

# PRESS RELEASE

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FOR: COLLIER ARBOR CARE

## PRO BONO WORK LENGTHENS LIFE OF SALEM'S WHIP TREE

A two-man crew of Certified Arborists from Clackamas' Collier Arbor Care spent last Friday making sure that Silverton's 154-year-old Riding Whip Tree will continue its long life as one of the State of Oregon's 45 official Heritage trees.

Currently owned by Jim Toeler at Geercrest farms, 12390 Sunnyview Rd. NE outside of Salem, the Black Cottonwood had been in poor health for some time before Collier's two-person crew did the pro-bono thinning of the tree's crown and extended the mulch area out to the dripline.

There had been significant dieback in the crown and the tree had a history of large branch failure, so Collier's arborists used the firm's bucket truck to accomplish the large cuts needed in the crown.

"We stayed out of that tree because of the history of large branch failure. There have been weddings under this tree and I told Jim to keep people away from it until we'd had a chance to work on it because it wasn't safe. The cottonwood isn't normally a love-lived tree. This one is old for a cottonwood and a good example of the potential danger to people from hazzard trees," said Collier Arbor Care President Terrill Collier, whose firm is among the oldest and largest in western Oregon.

The 90-foot-tree, which has a trunk circumference of 18 feet, grew after 15-year-old Florinda Geer stuck her black cottonwood riding switch into the ground after returning from a horse ride in 1854.

According to the Oregon Heritage Tree Program plaque at the tree, Forinda Geer married Timothy Davenport and in 1868 gave birth to Homer Davenport, a nationally famous political cartoonist, who spent many of his early years at the homestead.

The Daughters of the American Revolution memorialized the tree in 1936 and it became Marion County's first Heritage Tree in 1986. The Riding Whip Tree was dedicated as an Oregon Heritage Tree by the Heritage Tree Committee of the Oregon Travel Information Council in 2006.

Collier has been active in local and state heritage tree programs and his firm has done pro-bono work on Lake Oswego's Peg Tree and the 450-year-old Signature while oak at the Oregon Garden in Silverton.



CAPTION MATERIAL

**COLLIER ARBOR CARE TEAM** works on Riding Whip Tree near Salem, thinning crown to reduce branch end weights with goal of preventing large branch failures. Pro-bono work by Collier was aimed at extending life of 154-year-old black cottonwood, which grew after a riding crop, stuck in the ground, took root. Designated one of State of Oregon's 45 Heritage Trees, black cottonwood is unusually old for variety, normally not particularly long-lived.



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