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Christmas Tree Supports Unity

by Leroy Thomas

The 86-foot Noble fir was felled in a forest near Molalla, Oregon, but it didn't touch the ground until almost a week later when it arrived at its destination in Weatherford.

After being felled in the forest, it was taken by helicopter and loaded onto a ninety-foot flatbed trailer owned by the Weatherford Zip Tool Company.

The phenomenon, now in a ten-foot hole on a lot owned by Mike Freeman on the corner of Custer and Franklin, has been billed as the largest in the world. Maybe a more accurate designation is "largest known Christmas tree and largest to be transported in one piece."

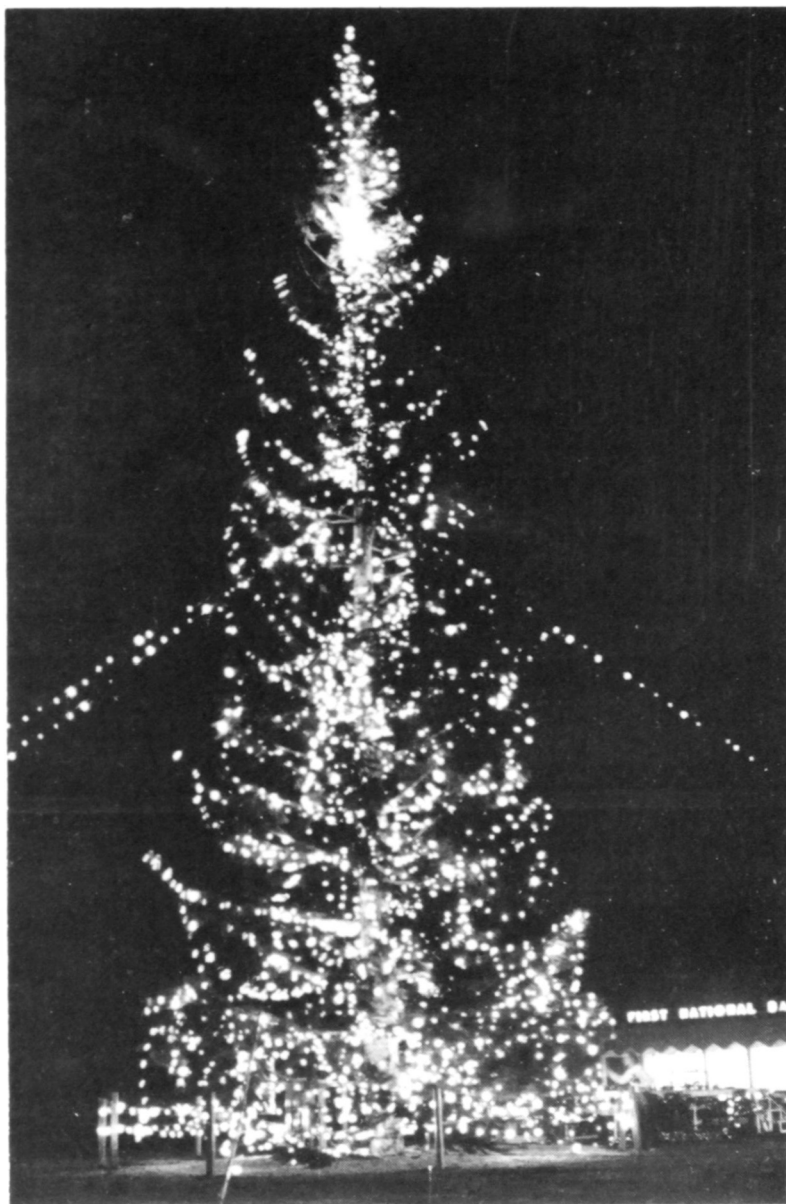
How large is large? It weighs 9100 pounds, it's 40 feet in diameter at the base, above ground, it has an eight-foot star weighing nearly five hundred pounds, and 15,000 lights decorate its branches. A 65-ton crane owned by Great Plains Transport of Clinton was required to place the tree into the hole.

Many Weatherford citizens are responsible for the special tree project. Glenda Kelley spearheaded the campaign and made the arrangements for buying the tree and bringing it to Weatherford. She was assisted by Jan Dorsey of the Chamber of Commerce. The First National Bank, headed by Glenda's husband, Don, paid the \$3000 for the Noble fir. Other Weatherford citizens have made monetary donations. The two drivers from Zip Tool — Troy Glenn and Steve Villines — were gone from home eleven days in order to bring the tree to Weatherford.

During the two weeks preceding Christmas, several Weatherford groups — including the Brownies, Girl Scouts, Paula Isch's Electric Sunshine and Eagle Express, the Federated Church Sanctuary Choir, the Weatherford High School 4-H Club, and Bob Allen's Glory Belles Handbellers, the Youth Choir, and the Adult Chorale from the First Baptist Church — provided musical programs beside the tree. Even Santa Claus came in from the North Pole for a guest appearance.

Some of the other citizens who played active roles were Brad Berrong, who coordinated the lighting activities, over twenty electricians from 3-M, Fox Photo, Modern Electric, Ryan Electric, Scott Electric, and Jackson Electric, as well as Melanie Villines and Raelene Amen, who with Glenda Kelley and Jan Dorsey made up a caravan to accompany the drivers the last three hundred miles home.

With the right care that it's sure to get — adequate feeding and watering through the tubes running to its base — Weatherford's citadel of the Christmas spirit could stay green until June, 1983. The good feelings evoked by an old-fashioned Christmas could last as long or longer.



CHRISTMAS TREE AGLOW

WESTVIEW is indebted to Katherine Dickey for her photography work on the Christmas tree story. Without such assistance, the Managing Editor's Finals Week could have been even more traumatic than it was.

PHOTO BY KATHERINE DICKEY

PHOTO BY KATHERINE DICKEY



THE CRANE DOES ITS WORK.

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PHOTO BY KATHERINE DICKEY



THE CHRISTMAS-
TREE LIGHTING
CEREMONY