



AUTUMN HALLSM

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North Carolina's Largest Red Bay Tree Found in Wilmington Tree Resides in Autumn Hall, Wilmington's Newest Mixed Use Community

NC Division of Forest Resources confirms specimen is "largest ever seen"

March 13, 2008 -- It was Developer Raiford Trask who first spotted the peculiar looking live oak on his tract of 236 acres in Wilmington. Standing among other live oaks and mature pines the tree appeared distinctive and worth a call to his arborist, Scott McGhee. McGhee took one look and recognized it for what it was – the most enormous Red Bay he'd ever seen. On Thursday, March 13, the North Carolina Division of Forest Resources confirmed it. With a circumference of 121 inches and an estimated crown spread of some 46 feet, the Red Bay tree (*Persea borbonia*) is far larger than the state's previous record holder, which comes in with a circumference of 82 inches and an estimated crown of 23 feet. Urban Forestry Specialist Alan Moore confirmed that the tree is indeed North Carolina's Champion Red Bay.

Red Bay "At Home" in Tree Friendly Development

The tree stands in what will soon be Wilmington's newest mixed-use community, Autumn Hall. Trask, together with his family is developing the site to accommodate 300 single family homes, 200 multi-family units, a world class tennis center, eleven distinct parks, an extensive commercial and business center and elegant retail promenade. Trask is earning accolades for the efforts he and his development team have taken to save trees on the site.

(more)

NC State's Largest Red Bay Tree in Wilmington

Thus far, approximately 150 trees have been spaded and transplanted to create more mature streetscapes throughout the community. Park locations have been driven by stands of trees. Road paving has been redirected at considerable expense and some residential lots have simply not been developed due to existing trees.

Such circumvention of trees also drove the installation of all water, sewer, telephone and cable lines, and required Progress Energy to engage in atypical installation of its lines, at the developer's expense. "Raiford's not your typical developer," says McGhee, "I've never worked with anyone who tries as hard as he does to save a tree."

About the Red Bay

The Red Bay sits near the property line along Eastwood Road, which leads to Wrightsville Beach. While commercial construction will surround it, nothing will disturb its continued growth. "I'm not at all worried about the development harming this tree," says McGhee, "it's a fine specimen and it's in good hands."

Red Bay is a native North American evergreen tree that can reach 50 feet in height but is usually shorter and wider when grown in urban areas. The tree flowers in the springtime and develops fruit, which is favored by birds and squirrels. The tree has red-brown bark and resembles a live oak with branches low to the ground.

About Autumn Hall

Autumn Hall is located just 1.5 miles from Wrightsville Beach and minutes from Historic Downtown Wilmington. The community is in its first phase of construction, with reservations for home sites underway. When complete, the project will include 51 acres of parks, walking trails and green space, in addition to an eight acre lake and a Creek Club from which residents can canoe and kayak along Bradley Creek to the Atlantic Ocean. For more information, visit www.autumnhall.com.



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