

ETHICIAN NEWS NETWORK

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ATTN: NEWSROOM/EDITOR

TREES ON SAM HOUSTON'S HOMESTEAD DESTROYED

For Immediate Release

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The sound of chain saws on the grounds of Sam Houston's original homestead in Huntsville, Texas alerted citizens to an atrocity that was taking place at taxpayer expense.

Investigation revealed that contractors working for The City of Huntsville were frantically killing important historic shade trees on public property. Natalie Stephens and George Russell who live on Texas hero Sam Houston's original homestead could not believe their eyes as they saw men with chain saws destroying trees that were so precious to Huntsville's citizens in years past that they were the focal point of press conferences and citizen led demonstrations.

Russell asked the contractor to please stop the massacre until such time as it could be determined who had made the terrible and probably illegal decision to kill the majestic trees. The contractor said that he was under orders to destroy all seven trees and that he would not stop.

Rushing to City Hall, Stephens and Russell asked for anyone in authority who would stop the killing. All city officials had taken an early lunch and were nowhere to be found. Russell then called the Huntsville Police Department and asked that an officer stop the destruction to public property.

Sam Houston State University and Huntsville Police officers were able to convince the logging contractor to stop. Immediately thereafter a City official arrived and attempted to recommence the carnage.

Russell, who has for decades been the protector of the Sam Houston homestead and who has invested huge sums of money to defend it from desecration, demanded that the official who identified himself as Randy Brown, Director of Public Works, call a halt to the chainsaw massacre. After a heated debate between Russell and Brown, refereed by University and City police officers, Brown finally agreed to stay the execution.

The next morning Brown called Russell at his office on the Sam Houston homestead and according to Russell, almost gleefully, said that he was going to order the destruction of the remaining three trees, beginning Monday morning, February 17, 2003. Sam Houston was President of The Republic of Texas and Mr. Brown therefore was ironically ordering the killing of the remaining Houston descendent trees on "President's Day".

Russell, who is Forest Practices Chair, Lone Star Sierra Club and an expert on urban forestry issues, using the Texas Agricultural Extension Service Evaluation of Texas Shade Trees formula, placed a value of the trees already destroyed at \$9,564.00 and the surviving trees that City functionary and bureaucrat, Brown has condemned to death, at \$15,313.00.

In a Valentine's Day phone call to Huntsville Mayor, Bill Green, Russell demanded that Green take action to prevent the further desecration of Sam Houston's legacy. In a subsequent e-mail to Green, Russell asked that City bureaucrats found responsible for the destruction of valuable public property be required to make restitution to the citizens of Huntsville.

Dr. Jim Carter, former City Council Member and Mayor Pro-tem who had been instrumental in the decision by Council to save these important historic trees, expressed shock, exasperation, and disgust, at what he called, "a mindless and continuing vendetta against our heritage and quality of life in Huntsville by our own so-called public servants".

George H. Russell, an outspoken opponent of the death penalty, is a resident of Huntsville, Texas, known worldwide as "The City of Death."

He is founder of The Patriot Network, and author of its 35+ web sites located at www.patriotnetwork.org, as well as founder of The Universal Ethician Church, an interfaith ministry with a worldwide following via the church's 275+ web sites located at www.salvationnetwork.org.

Russell, 57, is an educational video producer, environmental activist, historic preservation specialist, photographer, art and antique collector, philanthropist, American patriot and ethician.

Additional biographical information may be found in Who's Who in America, through Internet searches, and in other publications. Images of Mr. Russell suitable for downloading for publication may be found at www.salvationnetwork.org.