



## HERITAGE TREE PROGRAM

The Westerville Parks and Recreation Department and the Westerville Shade Tree Commission are seeking help from residents in identifying local trees for inclusion in the “Heritage Tree” program. The Heritage Tree program is conducted by the Parks and Recreation Department under the Division of Urban Forestry. The objective of the program is to identify and assist in the preservation of Westerville’s largest trees as part of the community’s heritage and the city’s 35-year long recognition as a Tree City USA. A Heritage Tree is the largest tree of its species within the city limits of Westerville. The tree must be a species native to the United States or introduced to this country more than 100 years ago.

Residents are encouraged to nominate a tree for the Heritage Tree program by obtaining forms available on the City website, [www.westerville.org](http://www.westerville.org). Once you’re on the website look under Services for Parks & Recreation and then Urban Forestry. At the bottom of the page is a link to the nomination form with instructions on what to do. The Shade Tree Commission measures and archives all nominated trees. The largest individual tree of each species will be identified as a Heritage Tree and adorned with a plaque. In addition, owners and finders of Heritage trees will receive a certificate of recognition from the Parks and Recreation Department.

This year, the Parks and Recreation Department and the Shade Tree Commission are searching for the largest Common Baldcypress (*Taxodium distichum*) in Westerville to add to the Heritage Tree listing. Baldcypress is native to the eastern United States and is commonly found in wetlands or along streams and rivers. The tree is a conifer with reddish-brown bark and soft, sage green needles which turn orange or pumpkin brown, and drop in the fall. We will also continue to accept nominations for other tree species.

This year, the Shade Tree Commission will be working to create an informational brochure which will include a self guided tour of Heritage Trees located on public property. This brochure will also be made available to residents on the City’s website, under Urban Forestry, when completed.

More information on Heritage Trees is available by calling Matt Ulrey, Parks and Urban Forestry Manager, at (614) 901-6598. If you want to learn more about the National Register of Big Trees visit the American Forests web site at [www.americanforests.org](http://www.americanforests.org).

Submitted by Samuel Dardinger for The Westerville Shade Tree Commission