

Dauphin Co. names 'official tree'

in bicentennial year



Dauphin County's largest living tree is the John Goodway Sycamore located in Lower Paxton Township.

HARRISBURG — Dauphin County Commissioners Jack Munnich, Norm Hetrick and Larry Hochendoner at their April 18 meeting signed a proclamation adopting the American Sycamore as Dauphin County's official tree. Their proclamation stated, "It is proper that during Dauphin County's Bicentennial Celebration an official recognition of the county's forested natural resources should be made."

This species was selected for its longevity, aesthetic and historical values. Duayne Forsberg, resource specialist with the Dauphin County Conservation District, submitted the American Sycamore as the major candidate for Dauphin County's official tree to the Board of County Commissioners. Forsberg had solicited the expertise of various foresters in the process of selecting a county tree.

The American Sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*) is an easily recognized tree because of its multicolored mottled bark. As the tree matures the bark

separates into large thin scales that resemble pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. It is also noted for the hanging fruiting ball that falls apart by every fall.

Commonly found along Dauphin County's streams in small groves the American Sycamore is frequently used by wood ducks that nest in the hollow cavities caused by damaged or broken limbs. Many canoeists and fishermen have stopped their sport to rest under the shade of one of the largest trees in the eastern deciduous forests.

In a recent news article prepared by Forsberg a number of historical aspects of the American Sycamore in Dauphin County were highlighted.

Long before the Pennsylvania Legislature established Dauphin County on March 4, 1785, seven trees were struggling for survival. Today, those seven trees stand as living giants of Dauphin County's heritage and as a visual tribute to "Celebrate 200!," Dauphin County's Bicentennial. Officially, they are among the oldest of their

species in Pennsylvania.

A lone American Sycamore stands just out of sight along Langletown Road in Lower Paxton Township. The John Goodway Sycamore is the largest living tree in Dauphin County. With a 22'5" circumference, it stands 113 feet high with a crown spread of 131 feet. The Goodway Sycamore is one of seven trees in Dauphin County that are honored as a Penn Tree.

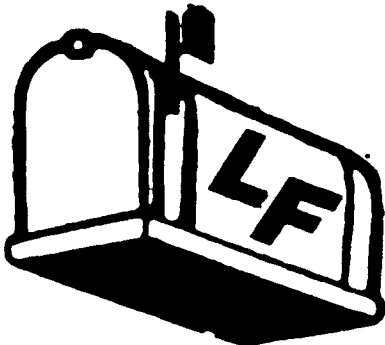
Penn Trees are individual native species that have been living since William Penn first stood on Pennsylvania soil in 1682. Less than 400 trees across the Commonwealth are classified as Penn Trees by the Penn Tree Committee.

Egg production up 24%

HARRISBURG — Pennsylvania's March egg production totaled 398 million, 24 percent above March 1984 production, according to the Pennsylvania Crop and Livestock Reporting Service. The average number of layers on hand during March was 17.7 million compared with 14.8 million on hand a year ago. Egg production per 100 layers was 2,252 compared with 2,174 for March 1984.

United States laying flocks produced 5.93 billion eggs during March, up two percent from the 5.79 billion produced a year ago. The total number of layers during March averaged 278 million, virtually unchanged from a year ago. March egg production per 100 layers was 2,138 compared with 2,084 eggs for March 1984.

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