.treelafayette.org](http://www.treelafayette.org)) before the Arbor Day event.

"Tree Lafayette is pleased to receive funds from the Alcoa Foundation for the ReLeaf Grant," says Rob Pahl, Tree Lafayette vice president, who is retired as the Director of Application Engineering from Alcoa. "It will help support an initiative by Alcoa to plant 10 million trees globally in the next 10 years. Alcoa already reached their initial goal of planting 1 million trees. This grant is the second major grant received by Tree Lafayette from the Alcoa Foundation." Funds from the grant will also pay for 1,400 saplings to be handed out to fourth graders in all three Greater Lafayette school corporations during Ag Awareness Days at the Tippecanoe Fair Grounds on April 4 and April 5, 2012. Tree Lafayette applied for the grant through the Alcoa Foundation and American Forests' Global ReLeaf Partnership for Trees. Global ReLeaf is a program included in American Forests, which is a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving America's forests. The

partnership between Alcoa Foundation and Global ReLeaf is intended to enable communities across the world to plant and care for trees in places that need them.

So this year, Tree Lafayette will be putting the money to good use on Arbor Day in Lafayette, when it will plant at least 70 trees at Tecumseh Junior High School, and at Jeff High School. Greg Shaner, chairman of Tree Lafayette's Tree Committee, will be the project manager for this year's Arbor Day, and will be assisted by Belinda Kiger, Lafayette Urban Forester, and advisor to Tree Lafayette. They will be coordinating the tree planting for the event at the schools.

Lafayette School Corp. Superintendent Ed Eiler says planting trees on school grounds helps strengthen memories and learning.

"We carry the images of the school we attended as a child throughout our entire lifetime," he says. "The landscaping of school grounds helps paint those images by helping to create an aura and atmosphere surrounding the school. Trees are a subtle yet integral part of that image. Thanks to everyone involved for creating a lasting learning experience as well as a more beautiful school and community."

Tecumseh Junior High School is one of the sites of the Arbor Day project.

"When I came to Tecumseh in 1996 it was very apparent that having a beautiful campus was important," says Principal Brett Gruetzmacher. "We have worked hard to maintain that image and are excited to have the opportunity to add to our grounds. We are thankful for the support from the Alcoa Foundation and Tree Lafayette."

### **About Tree Lafayette**

In 2011, Tree Lafayette planted 186 trees, and since 1994, has planted more than 1,400 street trees. The organization's mission is to plant trees in the urban setting, and enhance awareness of the importance of trees in this setting. Tree Lafayette has coordinated its own educational program, beginning with a third grade program, where students in the Lafayette School Corp. learn the basics of trees and how to take care of them. During these programs, trees are planted on the grounds of the elementary schools, so that students can observe their growth over the years. The grant from the Alcoa Foundation and the American Forests' Global ReLeaf Partnership will enable Tree Lafayette to work with and educate an even greater number of students in Lafayette and the surrounding area.