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Christmas Tree

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

July 21, 1993

MEMORANDUM FOR KEN CONNOLLY
FROM: VATE POWELL
SUBJECT: NATION'S CHRISTMAS TREE

RECEIVED

I spoke today with Paul Pincus who is the landscape architect at the Capitol about the Nation's Christmas Tree. Several people have written to us complaining about the use of a tree cut from a national forest for the "White House" Christmas celebration.

The tree that these people are actually talking about is the one at the Capitol. The White House Christmas tree is a live 32-foot tree. There are also 57 smaller trees (one for each state, D.C. and the territories) used as part of the "Pageant of Peace" which are cut from tree farms on reclaimed surface coal mines.

The Capitol tree is a much larger cut tree that comes from a national forest. The Forest Service has donated the tree since about 1970. Each year, the tree comes from a different national forest, usually one that is celebrating an anniversary or some other occasion. This year's tree will come from the San Bernardino National Forest that is celebrating its centennial. The tree, which was chosen in June, is a 125 year old, 75 foot White Fir.

Each year, an outside sponsor covers all costs for local publicity on the tree. Transportation, either by truck or by rail, is also provided free of charge. Local areas are very supportive of the program, as it helps their economies through tourism. The trees are located in areas that are already designated for use as pulp, and the removal of a large older tree actually encourages growth of several smaller ones in the area.

The tree is lit the day before the White House tree, and comes down January first or second. The branches and needles are all mulched and used on the grounds, and the trunk is used for various things (e.g. parking lot bumpers).

The reason why a live tree is unfeasible is that the tree has to be so large in keeping with the scale of the building. The tree has to be at least 55-60 feet tall or it would be dwarfed by the Capitol. A live tree in the same locations would obstruct the view of the building from the Mall. It would also prevent the Inauguration from taking place on the steps of the Capitol, and there could be no more National Symphony concerts there either.

At the size necessary, transplanting is not an option. They did actually try a live tree a few years ago, and brought one up from New Mexico. The tree fared very poorly, and was

ultimately moved to the arboretum where it will likely die. With the cost of replacing a live tree every few years, having a cut tree is the lowest cost to the taxpayer.

Mr. Pincus said that we should forward any correspondence on the tree to him at:

Architect of the Capitol
Washington, DC 20505

and he will respond.

This should be the plan for future correspondence. I will write to the school group and the gentleman in California directly from our office. I have attached a draft of each to this memo.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

July 21, 1993

ST

Save The Trees Committee
Birch Lake School
1616 Birch Lake Ave.
White Bear Lake, MN 55110

Dear students:

Thank you for your letter. I was very impressed by the work that you did in forming the Save the Trees Committee and collecting over two hundred dollars in pennies. It is very important that young people get active in environmental protection at an early age.

The National Christmas Tree is actually at the Capitol building where Congress meets, and not at the White House. The White House already has a permanent live tree for its celebrations.

I spoke to the landscape architect at the Capitol, and he explained that the National Christmas tree has to be very large or it would look tiny next to the Capitol building. The tree has to be at least 55 or 60 feet tall. If they put a live tree that big in the spot, the millions of citizens who visit Washington each year couldn't see the Capitol from the Mall (where the Washington Monument is). We also couldn't hold the inauguration or national symphony concerts at the Capitol anymore. They did try to plant a live tree a few years ago, but it got sick and they had to move it.

The trees always come from a different National Forest from areas where they could have been cut for timber. Cutting down a big old tree can actually help younger trees to get sun and grow.

He also told me that the Christmas tree is not just thrown away. The needles and branches are turned into mulch and used on the Capitol lawn. The trunk is cut up and used around the Capitol as well. None of the tree is wasted.

Once again, thank you for your letter and congratulations on doing such a good job raising money. I encourage you all to continue to work for a better environment.

Sincerely,

Albert Gore, Jr.

July 21, 1993

Mr. Robert W. Peck
1442 Irvine Boulevard
Suite 201
Tustin, CA 92680

Peck

Dear Mr. Peck:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Nation's Christmas Tree. The tree is in fact at the Capitol and not at the White House. The White House already has a permanent live tree as the focal point of its celebrations.

The Capitol tree comes from a different national forest each year. The Forest Service likes to select a forest that is having a special event, such as the centennial at San Bernardino, to increase publicity around the forest and foster tourism and recreational use of the forest. An outside sponsor covers all costs for local publicity on the tree. Transportation, either by truck or by rail, is also provided free of charge.

The tree is lit the day before the White House tree, and comes down January first or second. The branches and needles are all mulched and used on the grounds, and the trunk is used for various things at the Capitol (e.g. parking lot bumpers).

The reason why a live tree is unfeasible is that the tree has to be so large in keeping with the scale of the building. The tree has to be at least 55-60 feet tall or it would be dwarfed by the Capitol. A live tree in the same locations would obstruct the view of the building from the Mall. It would also prevent the Inauguration from taking place on the steps of the Capitol, and there could be no more National Symphony concerts there either.

Also, at the size necessary, transplanting is not an option. They did actually try a live tree a few years ago, and brought one up from New Mexico. The tree fared very poorly, and was ultimately moved to the arboretum where it will likely die. With the cost of replacing a live tree every few years, having a cut tree is the lowest cost to the taxpayer.

I do not know what the reporter was referring to when she said that sixty-three other trees were being cut down. There are 57 smaller trees (one for each state, D.C. and the territories) used as part of the "Pageant of Peace" at the White House, but they come from tree farms on reclaimed surface coal mines.

Again, thank you for your concern I hope this reply is helpful.

Sincerely,

Kathleen McGinty
Director, Office on Environmental Policy

ROBERT W. PECK

AN ACCOUNTANCY CORPORATION

1442 IRVINE BOULEVARD, SUITE 201

TUSTIN, CALIFORNIA 92680

(714) 832-4420

FAX: (714) 832-4480

June 22, 1993

Ms. Katie McGinty
Director, Office of Environmental Policy
Room 360, Old Executive Office Building
Washington, DC 20501

BY FAX

RE: "NATION'S TREE"
(AKA: WHITE HOUSE CHRISTMAS TREE)

Dear Ms. McGinty:

The accompanying article appeared in the Los Angeles Times on Wednesday, June 16 regarding the selection of the "Nation's Tree" for display on the White House lawn at Christmas.

Let me say that I have nothing against Christmas, Christmas trees or displaying one on the White House lawn. I do have significant concerns, however, that something is wrong here. **First**, the trees in the San Bernardino National Forest have been severely "stressed" by smog and other environmental pollution, the long running drought in California and an ongoing invasion by the pine borer beetle. As a result of those problems what would otherwise be a green conifer forest is a patchwork of yellow and brown dying and dead trees. We have a cabin in the area and within two hundred feet of our cabin six trees the size of the one scheduled to be cut have died in the last two years. Accordingly, to cut a one hundred and twenty-five year old seventy-five foot tall "perfect specimen" from this forest seems like a tremendous waste of a healthy tree. **Second**, as indicated by attached article the tree is being chosen from the San Bernardino National Forest "Because this is the centennial anniversary of the San Bernardino National Forest...". It seems ridiculous to commemorate the establishment of a national forest by cutting down one of its prime trees. **Third**, at a time when the President and Congress are struggling to balance the national budget and move towards financial recovery it seems inappropriate to have to truck a seventy-five foot tree three thousand miles for a brief display on the White House lawn.

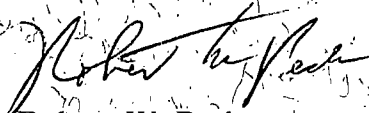
I spoke with a newspaper reporter yesterday who was covering this story and she advised me that the "Nation's Tree" is only one of sixty-three trees being cut from the San Bernardino National Forest and adjacent national forests for the U.S. Government's holiday celebrations. I would expect that Vice-President Gore and The Secretary of the Interior (if not our President as well) would have loftier goals for the development and preservation

of our national forest than destruction of these trees.

Should you or a representative of your office wish to discuss this matter further, you may reach me at (714) 832-4420 from 8 A.M. to 6:30 P.M. PST, Monday through Friday.

Thank you for consideration of my views.

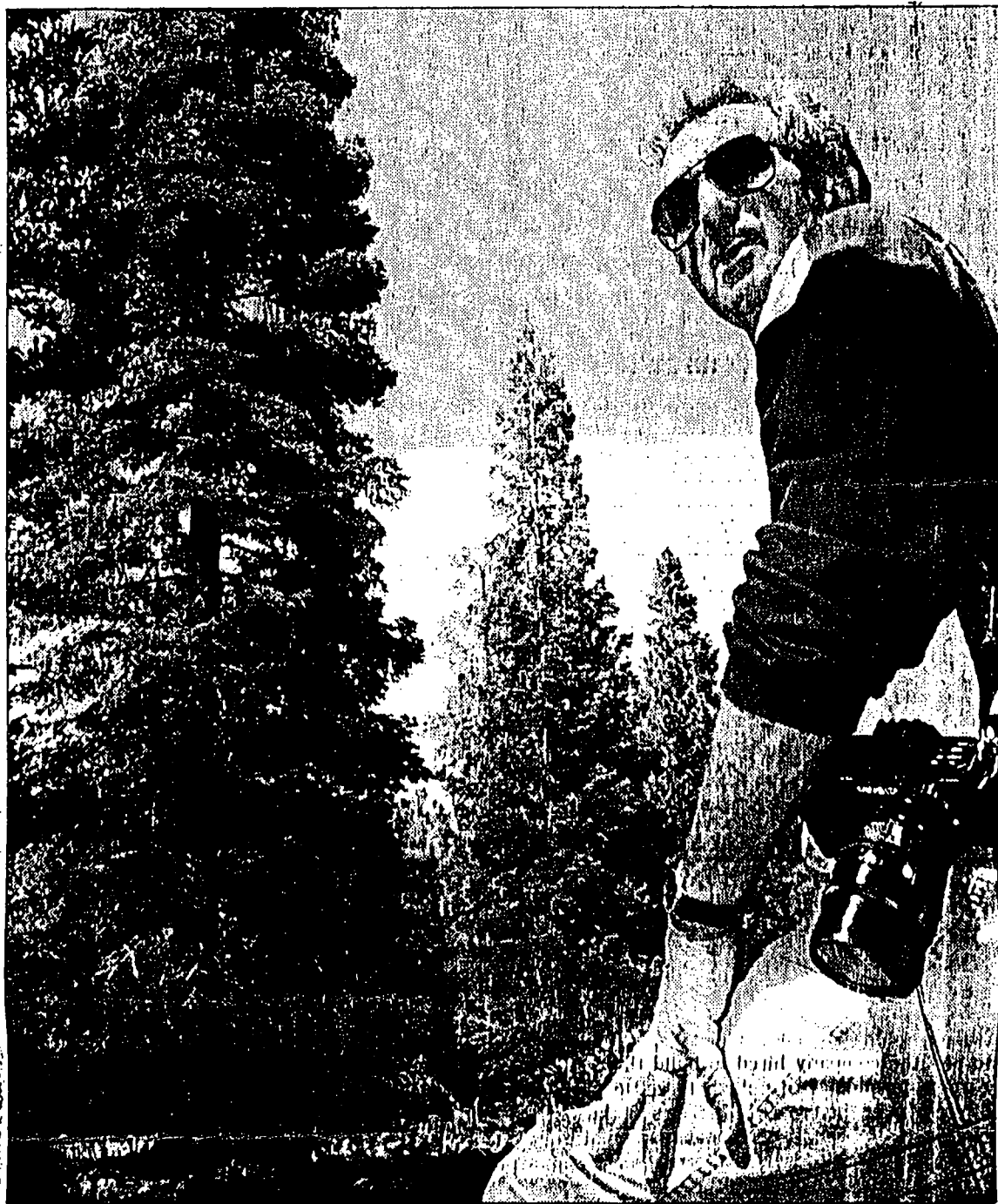
Yours very truly,



Robert W. Peck

RWP:tv
Enclosure

P.S. I am also enclosing a copy of a letter I wrote to the Public Information Officer for the San Bernardino National Forest. It should be noted that she has not yet been able to tell me whether the proposed cutting of the subject tree is even allowed under the established Use Plan for the area where the tree is situated.



JONATHAN ALCORN / For The Times

Paul Pincus, landscape architect for the Capitol, studies trees in San Bernardino National Forest.

Christmas Comes to Big Bear in June

■ **Ceremony:** Expert selects a towering, 125-year-old white fir to spend the yule season on U.S. Capitol grounds as the 'Nation's Tree.'

By TOM GORMAN
TIMES STAFF WRITER

BIG BEAR—It's one of the great trials and anxieties of the Christmas holiday season: the requisite trip to the tree lot to select that perfect evergreen.

Not too short! Not too tall! This one's too skinny! That one's too bushy! That's got a bad side!

And so Paul Pincus came this week, to the mountains above San Bernardino to pick the "Nation's Tree" for holiday display on the west lawn of the nation's Capitol.

Talk about a million critics. Talk about pressure.

The entire San Bernardino National Forest was his tree lot, and on Tuesday—after hours of driving around Big Bear looking at one tree after another and as forestry employees grew anxious—Pincus got out of the car, circled a 125-year-old towering white fir and proclaimed:

"Yes. This one."

There was no choir to sing the praises, "O, Christmas Tree!" Just
Please see TREE, A30



TOM GORMAN / Los Angeles Times

The tree selected for the Capitol.

THE: 75-Foot Fir Chosen

Continued from A3

the soft rush of wind through the trees like a thousand evergreen wind chimes.

One forestry official jotted in his notebook. Another, who saw this in several weeks earlier and promoted it as her personal choice, beamed.

This annual exercise is almost no humdrum stuff to Pincus, who as the landscape architect for the Capitol has selected holiday trees for the last 30 years. He has traveled much of the nation on his searches—wondering, once in Ohio, if that state even had any tall trees.

But this was Pincus' first visit to a Southern California forest, and the first chance for the four local national forests—Angeles, Los Padres, Cleveland and San Bernardino—to strut their stuff. Because this is the centennial anniversary of the San Bernardino National Forest, the search focused here.

San Bernardino National Forest officials got word in January that this year's tree would come from their land. In March, after the snows melted, forestry officials searched the mountains and developed a list of trees.

Pincus arrived Monday and within two hours of landing at smog-shrouded Ontario Airport he was being escorted through the Jeffrey and ponderosa pines at 8,000 feet, in search of a white fir—a tree more favored than the other local trees for its conical shape and fullness.

He suggested to the local tree experts that they were worrying too much. "By the time I'm

through with it," he said, "you'll never even recognize it. And every year, people say, 'That's the best one yet!'"

By day's end Monday, he had seen four trees. One was too short. Another, asymmetrical. The next leaned a tad awkwardly. But the last one was good, and led the competition into Tuesday.

On Tuesday he struck pay dirt—the tree that was the personal choice of Forester Merri Carol Murray. A 75-footer, with that classical Christmas tree shape. No holes. Good color. Dense with foliage. And next to a service road so the truck can get in.

"I can envision this," Pincus said, "on the Capitol grounds." And that was that.

The forest agency now will invite local schoolchildren to create 5,000 secular ornaments to adorn the tree. The tree's location will be kept secret—to prevent vandalism—until it is felled during a public ceremony in November.

The tree will be trucked to Washington, hoisted into a five-foot-deep hole, encased in concrete and supported with wires.

Decorating it will take a 10-member crew in cherry pickers about a week, Pincus said. They are old hands at this, he said, and won't bicker about where to put this ornament or that.

And don't worry about the lights, he added. The 4,000 of them—amber, clear and twinklers, but no reds, whites or blues that might connote religious significance—will be taken out of their storage cartons and tested.



ROBERT W. PECK

AN ACCOUNTANCY CORPORATION

1442 IRVINE BOULEVARD, SUITE 201

TUSTIN, CALIFORNIA 92680

(714) 832-4420

FAX: (714) 832-4480

June 17, 1993

Ms. Lorraine Lawrence
U.S. Forest Service
1824 South Commercenter Circle
San Bernardino, CA 92408-3430

RE: "NATION'S TREE"

Dear Ms. Lawrence:

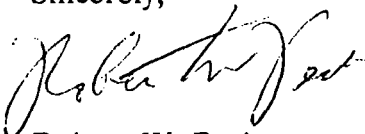
I am writing to you as a follow up to our telephone conversation of this morning regarding the proposed cutting of the "Nation's Tree" (AKA: White House Christmas Tree) from the San Bernardino National Forest. From speaking with you I understand that you have the best of intentions for the cutting of this tree to increase awareness of the San Bernardino National Forest and our need to preserve it. However, as I mentioned on the phone, I question the wisdom of cutting down a healthy 125 year old tree to celebrate the centennial of the San Bernardino National Forest particularly in a forest already ravaged by pollution, borer beetles and the drought. Significantly, you indicated to me that this tree might otherwise live for twenty-five more years.

As we discussed on the phone I formally request to be advised whether the cutting of this tree is allowed under the use plan established for the area in the forest where the tree is located. Additionally, I request to be provided the date of adoption of the use plan which allows for cutting of this tree for this purpose. Please respond in writing.

If the tree is truly about 125 years old it originally sprouted about the time that "modern" man first began exploiting the resources of the San Bernardinos. I am not an environmental activist but I am struck by the irony that after surviving so long this tree will be reduced to a public relations device and a memorial stump.

I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,



Robert W. Peck

RWP:tv

Paul ~~XXXXXX~~ Pincus _____
225-1200

1970 - Forest Service
From National Forest
diff. each yr.

Outside sponsor covers all
local publicity

trucking is free or charge

1:4 am before

3m 1- or 2nd

Tree notched -
trunk used

location would interfere
view from mall

immersion

not symphony concerts

Encourage younger trees to
grow

helps economy of areas where
trees come from

Already in areas that can be
molded

Has to be large in keeping
w/ scale of buildings

55-60 Foot

tried one 2 yrs ago from NM
not doing too well

Cot is cheapest way
of doing it

X-mas Tree

- ① who is Stan Locke
NPS White House liaison
- ② Call Paul Pincus
landscape architect for the Capitol
- ③ Call WH landscape / grounds keeper.
- ④ 63 trees being cut from San Bernardino?
Merri Carol Murray, NPS
- ⑤ who's Todd Stern

Options

No Tree - out of the question

Permanent Tree - possibly

Cut Tree - major D.C. or maybe not (gambler)

Compromise position -

Capitol tree permanent

State trees from reclaimed mining areas.

both have an environmental bent

Problems

Capitol landscaping

transplanting tree (Capitol 75 foot / WH 32 foot)

White Horse tree
Perm
Cap Tree?

1100 6th St SW
 Room 344
 80042
 Vake,
 send copy all
 of this (not note) to
 Jim Daniel, DO I
 619-6344 w/ note to
 call me.
 Return original
 to me.
 Keh
 Re2 Dot

PHOTOCOPY PRESERVATION

NOT FOR PUBLICATION UNTIL RELEASE
 BY THE COMMITTEE ON
 NATURAL RESOURCES
 UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUN

AND THE CALIFORNIA DESERT

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Marla:

It is my understanding that the National Park Service controls the White House grounds and that it has gift acceptance authority. Thus, if you want to do this, we should do it thru the National Park Service.

Let me know. I can help get it going.

Tadel

GATE? WHAT TO DO -
THE XMAS TREE GROWERS WILL
GO NUTS! MR,

~~Her~~ - who would
be the person around
here in charge of
this. Has food out for
Mason

PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION

PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION

BIRCH LAKE PTA
1616 BIRCH LAKE AVE.
WHITE BEAR LAKE, MN 55110

2599

June 2 19 93

17-2 214
910

Pay To The Order Of U.S. Government

\$ 235.71

Two hundred-thirty-five and 11/100 Dollars

FIRST BANK WHITE BEAR LAKE

FIRST BANK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
4700 CLARK AVENUE
WHITE BEAR LAKE, MN 55110

For % Al Gore

Ellen P. L. [Signature]

⑆091000022⑆128938503264⑆2599

CURRENT, INC., COLORADO SPRINGS, CO 80941

CUDDLY BEARS

BEAR DESIGNS OR DAKIN & COMPANY



WHITE BEAR LAKE AREA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 624

2399 Cedar Avenue
White Bear Lake, MN 55110

Birch Lake Elementary School
1616 Birch Lake Avenue
White Bear Lake, MN 55110
(612) 653-2776
Fax 653-2755

MAX DeRAAD
Principal

Vice President Gore
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W.
Washington D.C.

Save The Trees Committee
Birch Lake School
1616 Birch Lake Ave.
White Bear Lake Mn. 55110

Dear Vice President Gore:

We are writing to you from Birch Lake School in White Bear Lake, Minnesota to inform you of a group called STT. STT stands for Save The Trees. A group of sixth graders became concerned last year when a tree from Minnesota was cut down and hauled to the White House at Christmas time, then discarded.

Our leader is a first grade teacher Mr. Tomassoni. His idea was to buy a tree and plant it on the Capitol lawn and decorate it every year rather than cutting down a tree every year and hauling it a long distance.

The enclosed picture is the STT logo. It was designed by a fourth grade student from our school.

Our group had a few fundraisers and raised over three hundred dollars. It is our hope that you will use this money to purchase a permanent National Christmas tree.

We are sending this letter to you because we understand you are interested in protecting our environment. If you are interested in this idea please contact us.

Respectfully,

The STT Committee



WHITE BEAR LAKE AREA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 624

2399 Cedar Avenue
White Bear Lake, MN 55110

Birch Lake Elementary School
1616 Birch Lake Avenue
White Bear Lake, MN 55110
(612) 653-2776
Fax 653-2755

MAX DeRAAD
Principal

April 29, 1993

Dear Mr. President,

I'm sending you this letter to notify you about a project that a group of 6th graders is doing, called STT (Save The Trees). On April 30, we will be conducting a penny collection, here at Birch Lake Elementary, in White Bear Lake, Minnesota. Once we collect the pennies, we will send them to either you or Vice-President, Gore. We hope you will take the money and buy a tree to plant there on the front lawn of the Capitol. We hope you will quit cutting down a 100 year old tree each year, (and making pollution by hauling it a far distance).

Thank you for reading this letter,

President, Bryan Rhode

STT GROUP

Vice President, Stephanie Worwa

Chase Arenal, Andrew Walter

Mrs. Rine

Mrs. Leigen, 6th grade teacher

M. DeRaad, Principal

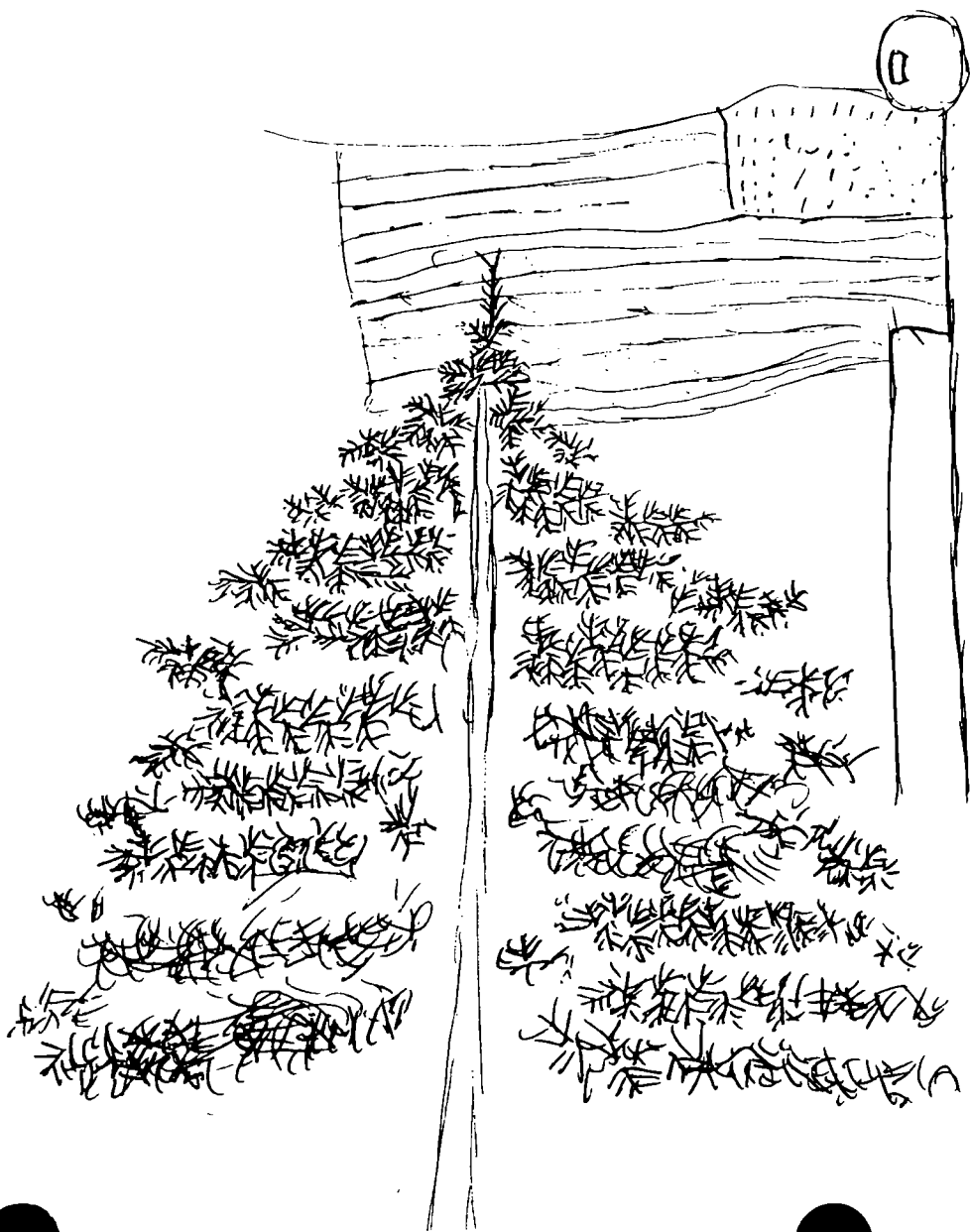
Lisa Anderson

Meg Makasy

Jessica Jensen

Jenny
Hruby

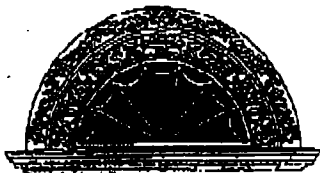
people who support
STT



Pennies for trees



Students at Birch Lake Elementary collected pennies last week in an effort to collect enough money to buy a permanent Christmas tree for the White House. The Earth-conscious students also wrote letters to President Clinton and Vice-President Gore asking them to use a live tree rather than cutting down a 100-year old tree every year. Pictured: members of the Save the Trees Committee: Back row, (from the left) Principal Max DeRaad, Chasie Arend, Jessica Jensen, first grade teacher Richard Tomassoni, Andrew Walter. Front row, (from left) Bryan Rhode, Lisa Anderson, Stephanie Worwa, Jenny Hrubby, Meghann McKasy. (Photo by Tamara Muhonen)



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WHITE HOUSE LIAISON

1100 OHIO DRIVE, S.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20242
(202) 619-6344 FAX (202) 619-6353

FAX

DATE: June 22, 1993

TO: Mr. Ken Connally

ADDRESS: Office of Environmental Policy, The White House

ROOM: _____

PHONE: 456-6224 FAX: 456-2710

FROM: Mr. Stan Lock

SUBJECT: National Christmas Tree

TOTAL NUMBER OF PAGES BEING SENT: 14
(INCLUDING COVER PAGE)



OSM

FACT SHEET

U. S. Department of the Interior
202 208-2553

Office of Surface Mining
November 21, 1990

CHRISTMAS TREES FROM RECLAIMED MINE LAND

Each year, just before Christmas, the President of the United States turns the switch that lights the national Christmas tree and the 57 smaller trees that represent the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. territories. This tree-lighting ceremony, called the Pageant of Peace, is held on the Ellipse, just south of the White House. Although the national tree is permanently planted on the Ellipse, the 57 state and territorial trees are planted temporarily for the event, and then, following the holiday season, are transplanted to the grounds of Washington area schools and other public buildings.

This year the 57 state and territorial trees are very special. They are from the Autumn Ridge Christmas Tree Farm, which is located on a reclaimed coal mine in western Maryland. Mined and reclaimed in the late 1960's, this land is an excellent example of how land used temporarily for surface coal mining can be returned to permanent, productive land use.

The Buffalo Coal Company mined coal on the site where this tree farm is located, just outside Oakland, Maryland, from 1966-1971. The coal was shipped to Washington, D.C., as fuel for electric power generating plants. (In fact it is likely that coal from this site was used to generate the electricity that lit the Christmas trees at Pageant of Peace ceremonies in the early 1960's.) Following the mining, reclamation was completed under the Maryland mining law, which required the operator to cover the mined area with a minimum of four feet of fill material. However, the company did more. Prior to returning the mined land to the land owner, the coal company regraded the site and established grass cover.

In 1980, the current owner, Gary Shaffer, purchased the property. Shaffer is president of Chesapeake Conservation Services of Sykesville, Maryland, a company that constructs erosion control and wetlands mitigation structures. Using its expertise in these areas, the company laid drain fields, completed the grading and topsoiling, constructed gravel roads, and established a Christmas tree farm with over 70,000 trees on the former coal mine land. Today over 100 acres of this former mined land are covered with carefully hand sheared Christmas trees. Streams and surface water running through the farm are clear, and the land is productive once again.

During the summer of 1990, officials from the Interior Department's Office of Surface Mining and The National Park Service selected trees for the December tree-lighting ceremony. In late fall, the pines were dug and transported to the Ellipse for planting and decorating. On December 13, President Bush will light the trees for this year's holiday season.

Although growing Christmas trees on reclaimed land is common today, it was an unusual land use prior to passage of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977. This national coal mining and reclamation law requires mining companies throughout the country to reclaim the land and either reestablish the old land use or develop new, more productive uses.

This year's Christmas trees are living proof that America can mine its coal resources without permanent environmental damage, and then return the land to productive, long-term land uses.

Tree farmer's products play part in pageant

By REBECCA LONG
News-Post Staff

A local family is experiencing the joy of giving in a tree-mendous way this Christmas season.

The Gary Shaffer family of Sykesville are this year's suppliers of the Christmas trees being used for the National Christmas Tree Pageant of Peace ceremony in Washington, D.C.

Selection was made by the National Forestry Service and the U.S. Department of Interior.

Mr. Shaffer purchased the 36-acre tree-producing plot of land in Garrett County in 1986, now home for more than 11,000 Christmas trees. "I bought the land because my wife thought it would be neat to raise Christmas trees," Mr. Shaffer said. "It's a project that allows us to see the finished product and what we've accomplished."

But Autumn Ridge Christmas Tree Plantation near Oak and is not a typical tree farm. In the 1970s it was a strip mine owned by the Buffalo Coal Company.

"The main reason we purchased the land was because it seemed like a real challenge," Mr. Shaffer explained. "Everyone laughed and

said the farm was an old strip job. But now we have had people like Chuck Myers with the Office of Surface Mining within the U.S. Department of the Interior refer to Autumn Ridge Christmas Tree Farm as 'a real conservation show place and success story.'"

"This will mark the first time in history that trees have been gathered from a reclaimed strip mine to be used in the National Pageant of Peace," said Mr. Shaffer. "My family is very honored and flattered to have been chosen to supply the trees. I'm still in disbelief."

The trees were planted by the National Coal Association through the Office of Surface Mining in the U.S. Department of the Interior, as a symbol of how reclaimed coal mining land can be returned to productive use.

"Our efforts are to make the public aware that the surface can be disturbed to recover coal and then put back into productive use," said Earl Kittleman, public affairs representative for the National Park Service. "Before the decision was made to get the trees from Shaffer's farm, it was important to make sure that the trees were all uniform in type and size."

"This will mark the first time in history that trees have been gathered from a reclaimed strip mine to be used in the National Pageant of Peace."

—Gary Shaffer

"In the past, trees were purchased from local nurseries for the display," he said. "The National Coal Association probably had the original idea to promote surface coal mining land for other productive uses and bring those type of trees to the White House."

Mr. Shaffer's trees will surround the National Christmas Tree. The circle of greens is known as the Pathway of Peace. The 67 small Scotch Pine, White Pine and Red Pine trees represent the 50 states, the District of Columbia and the U.S. territories. He supplied a total of 100 trees, with the remaining 43 being used to decorate around the Ellipse area.

The trees have already been planted around the Ellipse in front of the White House, according to Mr. Shaffer. "My family and I were at the planting ceremony two weeks ago and we helped Manuel Lujan Jr., U.S. Secretary of the Interior plant the first tree."

The Shaffer family was also invited to watch First Lady Barbara Bush place the star on the National Christmas Tree at last week's ceremony. To their surprise, the Mr. and Mrs. Shaffer and their two sons were brought in on the ceremonies for pictures with Mrs. Bush.

Mr. Shaffer is president and owner of Chesapeake Conservation Service

Inc. in Gamber. His interest in the strip mine stems from doing conservation work there. "I've always been interested in conservation and my business has completed 950 conservation projects in Maryland, Virginia, Delaware and Pennsylvania," he added.

The Chesapeake Conservation Service Inc. has constructed erosion control and wetlands mitigation structures on Autumn Ridge Christmas Tree Plantation. Using its expertise in these areas, the company laid drain fields, completed the grading and top soiling and constructed gravel roads.

According to Mr. Shaffer, there was a lot of overgrowth and weeds to be mowed, since the land had idled for many years. "The soil was on the poor side, but that's good when growing Christmas trees," he said. "The poorer soil slowed down the growth of trees which caused the trees to be fuller."

The Shaffer's are planning to plant an additional 30,000 trees in the spring of 1991 and 1992.

This year's Pageant of Peace, with the theme "Discovery," is co-sponsored by Christmas Pageant of Peace Inc., headed by Washington

businessman Joseph H. Riley of the National Park Service, the U.S. Department of Recreation and Parks, the Greater Washington Board of Trade and the Washington Convention and Visitors Association. The theme emphasizes the joy of learning, exploration and satisfaction of discovering new friends and people, according to Mr. Riley.

"The Christmas trees are given away selectively to be planted on public land at the completion of the Pageant of Peace exhibit after the holidays," Mr. Shaffer said.

The trees were decorated with donated ornaments made of brass, pewter, glass, wood, silver, paper, dried flowers, fabric and other materials unique to the region or state they represent.

The Christmas tree ceremonies by presidents and vice presidents is an unbroken tradition, started on Christmas Eve in 1923 by Calvin Coolidge who lit one Christmas tree on the White House south lawn.

The display will officially open with the lighting of the National Christmas Tree on Thursday, Dec. 13. The Christmas Pageant of Peace will continue from 3 to 6 p.m. Dec. 14 through 23 and Dec. 26 through 30.

Frederick Post 12-6-90



Mary Roth and Gary Shaffer, standing, of Sykesville, along with their sons, Spencer, back, and Taylor, front, take a look at one of the 100 Christmas trees they grew that are being used in the Pageant of Peace.

Staff photo by Sam Yu

Specifications for Christmas Trees

1991 Pageant of Peace

Furnish the following trees:

1. Colorado Blue Spruce, 6 to 7 feet tall, B&B/Baskets, sheared, full and uniform, 24 inch ball minimum

70 each

2. Colorado Blue Spruce or American Red Pine, 8 to 10 feet tall, B&B/Baskets, semisheared, full and uniform, 28 inch ball minimum

5 each

3. Norway Spruce, 8 to 10 feet tall, B&B/Baskets, semisheared, full and uniform, 28 inch ball minimum

5 each

4. White Pine, 8 to 10 feet tall, B&B/Baskets, semisheared, full and uniform, 28 inch ball minimum

5 each

5. Norway Spruce, 14 to 16 feet tall, B&B/Baskets, semisheared, full and uniform, 36 inch ball minimum

6 each

State inspection certificate identifying that trees are free of any insects, pests, and diseases to be supplied upon delivery of trees.

Carrier will have trees covered, so as to avoid any windburn or drying out of the root ball or foliage. As trees are being unloaded, they will be inspected for damaged root balls, trunks, and/or branches. Unsatisfactory trees will be returned and shall be replaced within 5 working days.

National Park Service representatives will tag trees prior to delivery.

Trees are to be delivered to President's Park at 16th Street and Constitution Avenue, N.W. (Ellipse) during the week of November 11, 1991 between the hours of 6:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. with 24 hour notice.



DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

CONTACT:

FOR RELEASE: November 3, 1992

Stephanie Hanna (O) 202/208-6416
(H) 703/751-8671

MEDIA ADVISORY:

Secretary of the Interior Manuel Lujan will kick off the Christmas season on Thursday, preparing for the annual Pageant of Peace by planting the first of 57 Douglas firs on the Ellipse, south of the White House.

The 57 live trees, representing the 50 states, the District of Columbia and the U.S. Territories, were grown at a tree farm in West Virginia. For the third consecutive year, the trees were grown on land reclaimed from a former coal mine.

The trees, which are donated by the National Coal Association, will be lit with the National Christmas Tree at the Pageant of Peace Ceremony on December 10, 1992.

Following the Christmas season, the 57 live trees will be replanted in parks throughout the Washington, DC, area by the National Park Service.

WHEN: 10:30 a.m., Thursday, November 5, 1992.

WHERE: The Ellipse, just south of the White House, at the Pageant of Peace site.

WHO: Manuel Lujan, Jr., Secretary of the Interior.
David C. O'Neal, Ass't Sec'y for Land & Minerals Mgmt.
Harry M. Snyder, Director of Office of Surface Mining.
Richard Lawson, President of National Coal Association.
Lawrence Street, President, New Allegheny Inc.

BACKGROUND: The trees were selected from the Carl Burgess Tree Farm, near Mount Storm, West Virginia. The land was mined for coal by the Allegheny Mining Corp. (now New Allegheny, Inc.) until the late 1970s, and then reclaimed for productive use as a tree farm.

-DOI-

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NEWS RELEASE

WHL/NCR
U.S. Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Editor's Advisory: Members of the media are invited to cover the lighting of the National Christmas Tree at 5 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 10, on the Ellipse, south of the White House. A media platform for cameras will be provided and more details will be available later. Members of the media should contact the Office of Public Affairs, 202-619-7226, if they plan to attend.

'Exploration' is theme

1992 CHRISTMAS PAGEANT OF PEACE
OPENS ON ELLIPSE at 5 p.m. Dec. 10

For Immediate Release
Contact: 202-619-7226

WASHINGTON, D.C.--President George Bush is expected to light the National Christmas Tree to open the 1992 Pageant of Peace in the Nation's Capital at 5 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 10.

Sponsored by the Christmas Pageant of Peace, Inc., and the National Park Service, the Pageant is held on the Ellipse, south of the White House. The opening ceremony will feature the Children's Chorus of Maryland; Lucie Arnaz, actress; Lee Greenwood, country singer; Keisha Knight Pulliam, star of "The Bill Cosby Show; Willard Scott, the NBC TV "Today" show weatherman, as the perennial Santa Claus; the cast of Ford's Theatre's production of "A Christmas Carol" and the U.S. Coast Guard Band.

The National Christmas Tree, a living Colorado Blue Spruce now 38-feet tall, is decorated each year by General Electric Lighting of Nela Park, Cleveland, Ohio.

(more)

National Capital Region 1100 Ohio Drive, S.W. Washington, D.C. 20242

1992 Christmas Pageant of Peace..pg.2

This year the tree, will sparkle with more than 5,000 lights to set off symmetric ornaments--squares, circles and triangles--depicting the modes of transportation used by explorers throughout history. The squares symbolize sails used to cross seas, the circles represent wheels used for land transit, and the triangles reference the wings of air and space flight.

The tree's all-white appearance is created by 1,000 crystal lights among garland swags. There are also 1,100 white lights in the ornaments, suggesting the earth's pristine state before exploration. A green mode using 3,000 green lamps, suggests growth and our commitment to ecology. A scattered pattern of multi-colored lights symbolizes the people of the world brought together by "Exploration."

Surrounding the National Tree will be 57 small Douglas Fir trees which represent the 50 states, the District of Columbia and U.S. Territories. Donated by the National Coal Association, the trees will be decorated with special ornaments created by representative organizations to reflect the 1992 theme.

The live trees, which form the 1992 Pathway of Peace have been grown on reclaimed surface coal mined land near Mount Storm, W.Va.

The U.S. Department of the Interior's Office of Surface Mining arranged for the 57 trees to be donated.

(more)

1992 Christmas Pageant of Peace..pg.3

The Christmas Pageant of Peace will continue Dec. 11-23 and Dec. 26-30, with musical programs each evening from 6-9 p.m., featuring volunteer choirs, bands and other musical groups from the metropolitan area and around the nation. The trees will remain lighted until Jan. 1.

For additional information about the Christmas Pageant of Peace, call the National Park Service, at 202-619-7222.

-NPS-

November 24, 1992

113-92

October 23, 1991

The Pathway of Peace Page (page 4 in the program):

The Pathway of Peace is a circle of 57 small blue spruce trees which represent the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. territories. Standing like sentinels around the National Christmas Tree, the small trees are decorated with unique hand-made Christmas ornaments that symbolize this year's Pageant theme, Charity. The ornaments have been created from a variety of materials, including brass, pewter, glass, wood, silver, paper, dried flowers, and fabric.

The live trees that form the 1991 Pathway of Peace, were grown on reclaimed mine land near St. Clairsville, Ohio. Fifteen years ago, coal was removed from the site and the land reclaimed. Today, this former surface coal mine is a productive Christmas tree farm. Following the 1991 Pageant of Peace, these trees will be planted permanently in Washington, D.C., and in nearby area parks.

The Christmas Pageant of Peace Committee expresses its sincere appreciation to all the public-spirited organizations from around the nation that contributed to the 1991 Pathway of Peace.

Acknowledgements (at the back of the program):

Thank you to the following for the blue spruce trees which form the Pathway of Peace and the other trees used to decorate the Ellipse during the 1991 Christmas Pageant of Peace:

Feisley Christmas Tree Farms, St. Clairsville, Ohio and the John P. Feisley family, which grow the trees.

National Coal Association and Richard L. Lawson, President, for

contributing the trees for the Pathway of Peace.

R & F Coal Company (a subsidiary of Shell Mining Company) and Jack Cox, President, the mine operator who reclaimed the land where the trees were grown, for transporting the trees to Washington, D.C.

The U.S. Department of the Interior's Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement and Harry M. Snyder, Director, for their assistance

Pathway of Peace

The State and Territory Trees

The "Pathway of Peace" consists of 57 small Douglas fir trees which represent the 50 states, the District of Columbia and U. S. territories.

Each of the trees is decorated with special ornaments unique to the state and which reflect the 1992 theme of "Exploration." One organization in each state or territory has contributed the ornaments for its tree. The ornaments are enclosed in plastic spheres to

protect them during the three weeks of the pageant.

The Christmas Pageant of Peace Committee expresses its sincere appreciation to all of the public-spirited organizations around the nation for their contribution. These include state arts organizations, major retail corporations, manufacturers, craft councils, museums, school children and major artists and craftsmen.

State and Territory Tree Ornament Sponsors

Alabama	Maryland	Rhode Island
Metropolitan Arts Council, Birmingham	Woodward & Lothrop	Rhode Island Heritage Commission
Alaska	Massachusetts	South Carolina
Ketchikan Arts & Humanities Council & Juneau School District	The Artful Hand Gallery	Kerrison's Department Store
Arizona	Michigan	South Dakota
Dillard's Department Stores	Jacobson's Stores, Inc.	The Dakota Kids
Arkansas	Minnesota	Tennessee
Target Stores	Target Stores	Dillard's Nashville Division
California	Mississippi	Texas
Target Stores	The Craftsmen's Guild of Mississippi, Inc.	The Children's Museum, New Braunfels
Colorado	Missouri	Utah
Topper's, Inc.	Dillard's Midwest	Brigham Young University Art Dept.
Connecticut	Montana	Vermont
Ethan Allen, Inc.	Hennessey's	Vermont Handcrafters, Inc.
Delaware	Nebraska	Virginia
John Wannamaker	Dillard's Midwest	Open High School, Richmond
District of Columbia	Nevada	Washington
Woodward & Lothrop	Bullock's	Target Stores
Florida	New Hampshire	West Virginia
The Museum of Florida History	Hampshire Pewter Co.	Stone & Thomas
Georgia	New Mexico	Wisconsin
Target Stores	Dillard's Department Stores	Kohl's Department Store
Hawaii	New Jersey	Wyoming
Mayor's Office of Culture & the Arts	The Newark Museum's Junior Museum	Cole Department Store
Idaho	New York	Puerto Rico
Idaho Commission on the Arts	Avici Incorporated	Gonzalez Padin Co., Inc.
Illinois	North Carolina	Virgin Islands
Illinois Artisans Program	The Arts Council of Winston-Salem & Forsyth County	Virgin Islands Council on the Arts
Indiana	North Dakota	Guam
Lazarus	North Dakota Arts Alliance	Office of Congressman Ben Blaz
Iowa	Ohio	American Samoa
Dillard's Midwest	Lazarus	Office of Congressman Eni F. H. Faleomavaega
Kansas	Oklahoma	Commonwealth of the
The Kansas Collection	C. R. Anthony Company	Northern Mariana Islands
Kentucky	Oregon	Council for Arts & Culture
Kentucky Guild of Artists & Craftsmen	Upper Willamette Piece Makers	Trust Territory of the Pacific
Louisiana	Pennsylvania	Belau National Museum, Republic
Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge	John Wannamaker & Carol's Heirloom Cookies	of Palau
Maine		
The Giving Tree of Rangeley, Maine		



Tree Design and Lighting



Symbolism plays an important role in conveying the Pageant's "Exploration" theme in the lighting and design of this year's tree.

More than 5000 GE lights provide sparkle as the tree's symmetric ornaments—squares, circles and triangles—depict the modes of transportation used by explorers throughout history. The squares symbolize sails used to cross seas; the circles represent wheels used for land transit, and the triangles reference the wings so vital to air and space flight.

The tree's all-white appearance is created by 1000 crystal lights among the garland swags.

There are also 1100 white lights in the ornaments, suggesting the earth's pristine state before explorations. Frank LaGiusa, who has designed the tree's decorations for GE for 17 years, incorporates a green mode using 3000 green lamps, suggesting growth and America's commitment to ecology. A scattered pattern of multi-colored GE lights symbolizes the varied peoples of the world brought together by "Exploration."

Tree Topping of the Tree Ceremony

This year marks the 12th year that Mrs. Barbara Bush has officiated at the traditional "Topping-of-the-Tree Ceremony" on the Ellipse. With the official tree-top ornament in place, the business of beginning the lighting and decorating of the National Tree and the state and territory trees commences.

During the traditional tree-topping, Mrs. Bush, usually accompanied by one or two of her grandchildren, joins Joseph Riley, President of the Christmas Pageant of Peace, in ascending to the top of the 38-foot tree in a hydraulic lift.

The top ornament, placed on the tree on December 1 by Barbara Bush, is a traditional

three dimensional star illuminated by a 75-watt halogen lamp.



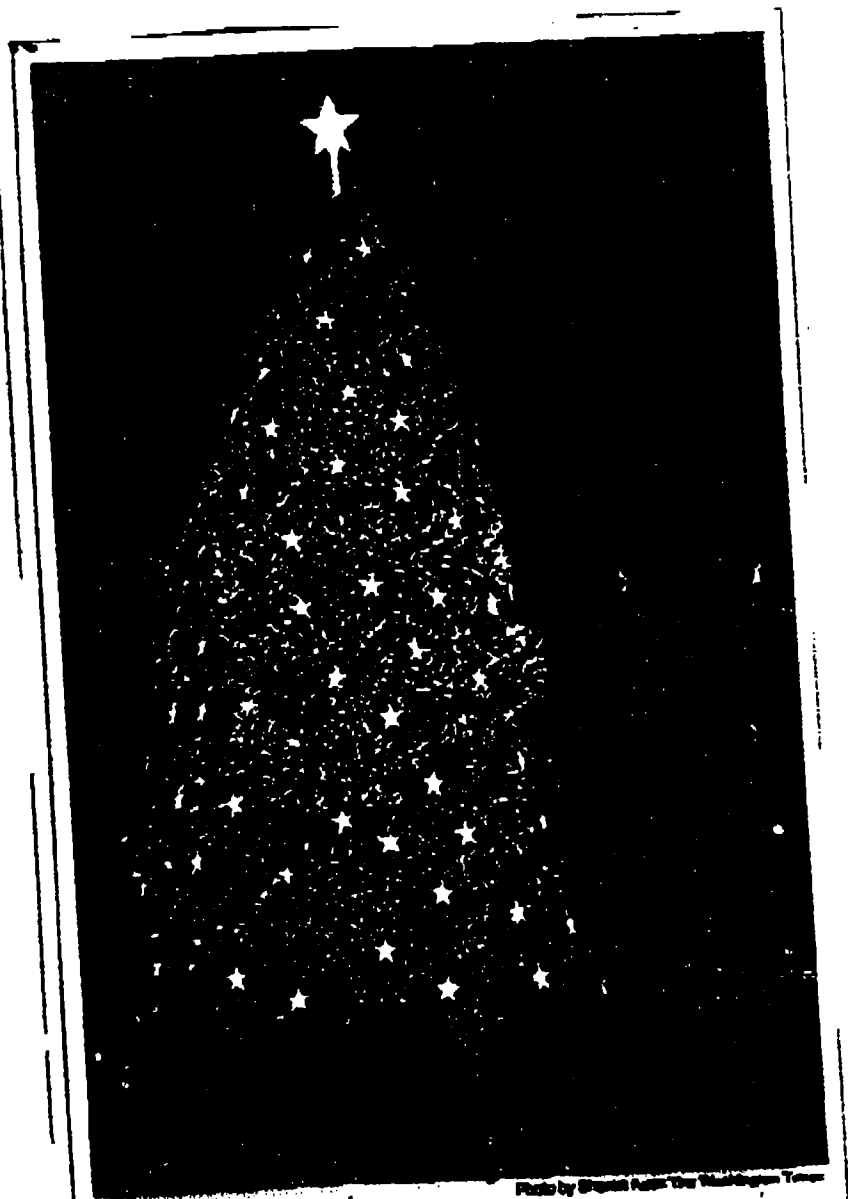
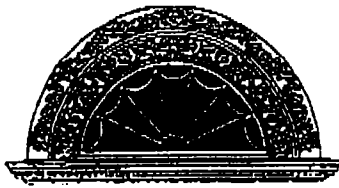


Photo by Stephen Feltz/The Washington Times

Light 'er up

Crowds gather on the Ellipse as the National Christmas Tree is lighted by President Bush yesterday. The tree, a living Colorado blue spruce, is 35 feet tall. The 12-year-old tree will remain lighted until Jan. 1.



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WHITE HOUSE LIAISON
1100 OHIO DRIVE, S.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20242
(202) 619-6344 FAX (202) 619-6353

FAX

DATE: June 22, 1993

TO: Mr. Ken Connally

ADDRESS: Office on Environmental Policy, The White House

ROOM: _____

PHONE: 456-6224 FAX: 456-2710

FROM: Mr. Stan Lock

SUBJECT: National Christmas Tree

TOTAL NUMBER OF PAGES BEING SENT: 14
(INCLUDING COVER PAGE)



OSM

U. S. Department of the Interior
202 208-2553

FACT SHEET

Office of Surface Mining
November 21, 1990

CHRISTMAS TREES FROM RECLAIMED MINE LAND

Each year, just before Christmas, the President of the United States turns the switch that lights the national Christmas tree and the 57 smaller trees that represent the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. territories. This tree-lighting ceremony, called the Pageant of Peace, is held on the Ellipse, just south of the White House. Although the national tree is permanently planted on the Ellipse, the 57 state and territorial trees are planted temporarily for the event, and then, following the holiday season, are transplanted to the grounds of Washington area schools and other public buildings.

This year the 57 state and territorial trees are very special. They are from the Autumn Ridge Christmas Tree Farm, which is located on a reclaimed coal mine in western Maryland. Mined and reclaimed in the late 1960's, this land is an excellent example of how land used temporarily for surface coal mining can be returned to permanent, productive land use.

The Buffalo Coal Company mined coal on the site where this tree farm is located, just outside Oakland, Maryland, from 1966-1971. The coal was shipped to Washington, D.C., as fuel for electric power generating plants. (In fact it is likely that coal from this site was used to generate the electricity that lit the Christmas trees at Pageant of Peace ceremonies in the early 1960's.) Following the mining, reclamation was completed under the Maryland mining law, which required the operator to cover the mined area with a minimum of four feet of fill material. However, the company did more. Prior to returning the mined land to the land owner, the coal company regraded the site and established grass cover.

In 1980, the current owner, Gary Shaffer, purchased the property. Shaffer is president of Chesapeake Conservation Services of Sykesville, Maryland, a company that constructs erosion control and wetlands mitigation structures. Using its expertise in these areas, the company laid drain fields, completed the grading and topsoiling, constructed gravel roads, and established a Christmas tree farm with over 70,000 trees on the former coal mine land. Today over 100 acres of this former mined land are covered with carefully hand sheared Christmas trees. Streams and surface water running through the farm are clear, and the land is productive once again.

During the summer of 1990, officials from the Interior Department's Office of Surface Mining and The National Park Service selected trees for the December tree-lighting ceremony. In late fall, the pines were dug and transported to the Ellipse for planting and decorating. On December 13, President Bush will light the trees for this year's holiday season.

Although growing Christmas trees on reclaimed land is common today, it was an unusual land use prior to passage of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977. This national coal mining and reclamation law requires mining companies throughout the country to reclaim the land and either reestablish the old land use or develop new, more productive uses.

This year's Christmas trees are living proof that America can mine its coal resources without permanent environmental damage, and then return the land to productive, long-term land uses.

Tree farmer's products play part in pageant

By REBECCA LONG
News-Post Staff

A local family is experiencing the joy of giving in a tree-mendous way this Christmas season.

The Gary Shaffer family of Sykesville are this year's suppliers of the Christmas trees being used for the National Christmas Tree Pageant of Peace ceremony in Washington, D.C.

Selection was made by the National Forestry Service and the U.S. Department of Interior.

Mr. Shaffer purchased the 134-acre tree-producing plot of land in Garrett County in 1980, now home for more than 11,000 Christmas trees. "I bought the land because my wife thought it would be neat to raise Christmas trees," Mr. Shaffer said. "It's a project that allows us to see the finished product and what we've accomplished."

But Autumn Ridge Christmas Tree Plantation near Oakland is not a typical tree farm. In the 1970s it was a strip mine owned by the Buffalo Coal Company.

"The main reason we purchased the land was because it seemed like a real challenge," Mr. Shaffer explained. "Everyone laughed and

said the farm was an old strip job. But now we have had people like Chuck Myers with the Office of Surface Mining within the U.S. Department of the Interior refer to Autumn Ridge Christmas Tree Farm as 'a real conservation show place and success story.'"

"This will mark the first time in history that trees have been gathered from a reclaimed strip mine to be used in the National Pageant of Peace," said Mr. Shaffer. "My family is very honored and flattered to have been chosen to supply the trees. I'm still in disbelief."

The trees were planted by the National Coal Association through the Office of Surface Mining in the U.S. Department of the Interior, as a symbol of how reclaimed coal mining land can be returned to productive use.

"Our efforts are to make the public aware that the surface can be disturbed to recover coal and then put back into productive use," said Earl Killenback, public affairs representative for the National Park Service. "Before the decision was made to get the trees from Shaffer's farm, it was important to make sure that the trees were all uniform in type and size."

"This will mark the first time in history that trees have been gathered from a reclaimed strip mine to be used in the National Pageant of Peace."

—Gary Shaffer

"In the past, trees were purchased from local nurseries for the display," he said. "The National Coal Association probably had the original idea to promote surface coal mining land for other productive uses and bring those types of trees to the White House."

Mr. Shaffer's trees will surround the National Christmas Tree. The circle of greens is known as the Pathway of Peace. The 57 small Scotch Pine, White Pine and Red Pine trees, represent the 50 states, the District of Columbia and the U.S. territories. He supplied a total of 100 trees, with the remaining 43 being used to decorate around the Ellipse area.

The trees have already been planted around the Ellipse in front of the White House, according to Mr. Shaffer. "My family and I were at the planting ceremony two weeks ago and we helped Manuel Lujan Jr., U.S. Secretary of the Interior plant the first tree."

The Shaffer family was also invited to watch First Lady Barbara Bush place the star on the National Christmas Tree at last week's ceremony. To their surprise, the Mr. and Mrs. Shaffer and their two sons were brought in on the ceremonies for pictures with Mrs. Bush.

Mr. Shaffer is president and owner of Chesapeake Conservation Service

Inc. in Qambar. His interest in the strip mine stems from doing conservation work there. "I've always been interested in conservation and my business has completed 830 conservation projects in Maryland, Virginia, Delaware and Pennsylvania," he added.

The Chesapeake Conservation Service Inc. has constructed erosion control and wetlands mitigation structures on Autumn Ridge Christmas Tree Plantation. Using its expertise in these areas, the company laid drain fields, completed the grading and top soiling and constructed gravel roads.

According to Mr. Shaffer, there was a lot of overgrowth and weeds to be mowed, since the land had idled for many years. "The soil was on the poor side, but that's good when growing Christmas trees," he said. "The poorer soil slowed down the growth of trees which caused the trees to be fuller."

The Shaffer's are planning to plant an additional 30,000 trees in the spring of 1991 and 1992.

This year's Pageant of Peace, with the theme "Discovery," is co-sponsored by Christmas Pageant of Peace Inc. headed by Washington

businessman Joseph H. Riley of the National Park Service, the U.S. Department of Recreation and Parks, the Greater Washington Board of Trade and the Washington Convention and Visitors Association. The theme emphasizes the joy of learning, exploration and satisfaction of discovering new friends and people, according to Mr. Riley.

"The Christmas trees are given away selectively to be planted on public land at the completion of the Pageant of Peace exhibit after the holidays," Mr. Shaffer said.

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Frederick Post 12-6-90



Mary Beth and Gary Shaffer, standing, of Sykesville, along with their sons, Spencer, back, and Taylor, front, take a look at one of the 100 Christmas trees they grew that are being used in the Pageant of Peace.

Staff photo by Sam Yu