

MEDIA RELEASE

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Bridgewater Mayor Dan Hayes Announces Fall Tree Dedication Ceremony

Township Partners with the Assam Foundation of North America to Honor Internationally Renowned Assam Forester Jadav Payeng

The Bridgewater Township Shade Tree Board (Team Arbor) and the Assam Foundation of North America (AFNA) are pleased to announce a tree dedication ceremony to honor the internationally renowned forester Jadav Payeng. The free community event will take place on Saturday, 17 October at 10:00 AM at Chimney Rock Park. The park is located on Chimney Rock Road, Martinsville. The event will include a memorial tree dedication, live music and a display of folk dance from Assam. The ceremony is sponsored through the support of the Assam Foundation of North America (AFNA).

Jadav Payeng is a Mishing tribe environmental activist and forester from the river island Majuli, Jorhat, India. Over the course of several decades, he has singlehandedly transformed almost 1,400 acres of a river sandbar into a bustling forest ecosystem through the planting and tending of thousands of trees. That's equivalent to an area almost twice the size of Central Park in New York City. In recent years the island has been transformed into a preserve for over 100 species of trees and plants as well as a wildlife refuge for elephants, tigers, monkeys, birds and the rare one-horned Indian rhinoceros.

The celebration also marks Bridgewater's achievement as a recognized Tree City USA for the 19th consecutive year and honors the community for its commitment to effective urban forest management. The Tree City USA program is sponsored by the Arbor Day Foundation in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service and the National Association of State Foresters. The celebration will include the recognition of the Roots and Shoots Club from Hillside Intermediate School for the students' support of the local tree canopy and their commitment to the preservation of the Rain Forest.

For more information about the tree dedication ceremony and celebration please feel free to contact Chris O. Poulsen, Township Director of Human Services, by telephone at (908) 725-5750 or by email at cpoulsen@bridgewaternj.gov. Additional information about the Assam Foundation of North America is available at www.assamfoundation.net.