



News Release

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Students join Detroit Metropolitan Airport, Wayne County Parks and Davey Tree Expert Company for Arbor Day event

-- 2017 marks the 2nd year for the event and 20th anniversary of Crosswinds Marsh

SUMPTER TOWNSHIP, Mich. (April 27, 2017) – More than 150 students will receive a real life science lesson during the second annual Arbor Day event sponsored by Detroit Metropolitan Airport (DTW), Wayne County Parks and The Davey Tree Expert Company. This year’s theme is “Pollinators and Partners.” Sixth through eighth graders from Gesu Catholic School in Detroit and Renton Junior High School in New Boston will learn about sustainability; the important role of wildflowers, trees and insects in the ecosystem; and the value of wetlands. The event will begin at 8:30 a.m. on Friday, April 28 at Crosswinds Marsh Wetlands Interpretive Preserve, 27600 Haggerty Road, Sumpter Township.

Crosswinds Marsh is one of the largest and most successful wetland mitigation projects in the country. The 1000-acre nature preserve is maintained by Wayne County Parks under an agreement with the Airport Authority—which operates DTW—making Crosswinds Marsh the ideal location for this collaboration.

Throughout the event, students will visit a variety of learning stations, assist with the planting and seeding of a wildflower meadow, and the installation of a butterfly garden. A bee community will also be established to help with the declining population of bees and other pollinators in the region. In recognition of Arbor Day, the students will each receive a sapling to take home and more than 100 pollinating and flowering trees will be planted at Crosswinds Marsh in the days following the event.

“Our airport prides itself on our commitment to sustainability,” said Airport Authority CEO Joseph Nardone. “The Arbor Day event is another opportunity for us to not only invest in our environment, but also our community. Our team has worked closely with Gesu Catholic School and Renton Junior High to ensure this is a meaningful educational experience. We provided the students with caterpillars to nurture as they evolve into butterflies. Those butterflies will be released on Arbor Day. We’re grateful to Wayne County Executive Warren Evans and his team who make certain Crosswinds Marsh continues to be a gem in our region.”

“We are proud to team up with the Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport and Davey Tree for another Arbor Day,” said Wayne County Executive Warren C. Evans. “It’s a good opportunity to beautify our community while creating solutions to protect and enhance the environment. At the same time, hopefully we will foster a greater appreciation for the outdoors and inspire some of our youth to be stewards of our natural resources.”

“The wildflower meadow and pollinator garden that Davey Tree and the children plant will attract the kinds of beneficial insects that we know make a big difference in our greater environment,” said Davey Tree Branch Manager Jeff Kecskes. “These flowers will not only look beautiful, but they’ll also positively impact the local landscape for years to come.”

Representatives from the Airport Authority, Wayne County Parks and the SmithGroupJJR will kick off the event with a brief program at **9:15 a.m.** Immediately following, students will rotate between four learning stations, assist with planting and tour the park. Davey Tree; DTW; Green Toe Gardens; Mary Kreczkowski, a volunteer member of the Southeast Michigan Butterfly Association; SmithGroupJJR; Wayne County Parks and Wayne County Soil Conservation District will deliver presentations and have educational displays. The festivities will end with the release of more than 400 butterflies at **1:40 p.m.** in the newly created butterfly garden. Although the event is not open to the public, the park will remain open throughout the day for visitors to enjoy.

Hundreds of species of birds, fish and mammals can be spotted at Crosswinds Marsh including bald eagles, egrets, herons, muskrats, fox, coyote and whitetail deer. The park features boardwalks, hiking trails and equestrian trails.

Construction of Crosswinds Marsh began in 1991 to mitigate wetlands that would soon be disturbed at DTW during major capital improvements, including a new crosswind runway, a runway extension, a new air traffic control tower, a new access road, the McNamara Terminal and other infrastructure improvements. Soil was excavated, drains were redirected and thousands of wetland plants, such as marsh marigolds, hairy asters and water lilies were established as part of the Marsh construction. After collaborating with Sumpter Township residents and leaders, the Marsh opened as a public park in 1997 operated by Wayne County.

When Wayne County Airport Authority was established as an independent agency in 2002, it assumed the County's obligations related to Detroit Metropolitan Airport, Willow Run Airport and Crosswinds Marsh.

Detroit Metropolitan Airport was honored with several awards for the construction of Crosswinds Marsh including the 1999 *Environmental Achievement Award* from Airports Council International-North America. This year marks the 20th anniversary of Crosswinds Marsh.

Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport (DTW) welcomed more than 34 million passengers in 2016 and is one of the world's leading air transportation hubs. With service from 13 scheduled passenger airlines, Michigan's largest airport offers more than 1,100 flights per day to and from more than 140 non-stop destinations on four continents. With two award-winning passenger terminals, six jet runways, and an onsite AAA Four-Diamond Westin Hotel, DTW is among the world's most efficient, customer friendly and operationally capable airports in North America. DTW is operated by Wayne County Airport Authority, which also operates nearby Willow Run Airport – an important corporate, cargo and general aviation facility. The Airport Authority is entirely self-sustaining and does not receive tax dollars to support airport operations. Visit www.metroairport.com for more information.

Wayne County Parks is a division of the Wayne County Department of Public Services with the purpose of enhancing the quality of life for families and citizens of the 43 communities of Wayne County. We maintain 5,600 acres of parkland and operate 35 parks, two golf courses, and the Wayne County Family Aquatic Center. Wayne County Parks holds dozens of educational and recreational events all year long including field trips, nature walks, and host classic annual events such as the Marshmallow Drops at Nankin Mills and Elizabeth Park, New Country on the River, and Jazz on the River. Wayne County is committed to offering the best park experiences for families to enjoy. For more information about Wayne County Parks, please call (734) 261-1990 or visit www.parks.waynecounty.com.

The Davey Tree Expert Company's more than 8,600 employees provide tree care, grounds maintenance and environmental consulting services for the residential, utility, commercial and government markets throughout the U.S. and Canada. Davey has provided Proven Solutions for a Growing World since 1880 and has been employee-owned for 38 years. For more information, visit www.davey.com.

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