

NEWS RELEASE

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Second annual search for largest Prosper tree begins *Champion Tree Contest seeks largest Live Oak*

PROSPER (September 26, 2019) Prosper's annual community-wide search for the largest tree of a certain species enters its second year as the Parks and Recreation Department announces that the venerable Live Oak is this year's objective.

Called the Champion Tree Contest, the search-and-identify campaign is conducted in support of urban forestry within the Town. The contest is a fun initiative that challenges residents to find the largest Live Oak, pinpoint its location and measure the trunk's girth, sending the info to officials via email. The contest runs through Monday, Oct. 7. The winning entry will be revealed on the Town's social media sites and an engraved plaque will be located near the eventual Champion Tree.

The Live Oak is acclaimed in the South as a symbol of enduring strength. The tree earned its well-deserved name because its leaves remains green and "alive" throughout the winter when other oaks become dormant and shed their foliage.

The famed U.S.S. Constitution reportedly received its nickname, "Old Ironsides," during the War of 1812 because its hull was so tough that cannon balls from British war ships literally bounced off. Not surprisingly, the hull's planks were made with wood from Live Oaks. Live Oaks are known to live for hundreds of years, spreading their generous canopies in majestic sweeps. When reaching about 20 years of age, they begin producing sweet, edible acorns that are a favorite of turkeys, ducks, jays, quail, and deer.

One of the largest known Live Oak trees can be found in neighboring Louisiana. The "Seven Sisters Oak" is estimated to be over a thousand years old and has a trunk circumference of over 37 feet, that the equivalent of six adults with outstretched arms forming a circle. Its crown spreads out about 150 feet, that's half the length of a football field.

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

The annual Prosper Arbor Day celebration is set for Saturday, Nov. 2, from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. at Folsom Park, 901 White River Drive.

To participate in the Champion Tree Contest, Prosper residents must submit measurements of the diameter of the trunk and the exact location of their entry to Parks Supervisor Matt Furr at matt.furr@prospertx.gov.

Last year's inaugural winner was a Bur Oak located at Horseshoe Court and Glacier Point Court in Whitley Place. The winner was submitted by Bill and Georgette Guernsey.

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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 25,000 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."