

Trees, People and Environment

LIVING TREE CARE inc.Desoto

“ In the business of saving trees”

Living Tree Care began in 1991. I moved down to Jefferson County from the suburbs of Chicago in 1988 to attend Christian Outreach school of Ministries in Goldman. I had acquired a passion for saving trees in Elmhurst Il. During my tenure there I coordinated the efforts to save the city’s namesake, thousands of American elms. When I moved my family here I never wanted to climb a tree again. Tree work is an extremely hard and dangerous occupation.

While driving through Festus I was shocked to see trees ‘topped’. It almost looked like there was a spiritual pall in Jefferson County, because trees were never designed to be so hacked, and I had never seen the like in Illinois. One gets extreme about what one does not know about and in fear...hacks it back.

A prophetic word came through a fellow seminarian that I was anointed to climb trees and that I was to take the staff that was in my hand and throw it down. I knew who was speaking to me and it was tough. It was not supposed to happen this way. People get called out of business into ministry, not the other way around. The word cut past the outer bark into the core. My wife, Theresa received the name Living Tree in a dream . In a Catholic translation (we’re Protestant), on His way to the cross Jesus referred to Himself as the Living Tree. Protestant translations say ‘green tree’.

Fourteen years later many of our best clients are those with just a handful of trees. They take great stock in the value of their trees. Others see the value in their bass boats and that’s ok.

We Trimmed 600 of Forest Park’s trees for the 200 year celebration of Lewis and Clark’s exhibition and the 100 year anniversary of the 1904 world’s fair. We installed lightning protection systems in some of the trees. infused some to protect fromOak Wilt disease and won a national award for the project. We are helping to save a historical black cemetery in Crestwood from condemnation (Father Dickson cemetery). In 2004 we did a project for Operation Brightside in removing highly hazardous trees in some of the poorer neighborhoods in St. Louis.

The highlight of my carrier happened this summer when one of our clients sent our family, Theresa (Tree for short) myself and our four daughters to Jerusalem for two weeks!

In our own backyard we are working with the leadership in Jefferson county to set a standard of tree preservation in our county’s growth before it explodes. There is a bible verse out of the book of Proverbs that I bank on.

“Do you see a man skilled in his work?
He shall stand before kings, he will not stand before obscure men.”

W.Phillips (Phil) Berwick
President Living Tree Care inc.