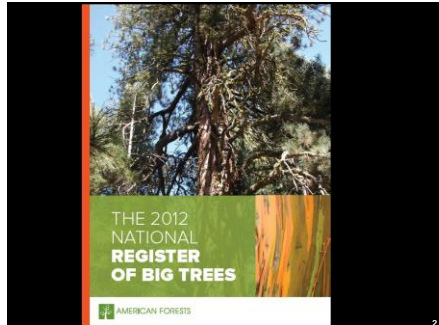


Slide 1



Slide 2



The American Forests keeps a record of our Nation's champion trees, the largest tree of record for any particular species.

Slide 3



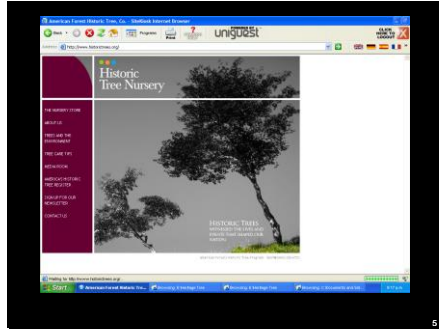
The Texas Forest Service keeps a list of the Champion Trees of Texas. Many municipalities or regions have similar lists for local champions. It takes a considerable amount of time to keep these lists accurate and current.

Slide 4



When new trees are nominated they must to be located and measured. Current champions must be regularly visited and re measured. Why would we expend valuable staff time and resources to maintain a big tree registry?

Slide 5



The American Forests has a record of America's historic trees. Through the cooperation of regional and State Forest Services seeds are collected from historic trees and sent to the National Arbor Day Foundation's Tree Farm.

Slide 6



There they are germinated and seedlings are offered for sale to the public for \$39.95 each.

Why would anyone pay \$40 for a mere seedling? You can easily buy a 5 or 10 gallon tree from any home improvement store at that price. Why do we hold some trees with such reverence?

Slide 7



People see trees as a bond with the past, a gateway to their heritage. The older or larger the tree, the more they feel that connection. They purchase an offspring from an historic tree as a way to connect to their inheritance.

Slide 8



When someone seeks out a champion tree they do so out of respect and appreciation. Seeing or touching an old tree can be almost spiritual in nature. It's usually not because the tree had the ability to reach a particular size, but what that size represents; age, witness and a connection to the past.

Slide 9



FW has been called where the west begins and has a very rich and colorful history. The citizens of Fort Worth are proud of that history. No matter if we are new comers or have been here all of our lives, the history of our town is a part of who we are. That shared experience binds us together and makes us a community.

Slide 10



Landmarks that demonstrate that heritage become gathering places. FW is rich with historic places, buildings and landmarks. Visit a FW citizen and you'll be drug to at least a few of them.

Slide 11



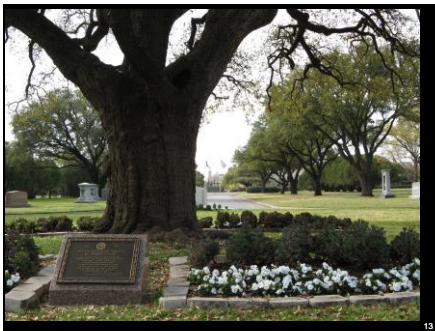
When those first settlers came to live in Fort Worth they found mostly tall prairie grasses. There were dense stands of trees along the banks of the Trinity. The nearest sizable woods were the Eastern Cross Timbers where the far east Fort Worth and the mid cities area are today. The shorter post oaks of the Western Cross Timbers lay near the rocky hills to the west. A few opportunistic stands of post oaks stood on sandy slopes to the north east of the settlement where Calvary Cathedral and Oakhurst and Riverside Neighborhoods are now. However, what they knew at the time as the Settlement of Fort Worth had little to offer in the way of shade.

Slide
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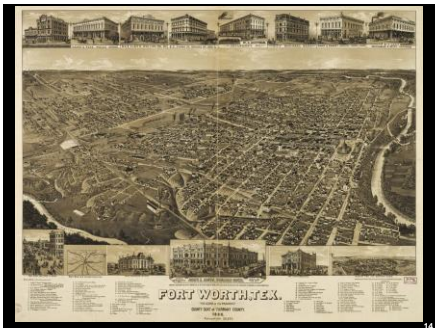
A few of Fort Worth's founding fathers established their farms and ranches outside the settlement and preserved the few scattered live oaks they found. Often they would build their homes near a lone tree. In hot Texas summers without benefit of air conditioning the spreading branches of a single old live oak would have been an inviting place.

Slide
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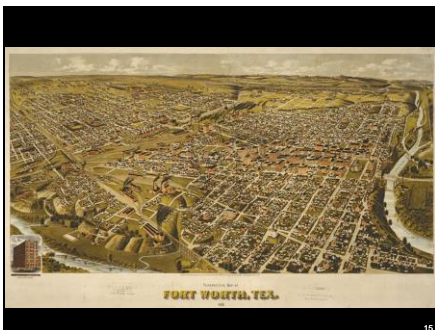
Weddings suppers of prominent Fort Worth Citizens were held beneath these rare stately oaks.

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Straight away the city started planting trees along the hot dusty streets of Fort Worth. So cherished were they that the City Charter made it illegal to hitch a horse to, or deface a City tree.

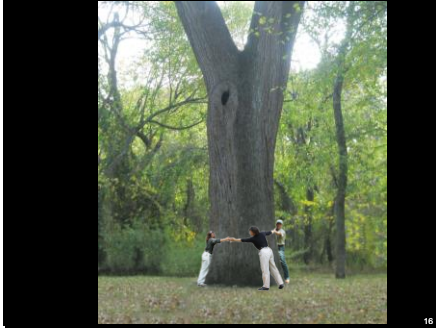
Slide
15



Our love of trees grew with Fort Worth and where new buildings went up, trees were planted beside them. It has been a grand tradition in Fort Worth to cherish what we have, and plan for the future at the same time.

The City hired its first Urban Forester in the early 1920's. As far as we know, it was the first municipal Forester in Texas.

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Trees are a part of our history. But history can be lost. Stories can be forgotten. Without chronicling, our legacy can slowly disappear. When that happens our connection to each other as a community is diminished.

(*click*)

Where once a historic marker stood now stands just another tree in the way of progress.

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We discovered a need in Fort Worth to reconnect to our oldest citizens. Those that had seen the birth of our City and had sheltered our founding fathers.

The stories behind many of these silent witnesses had been lost. Sometimes a lone sign hinting at some significance was all that was left..

Tell story of JPS Tree

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In 2008 Fort Worth was becoming the fastest growing city of her size in the United States. An influx of new Fort Worth Citizens unconnected to her roots and a development fury with a gold rush mentality was jeopardizing our living legacy

This suspected Indian Marker Tree was lost to a parking lot.

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A live oak over 50 inches in diameter on public land was lost that same year to construction. Less than 1% of all trees in Fort Worth are over 30". A live oak over 50 inches would be rare in our city. There was no outcry at it's loss. No one missed it, even though it was in plain site, and had been passed by hundreds of people each year, they had no reason to stop and contemplate its significance.

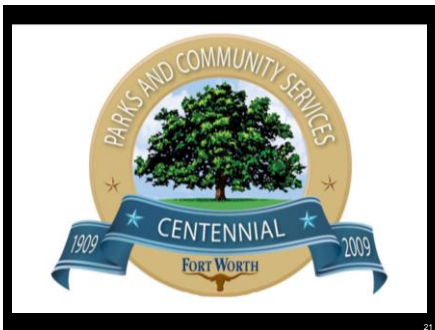
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Several months later we learned tree had stood at a favorite camping spot of cowhands working the Chisum Trail.

In order to preserve these significant trees, we had to first find them and then reconnect them our citizens.

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In 2009, our Parks and Community Services celebrated it's 100th birthday. Each month a different division of the Department held a unique event to commemorate Parks 100th birthday. 2009 was also Fort Worth's 30th year as Tree City USA. It was an ideal opportunity to initiate the Heritage Tree Campaign. We had instant buy-in from our department and City leaders.

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We developed a media campaign asking our citizens to seek out the trees in Fort Worth that bind us together as a community either through a shared history, a landmark or a bragging right for size or uniqueness. We asked them to tell us the story behind the tree so that we could preserve that heritage for future generations. The trees accepted would be announced on Arbor Day, April 24th, 2009.

A press release went in the City Page of Fort Worth Star Telegram, City Times, the Councilmember newsletters, a targeted email campaign to all Neighborhood Association Presidents, volunteers, Citizen Foresters and other partners.

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At the time the Fort Worth had a Community Relations Department. Their job, among other things, was to offer themselves as guest speakers to Home Owner Associations informing citizens of the services offered by the City.

We developed a scripted Power Point Presentation for them to easily introduce the Heritage Tree Campaign and seek nominations.

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We took the Community Relations employees on a tour of trees that we believed were good potential heritage tree candidates. They became valuable advocates for the program.

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Citizens could nominate a Single tree or group of trees

The nomination form asked for at least one of the following criteria

Unusual size, age, species or distinguishing characteristics

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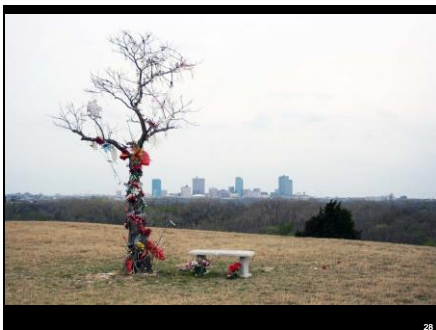
- Contributes to and significantly strengthens community ties

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- Located on a historic site or contributes to the sites history

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- Enjoys notoriety

Slide
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Or serves as a well know landmark

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It was truly rewarding endeavor. The nominations were a delight to read. We discovered trees we hadn't previously known of and discovered the history behind trees that had been a mystery.

We had over 70 nominations. We assembled a panel of anonymous judges representing urban forestry experts, historians, educators and tree advocates. They looked for a thread that tied the trees to Fort Worth and made it a part of our heritage. In the end, our judges found 43 nominations that met the criteria.

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We invited all those who had nominated a tree to join us in celebrating Arbor Day for the formal announcement of Fort Worth's Heritage Trees.

Certificates were designed and printed for the owner of each heritage tree as well as the nominator.

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We could think of no better place to hold Arbor Day than at the once mysterious John Peter Smith Oak.

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It was the best attended municipal Arbor Day ceremony we'd had in over 10 years. Entire neighborhoods turned out to see if their tree make Heritage status and receive their certificate.

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We displayed a map of all the Heritage Trees whose owners had granted us permission to disclose their location

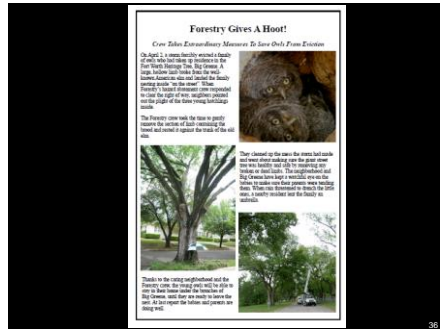
(panic ensued)

Slide
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We also offered a handout map of all the nearby Heritage trees for citizens to visit on their own.

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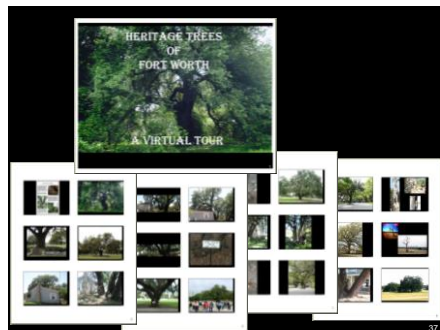
Just days before the ceremony one of the Heritage Trees, called the Greene Tree, had a broken limb which contained a nest of screech owls.

(Forestry crews saved the section with the babies)
(owners offered up umbrella)

Took opportunity to gleam some positive press by printing the story complete with photos and mounting on foam board. We displayed at the ceremony.

The nominator's asked for the board and display it at their next HOA meeting

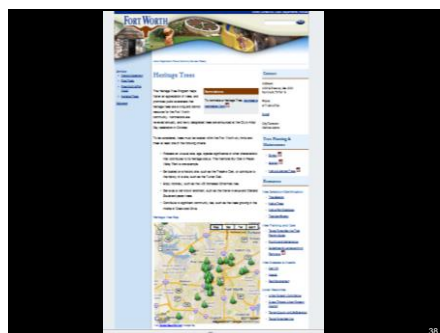
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Our first objective had been met, to seek out Fort Worth's heritage trees.

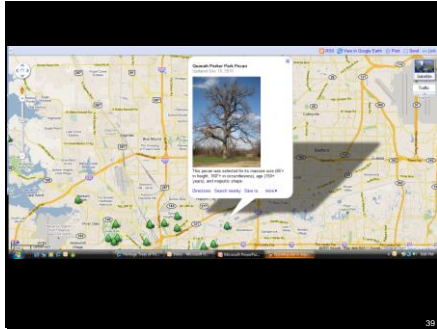
Our next step was to make others aware of their presence. We developed a virtual tour. A powerpoint presentation available for neighborhood and organizational meetings. In the V.T. even the trees with undisclosed locations could be highlighted.

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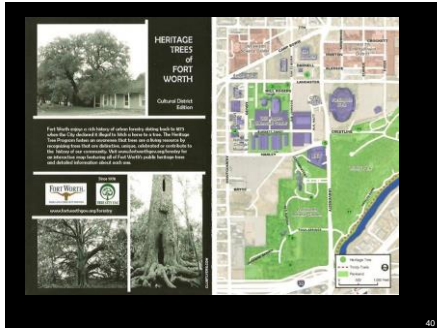
Last fall we posted an interactive map on our web site. This google based map has an icon for each Heritage Tree with a publicly disclosed location.

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Clicking a tree icon will pull up a brief description of the tree. You can save the maps to “my maps” or save just individual trees. With a google maps application you can view the map via your smart phone.

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A postcard designed to interest and direct users to the website was placed in areas that draw patrons interested in nature or history, such as the Botanic Garden, the Nature Center, and Log Cabin Village. Post cards were also placed Visitors Bureau prior to super bowl. For our visitors who wanted to see historic trees covered in snow it was a valuable tool.

The post card is also used as handouts at presentations to direct people to our website to visit our heritage trees in person.

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Have we met our objectives to find, highlight and protect? I believe we are off to a good start.

These three live oaks stand at Rockwood Golf Course. Each is over 50” DBH. They once had a 4th companion that was lost in 2008 to build a driving range. These trees will be spared that fate, simply because someone took the time to nominate them as Heritage Trees.

The First T had plans to build a club house at Rockwood. They wanted it near their new driving range. Their plan was to lift the canopy on this half of the tree to place the building underneath. Once they learned of the tree’s Heritage Status, and therefore its significance they were willing to pay for a complete redesign of their structure.

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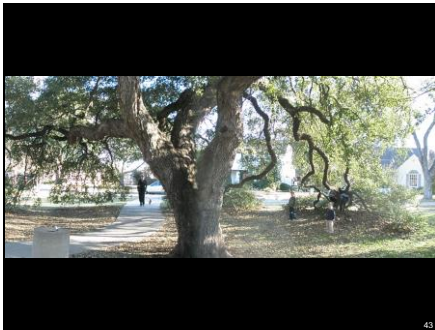


The building went from a boring rectangle to a C shape. The building was moved well beyond the tree's critical root zone. Over 2/3 of the foundation is pier and beam to further minimize impact.

The architect was so inspired to have his building near a heritage tree he built designed a suspended deck for viewing the tree. There are windows on either side of the building and an interior architectural detail inside the building so that standing on the opposite side your eye will be drawn through the building and to the tree. The building was not simply designed around the tree but celebrating the tree.

This was just the beginning. The designers and the First T decided to take it further and strive for Lead Certification.

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A storm sewer line proposed through Monticello Park was moved back into the street where it belongs to save the Monticello Oak. A tree more ancient and fragile than any I have seen in Fort Worth.

The Harley Street Live Oaks were saved from a similar fate.

Heritage Trees are getting the attention they deserve.

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The Trader's Oak almost completely choked out by vines was tended by hard working volunteers including Citizen Foresters led by Forestry staff. Later Forestry crews gingerly raised the canopy just enough to allow mowing and prevent vines from taking hold again.

The trees at Rockwood have been tended by Bartlett Tree, free of charge.

Though the Forestry Section only performs Hazard abatement pruning, that needed to protect citizens and property. We have recently changed our policy on Heritage Status Trees. They are now considered as valuable as any historic building and pruning will be performed to assure their health and preservation.

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The Tree That Started it all.

explain mystery of JPS tree

Most of the land around the cultural district belonged to Major Van Zandt, a early settler and founder of Fort Worth. This tree was on the 600 acres he purchased just west of the Trinity from Fort Worth.

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Van Zandt donated part of his land to the FWISD. Legend has it, one requirement was that they preserve this old tree. We do not know what caused the affection Major Van Zandt had for the tree, if there was some significant event from his life that took place, such as a wedding, church services, or some other gathering of friends, or if he simply loved the magnificent oak which was a mature tree even when the Major owned it.

We do know that the school district shared that affection. FWISD original logo was a drawing of the oak with the words “growing stronger” beneath.

One of Fort Worth’s early schools, the Van Zandt West Side School, was built near the giant, leafy oak. Later, the old Administration Building shared the property.

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In the 1980’s, the school board voted to name the tree in honor of John Peter Smith, who in 1854, opened the city’s first school and helped establish the city’s public school system.

Later the land would be sold the Kimbell Art Foundation with the stipulation that the property always be used for education, and the beloved tree be preserved. The Kimbell publicly stated they would gladly preserve the tree, a work of beauty in it’s own right.

When we first started this Journey a few years back, we couldn’t find anything about the John Peter Smith Oak. Today if you google him you will find a little more that two pages of websites that mention him.

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Through his life , he's lived on a grassland, grazed by buffalo and elk. He sat on the property of one our the areas most outstanding citizens and no doubt hosted at least a few gatherings. Had children play and laugh beneath his branches recessing from books and chalk boards. He watched a cultural district rise around him including the nearby Will Rogers Coliseum, The Kimbell, The Modern and the Amon Carter. And he still gathers us together under shade of his open branches. He bacons us, invites us to share as a community in his wealth, in our heritage.