

PSA News Release

Clemson and Forestry Commission partner to honor Senator

CLEMSON — Clemson University's Strom Thurmond Institute (STI) and the South Carolina Forestry Commission have joined together to celebrate the 100th birthday of Sen. Strom Thurmond.

To honor the senator on Dec. 5 and to recognize Arbor Day on Dec. 6, community groups, individuals and local governments are encouraged to plant oak trees across South Carolina.

"It is a fitting tribute to Senator Thurmond that South Carolinians plant 100 trees across the state," said Donna London, senior research associate, Strom Thurmond Institute. "Like the oak, the senator has strength and longevity. All trees are meaningful symbols of optimism and the future."

The Forestry Commission will register the tree, the person, organization or local government, where it is planted, what type of tree and the contact person. Once compiled, this information will be sent to Thurmond as part of his birthday celebration.

"Although an oak tree has been recommended, if for some reason an oak tree is not available, any tree will do and can be registered," said Bob Scholwaller, state forester. "These trees, oak or not, will be enduring symbols of Senator Thurmond's legacy of service to South Carolina, and the Forestry Commission is proud to participate in this tribute to him."

The American people chose the oak tree as the national tree through a four-month voting process held last year and conducted by the National Arbor Day Foundation.

To register your tree, contact Gloria Freeman at 803-896-8846 or e-mail gfreeman@forestry.state.SC.us.

If you need assistance to determine the location and type of tree that might be suitable for the location or information on tree care and maintenance, contact the urban forester or the Extension office in your county. You may also visit the S.C. Forestry Commission's website at www.state.sc.us/forest/urban.htm.

Strom Thurmond was born in Edgefield and earned his B.S. degree from Clemson University in 1923. He was a farmer, teacher and athletic coach until 1929, when he became the Edgefield County superintendent of education, serving in this position until 1933.

He was admitted to the South Carolina Bar in 1930. He served as the Edgefield town and county attorney from 1930 to 1938.

In 1954, he was elected to the U.S. Senate by a write-in vote, the only person ever elected to the Senate in this manner. Thurmond resigned in 1956 to fulfill a campaign promise. He was re-elected that same year and has served as United States senator since.