

It's less than one month away. Mark your calendar and get ready for the week of September 22, 2013. Already knowing that date is printed on your calendar, and it officially designates the beginning of autumn and the end of summer, you might be saying, "Why mark my calendar?" "For what do I need to get ready?"

Autumn is an opportune time to plant trees in Nebraska. Many people don't realize that fall's cooler temperatures and reduced humidity make it less stressful for newly planted trees to establish compared with those planted in the spring.

Organized by ReTree Nebraska and tree advocates across the state, the week of September 22, 2013, has been named ReTree Week. If you didn't celebrate Arbor Day in the spring of the year, the week of 9-22-2013 is a celebration of fall tree-planting in Nebraska.

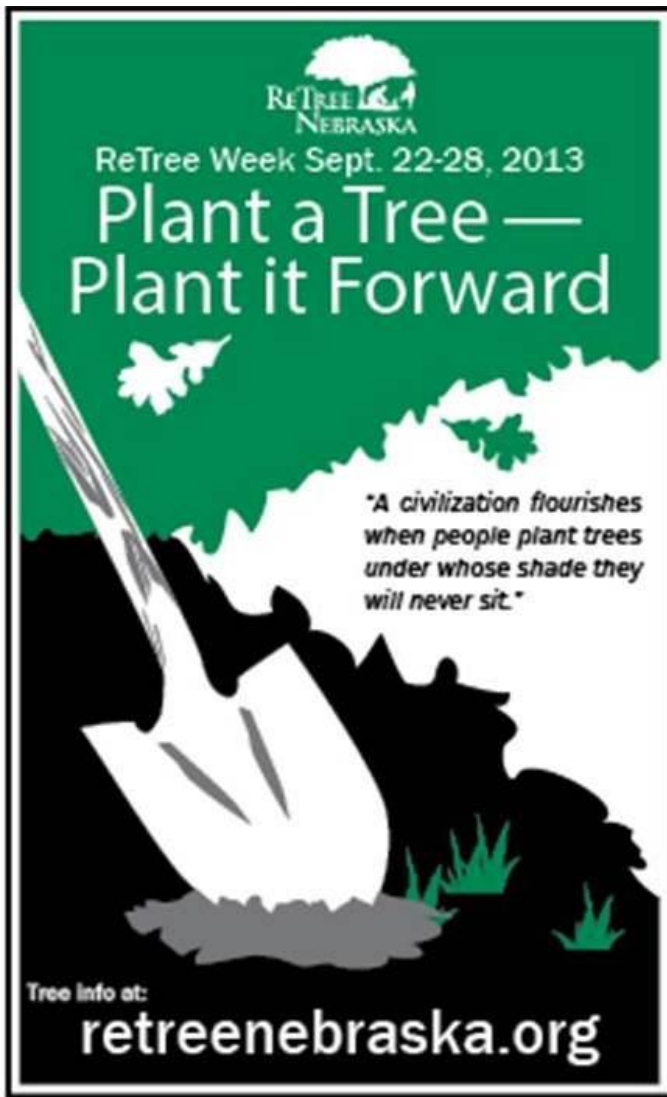
A little over six years ago, on May 5, 2007, I wrote about the Nebraska Forest Service, the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum, UNL's Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources and UNL Extension Services forming a strong partnership with the green industry and together initiating a program called ReTree Nebraska.

Prior to that date, a survey by the Nebraska Forest Service had been conducted involving more than two hundred Nebraska communities. Gleaned from their survey was the staggering fact that since 1977 the state of Nebraska has lost nearly half of its community trees to an assortment of perils. Thus, the time was right for ReTree Nebraska. The goal of ReTree Nebraska was to plant one million high quality trees in Nebraska communities over the next decade. After six years into the program, and to be on target, well over 500,000 trees should have been planted by now. Perhaps that number, and hopefully more, have been, but at present, only 185,473 planted trees have been reported. It appears we have some catching up to do if we intend to reach our goal by 2017.

The idea of replenishing our community forests is not new. An old Greek proverb states, "A civilization flourishes when people plant trees under whose shade they will never sit." In 1885, J. Sterling Morton, founder of Nebraska's very own home-grown holiday Arbor Day, once said, "Each generation takes the earth as trustees. We ought to bequeath to posterity as many forests and orchards as we have exhausted and consumed." The time is now. It is a call for action.

During the week of September 22, 2013, I certainly plan to be actively involved planting trees— knowing very well they will be trees whose shade I may never enjoy. We plant trees for future generations. For ReTree Week, whether you are old, young or in-

between, I encourage you to become involved. Plant a tree or trees— and report them.



Those trees which can be counted toward ReTree Nebraska's one million are trees planted from April, 2007, through April, 2017. They include the following:

- Trees planted within city limits, on public or private land.
- Trees planted for the protection or beautification of houses on acreages and farmstead houses.
- Trees planted for the protection or beautification of rural community buildings such as schools or churches.
- Transplanted wild or seedling trees may be counted if planted in the locations described above.

To learn more about ReTree Week and ReTree Nebraska and how to report your tree or trees, along with other tree facts, go to <http://retreenebraska.org>

Mark your calendar. ReTree Week is less than a month away. Start planning

your planting. Help ReTree Nebraska reach its goal. Hopefully, your children, your grandchildren and your great grandchildren will thank you. One thing is for sure, I thank you.