

Toluca Coal Mine Arbor Day Celebration

Each Spring, the Unit's Master Gardener and Master Naturalist volunteers collaborate with the Toluca Coal Mine Association in hosting an Arbor Day Celebration at the Toluca Jumbo in Marshall County. Volunteers have historically held brief talks followed by activities focused on learning horticulture and natural resources topics. Past topics have included volunteers leading a tree identification program and a discussion about Illinois geology, as well as programs on how to plant a tree, and the importance of native wildflowers. Youth participants include over 180 Students in 3rd, 4th and 5th grades. In 2019, students were taught the proper way to plant a tree and assisted with the planting of a tree in the Toluca Coal Mine Park. Additionally, students assisted in planting native wildflower plugs, and throwing "wildflower bombs" around the park to establish native species. Our volunteers look forward to assisting with this event each year.



Above left: Students from Fieldcrest School assist in planting native wildflower plugs at the Toluca Coal Mine Park.

Above Right: Master Gardener Frances Morse assists students in planting a tree at the Toluca Coal Mine Park.

Left: Master Gardener Amy-Moore McKee assists a student with making "wildflower seed bombs".