



MEDIA ALERT

Interview and Photo Opportunities

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Conservation Celebrities Gather in Central Park for America's Largest Fundraiser for Tree Research *STIHL Tour des Trees kicks off July 19 in New York City*

WHAT: America's largest fundraiser for tree research, the STIHL Tour des Trees is a weeklong, 500-mile cross-country cycling event throughout the Northeast United States. On Sunday, July 19, the Tour cyclists arrive in Central Park for a kick off event that includes celebrity book signings, tree climbing demonstrations, potted tree giveaways and fun, educational programs for the whole family.

Approximately 70 cyclists ride in the Tour to benefit the Tree Research and Education Endowment (TREE) Fund, an international charitable organization dedicated to advancing knowledge in the field of arboriculture and urban forestry to benefit people, trees and the environment. Since its inception in 1992, the Tour has generated more than \$4.1 million and has funded a host of diverse projects, including a major analysis of recently-planted New York City street trees to determine what can be done to help new transplants live.

The tour travels through three parks designed by world renowned landscape designer and father of American landscape architecture, Fredrick Law Olmsted, including New York's Central Park.

WHO: **Chuck Leavell:** Rolling Stones keyboardist and a noted environmentalist, Leavell recently co-founded the environmental national Web news site Mother Nature Network (mnn.com) and runs a Georgia tree farm, Charlane Plantation, for which he has received several national conservation awards. Leavell is the author of three books on conservation. www.chuckleavell.com, www.mnn.com

P. Allen Smith: Garden expert and *TODAY* show garden contributor, Smith has two television series on gardening and is a best-selling author of the "Garden Home" book series. www.pallensmith.com

Mark Chisholm: Two-time world champion tree climber and a world record holder, Chisholm is a tree care specialist who travels around the world consulting and educating on tree care. http://stihlusa.com/events/events_chisholm.html.

Judith Hope Blau: A successful children's book author and product designer, Blau created the Treetures Environmental Education Program in 1984 as a pro bono endeavor. With whimsical characters dedicated to carrying the message of tree planting and care,



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the program promotes activities held throughout the country that combine environmental education with entertainment for children. www.treetures.com

WHEN: Sunday, July 19
9:30 AM

WHERE: **Central Park**, New York City
Lenox Avenue entrance to the Park, northwest of the Harlem Meer

MORE INFO: www.stihltourdestrees.org or contact Kate Davis at 757-232-2526

SPONSORS: Corporate sponsorships offset the cost of food, housing and logistics along the Tour route. The sponsors of the 2009 event include title sponsor STIHL Inc., crown sponsor National Grid, partners Asplundh Tree Expert Co., Duke Energy, Bartlett Tree Experts and Northeast STIHL, and platinum sponsor The Davey Tree Expert Co. The event is co-sponsored by the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation.

About the TREE Fund:

The TREE Fund's mission is to identify and fund projects and programs that advance knowledge in the field of arboriculture and urban forestry to benefit people, trees, and the environment.

The TREE Fund has supported research that has led to important developments in:

- Understanding air pollution reduction and carbon sequestration by trees
- Determining the costs and benefits of urban trees
- Improving conditions for tree growth in difficult sites
- Strategies to manage diseases and pests that affect urban trees

For more information, visit www.treefund.org.

About STIHL Inc.

STIHL Inc. manufactures the world's largest selling brand of chain saws and produces a full line of powerful, lightweight, and versatile handheld outdoor power equipment for homeowners and professional users. STIHL products are sold through servicing power equipment retailers from coast to coast— not mass merchants. STIHL products sold through U.S. STIHL dealers are for distribution in the United States only. For more information or for the name of the closest STIHL retailer, call toll free 1-800-GO STIHL (1-800-467-8445) or visit the STIHL Web site at www.stihlusa.com.

STIHL is also pleased to support the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA), the Tree Care Industry Association (TCIA), National FFA, Professional Landcare Network (PLANET), the American Tree Farm System (ATFS), and the National Association of State Park Directors (NASPD).

About National Grid:

National Grid is an international energy delivery company. In the U.S., National Grid delivers electricity to approximately 3.3 million customers in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York and Rhode Island, and manages the electricity network on Long Island under an agreement with the Long Island Power Authority (LIPA). For more information visit: www.nationalgrid.com.



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New York City Department of Parks & Recreation

Parks & Recreation is the steward of more than 29,000 acres of land – 14 percent of New York City – including more than 5,000 individual properties ranging from Central Park to community gardens and GreenStreets. We house five major stadia and operate more than 800 athletic fields and nearly 1,000 playgrounds, 550 tennis courts, 65 public pools, 48 recreational facilities, 17 nature centers, 13 golf courses and 14 miles of beaches. We care for 1,200 monuments and 22 historic house museums. We look after 600,000 street trees, and two million more in parks. We are New York City's principal providers of recreational and athletic facilities and programs. We are home to free concerts, world-class sports events and cultural festivals. For more information, please visit www.nyc.gov/parks.

About MillionTreesNYC

MillionTreesNYC, one of the 127 PlaNYC initiatives, is a citywide, public-private program with an ambitious goal: to plant and care for one million new trees across the City's five boroughs over the next decade. By planting one million trees, New York City can increase its urban forest—our most valuable environmental asset made up of street trees, park trees, and trees on public, private and commercial land—by an astounding 20 percent, while achieving the many quality-of-life benefits that come with planting trees. For more information, please visit www.milliontreesnyc.org.

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