

NEWS RELEASE

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Parks Board initiates search for Town's largest Bur Oak

PROSPER (September 17, 2018) Acting as nature's primary air pollution filters, providing food, lodging and nesting support for wildlife, fighting against erosion, adding stately beauty to landscapes, and increasing the value of property, trees are both vital and irreplaceable.

To celebrate their undisputed importance and versatility, the Parks and Recreation Department has initiated the Champion Tree Contest, a fun initiative to find the largest Bur Oak in Prosper. The contest runs through Monday, Oct. 8 and will result in the placement of an engraved plaque near the winning tree.

Conceived, developed and sponsored by the Prosper Parks and Recreation Board, the contest is part of the effort to support urban forestry within the Town of Prosper. All Prosper residents are invited to explore and join the hunt. Champions in other species of trees will be featured in future years.

The Bur Oak is one of the most majestic, impressive oak trees in North America. Its massive trunk can grow to 10 feet in diameter and it's not uncommon for Bur Oaks to grow to be 200 to 300 years old. Some may live up to 400 years. Arborists know it by its scientific name, *Quercus Macrocarpa*, and have documented its presence throughout the US and Canada.

The unique feature of the Bur Oak is very large acorns, the largest of any North American oak, often one to two inches long and over one inch broad with a large cup that wraps around much of the nut. Bur Oaks have broad, variable leaves with greenish-yellow flowers produced in the spring and deeply furrowed bark. A Google search for "images of bur oaks" can produce excellent photos illustrating the tree's canopy, its individual leaves, acorns, and distinctive bark.

"We encourage Prosper families to have some fun learning about trees and hunting on their property or in our Prosper parks for a large Bur Oak to enter into the contest," said Dudley Raymond, Director of Parks and Recreation. "As we head into Texas Arbor Day, we look to this contest to bring attention to the beautiful trees and forests in our community."

Prosper's Second Annual Arbor Day celebration is set for Saturday, Nov. 3, from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m., at Pecan Grove Park, 831 Del Carmen Drive.

Once a tree has been identified as an eligible entry into the contest, residents are asked to submit measurements of the trunk's diameter and the exact location of their entry, along with a digital photo if possible, to Matt Furr, Parks Supervisor at matt.furr@prospertx.gov.

A photo of the person or family identifying the Champion Tree will be featured on all of the Town's social media accounts. In the event more than one entry identifies the Champion, the entry with the earliest submission date will be declared the winner.

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ABOUT THE TOWN OF PROSPER – The Town of Prosper is a fast-growing suburb with small town charm, located 30 miles north of Dallas at the crossroads of U.S. 380, Preston Road and the Dallas North Tollway in Collin and Denton Counties. Prosper sits on 27 square miles and is home to more than 24,000 people. A home-rule municipality, governed by a council-manager form of government, the town has full-time fire and police departments, including its own dispatch service. As the Town grows to its projected build-out population of 70,000 residents, Prosper's vision is to remain a "Place Where Everyone Matters."