

Stihl's Tour des Trees Stops in Camden

The STIHL Tour des Tree made its first visit ever to the state of South Carolina Oct. 13-14. The 2016 Tour started Oct. 9 and ended Oct. 15 in Charlotte, traveling over 600 scenic miles through North and South Carolina. Overnight stops included Mount Airy, Greensboro, Raleigh, and Southern Pines in North Carolina, and Camden. The event was coordinated by the TREE Fund.

The STIHL Tour des Trees, an annual weeklong, 500 to 600-mile cycling adventure, is the primary public outreach and engagement event of the Tree Research and Education Endowment Fund (TREE Fund). Since 1992 Tour riders have cycled to communities large and small in the U.S., Canada and the U.K, planting trees, educating children and shining a light on the work done by arboriculture professionals and the importance of science-based tree care. The Tour also serves to advance the TREE Fund's mission to support scientific discovery and dissemination of new knowledge in arboriculture and urban forestry. Funds raised by riders support research grants, scholarships and arboriculture education programs administered by the TREE Fund. Now in its 25th year, the Tour has raised more than \$6 million for tree research.

The Tour des Trees has proven to be an event that marries a passion for cycling with a passion for the environment. It brings together people from different professions and backgrounds. It is fast becoming a "destination tour" for avid cyclists from all over the United States, Canada and beyond.

The 105 cyclists arrived in Camden from Southern Pines, N.C. This trek marked the fifth and longest day of the 2016 Tour with cyclists biking a total of 123 miles through the sandhills of South Carolina.

Each year Camden hosts Arbor Day. It is a day celebrating the preservation and the planting of trees. America has been involved with it since the 1870s. Each state or city may have a different day to celebrate Arbor Day. Liz Gilland, Camden Urban Forester and local coordinator, explained that "South Carolina usually celebrates Arbor Day



SCFC Coastal Urban Forester Frances Waite and Urban Forestry Coordinator Lowe Sharpe assist TreesSC Executive Director Karen Hauck with handing out refreshments to the riders as they arrive.



The group blesses the oak tree at the dedication ceremony.



Riders entered Camden after a long day of riding hills.

on the first Friday in December, but this year Camden will celebrate it in October." In regards to the Tour, she continued, "It's an exciting event to come to town." "The TREE Fund could have chosen any other South Carolina city, but they chose Camden. We are taking this opportunity of their visit to celebrate Arbor Day and commemorate their visit. It works because they are coming around the time of our annual tree dedication."

A white oak tree was donated by The Camden Tree Foundation and planted at the National Steeplechase Museum. On Friday morning, a kid-friendly

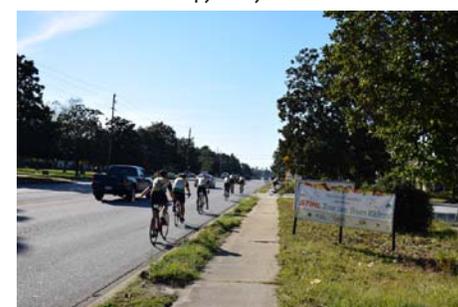
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Riders welcomed the snacks after a long journey on a warm day.



Camden Urban Forester Liz Gilland receives a token of appreciation from TREE Fund CEO Eric Smith and Director of Philanthropy Mary DiCarlo.



Riders finished the day's 123-mile journey at the Colony Inn.



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education program about trees was presented at Jackson Elementary School by Professor Pricklethorn (also known as, Tour rider and arborist Warren Hoselton). A black gum tree was donated by the Tree Foundation and planted on the school grounds. Kids participating in the event received a book pertaining to trees. After the ceremonies, the cyclists headed to Charlotte to end their weeklong ride.

Trees SC provided refreshments for the tour riders at the end of their day's journey. The Forestry Commission was one of the many co-sponsors and provided much-needed on-the-ground assistance with setup, photography and the design and printing of welcome banners.

For more information, visit <http://stihltourdestrees.org/>.



A rider is completely exhausted after the 123-mile ride.