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Overland Park to Celebrate National NeighborWoods Month

Sponsored by The Home Depot Foundation

Overland Park, Kan. – October 1, 2006. Heartland Tree Alliance/Bridging the Gap today announced that it will plant/maintain 25 trees as part of their Pruning Field Day. This event is one of more than 100 greening efforts throughout the country being promoted during October, which has been declared National NeighborWoods Month by the national nonprofit, the Alliance for Community Trees (ACT). Heartland Tree Alliance is a member of ACT's NeighborWoods Network.

HTA offers TreeKeepers, a 6-week course that covers all kinds of information about trees- soils, disease, planting, pruning, etc. There are 2 outdoor sessions, one on tree ID and one on pruning. This is the second field day for HTA's Tree Keepers class. This class will train volunteers to help care for young trees on public property throughout the Kansas City metro area.

"It's great to be working on an important greening effort at a time when other organizations are doing so as well," said Suzy Latare. "Part of our goal is to draw attention to the good work being done at the grassroots level all across the country to improve urban and community forests." Heartland Tree Alliance seeks to inspire people of our region to understand the importance of the community forest through active participation and education.

Heartland Tree Alliance's celebration will take place as follows:
Oct 7, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Call for location.

"Having local organizations like Heartland Tree Alliance participate in National NeighborWoods Month helps us show the cumulative effect of a burgeoning urban and community forestry movement," said ACT Executive Director Alice Ewen Walker. Founded in 1993, the Alliance for Community Trees is a national coalition of 97 nonprofit organizations engaged in urban and community forestry. Its members are dedicated to grassroots community greening, public education, policymaking, job training, environmental design and other activities that support better urban forest stewardship.

Strategically planted trees contribute to energy conservation, improved children's health, increase property values, lower crime rates, save municipalities money through savings in stormwater management infrastructure, and encourage shoppers to linger longer. For example, children in neighborhoods with fewer trees have five times less lung function and higher school absences. Shaded streets require about 60% less sealant roadwork than unshaded streets. It is estimated that for every \$1 a city invests in trees, it receives up to \$3.74 in benefits.

NeighborWoods Month is sponsored through a generous grant from The Home Depot Foundation. "National NeighborWoods Month offers a unique opportunity for people to understand the contributions of trees to the health, beauty and livability of their communities," said Kelly Caffarelli, executive director of The Home Depot Foundation. "By partnering with ACT and local NeighborWoods organizations like Heartland Tree Alliance, The Foundation is able to further its goals of investing in the overall health and success of our communities."

About The Home Depot Foundation

The Home Depot Foundation was created in 2002 to further the community-building goals of The Home Depot by providing additional resources to assist nonprofit organizations in building affordable, efficient and healthy homes throughout the United States and Canada. The Home Depot Foundation administers grant-making programs in the areas of "Affordable Housing, Built Responsibly" and "Community Trees – Healthy Neighborhoods." Since its formation, The Home Depot Foundation has granted more than \$25 million to nonprofit and government organizations throughout North America. For more information, visit homedepotfoundation.org.

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