

<http://www.MSCNews.net/news/index.cfm?nk=36013>

Friday Is Arbor Day

(AP) - People across the nation will observe Arbor Day on Friday, but no state will celebrate with as much fervor as Nebraska, where the celebration of trees got its start 142 years ago.

Like elsewhere, Nebraskans will plant trees and children will read poetry and join in coloring contests. But unlike other states many public offices will close - it's the only state in which Arbor Day is a paid holiday for state workers.

Nebraska City's J. Sterling Morton first proposed the tree-planting holiday in 1872. Morton was a newspaper editor and secretary of the Nebraska Territory.

The city's celebration this year includes a parade, chili cook-off, home and garden show and a run.

The holiday typically attracts less attention in other states, where it can be overshadowed by Earth Day.

Associated Press