

UPTOWN

Century-old oak falls victim to rain

Saturated earth led to demise of tree known as 'Grandmother'

By **JESUS JIMENEZ**
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For more than 100 years, a giant post oak provided shade at 2719 Routh St. in Uptown Dallas.

Last week, the tree came down.

Gail Thomas, founding fellow of the Dallas Institute of Humanities and Culture, said recent weather led to the tree's demise. She cited the saturated earth after Dallas-Fort Worth's wettest September on record — 12.69 inches of rain was reported at DFW International Airport.

Through Oct. 10 — the day before the tree was felled — the airport recorded 3.26 inches of rain in October, according to the National Weather Service.

Thomas said the institute's arborist, Jeannine Cumming, had previously found rot root on the tree but was trying to treat it.

The Dallas Institute moved to 2719 Routh St. in 1980, according to Thomas. The institute is a nonprofit educational organization with a mission to "enrich and deepen the practical life of the city."

The house where the Dallas Institute resides was built in 1906.

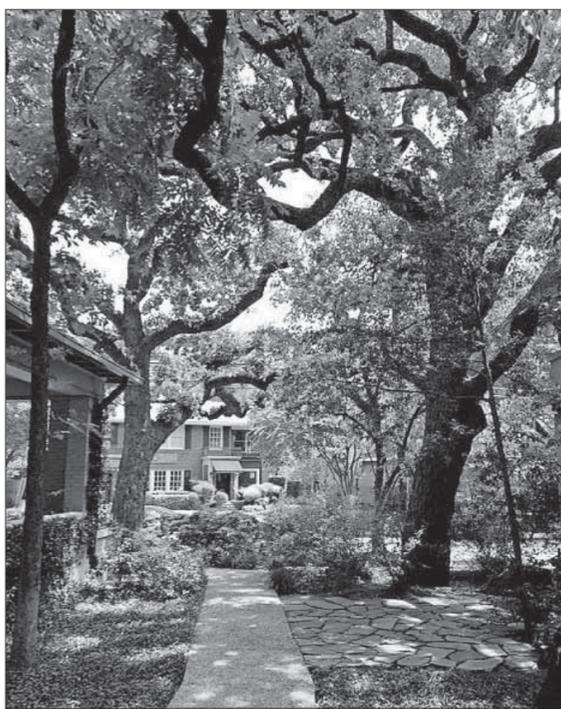
"Legend has it that this one, whom we called 'Grandmother,' and another, whom we call 'Grandfather,' were original with the 1906 historic house we call Thomas Hall," said Larry Allums, executive director of the institute.

"Grandmother was a beloved part of our life here, and we're still grieving her loss," he said.

On a sunny day, Thomas said, Grandmother provided enough shade to cover the building's entire porch.

"I think it was just time, but it's hard to give it up," she said. "The loss of it has been profound, and you just feel it [missing] when you walk around."

Thomas said people spend their whole lives living in the



Dallas Institute of Humanities

For decades, the giant post oak known as "Grandmother" (right) shaded the property in Uptown that is now home to the Dallas Institute of Humanities and Culture.

city without taking time to appreciate natural wonders like Grandmother. "It's such a beautiful, living being — what a tree is," she said.

The tree was so large that cutting it down took three days. Cumming preserved "a good chunk of her hulking trunk," said Claudia MacMillan, director of the Cowan Center for Ed-

ucation at the Dallas Institute.

The trunk will lie in the yard to "commemorate the tremendous loss that she is to our Dallas Institute community," MacMillan said. "And she will lie there until she sinks back in the earth, if I have anything to say about it."

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TEXAS

Report cites substance use in bus crash

Driver had used sedative, pot before accident that killed 13

By **CLAIRE Z. CARDONA**
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JACK D. YOUNG

A driver's marijuana and prescription sedative use led to the head-on crash that killed 13 people on a church bus last year, the National Transportation Safety Board determined Tuesday.

Toxicology tests showed Jack Dillon Young had marijuana and clonazepam, a sedative used to treat seizure and panic disorders, in his system. Young also said he took twice the prescribed dosage before the March 29, 2017, crash, according to a summary of the NTSB report.

Young's truck crossed into oncoming traffic on U.S. Highway 83 near Concan, about 80 miles west of San Antonio, and slammed into the bus carrying members of First Baptist New Braunfels.

Fourteen people were on the bus, and the driver and 12 passengers died. The victims ranged in age from 61 to 87. They had been heading back from a choir retreat.

Unsmoked and partially smoked marijuana cigarettes, drug paraphernalia and prescription and over-the-counter medication were found in Young's truck.

A witness recorded a 14-minute long video that showed the truck crossing over the solid white should-

er line 37 times, going over the double-yellow center line 19 times, and, at one point, driving completely on the wrong side of the road, a preliminary report stated.

The video ends just before the truck enters the curve where the crash occurred.

After the crash, Young reportedly told a witness he had been texting.

A summary of the NTSB report stated it was possible Young had been using his cellphone, but "this action would not explain the prolonged and continuous erratic driving behavior seen in the witness video recording leading up to the crash."

The NTSB report also recommended lap and shoulder belts, instead of just lap seatbelts, be used on medium-size buses. The lap belts the passengers in the back of the bus were wearing contributed to the severity of their injuries, the report said.

Young, who was 20 at the time, has pleaded no contest to intoxication assault and 13 counts of intoxication manslaughter. He faces up to 270 years in prison at his sentencing, which is scheduled for November.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

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Rain keeps road crews busy fixing potholes

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weekend," said Tony Hartzel, a communications director for the department. "The continual rain has helped create potholes throughout the area."

Hartzel said that when water gets under a roadway, the weight of traffic weakens and eventually can displace chunks of the pavement. Since Monday, TxDOT has

had three crews working to fill almost 100 potholes in Dallas County, according to Hartzel.

From Friday through Wednesday morning, 7.41 inches of rain was recorded at DFW International Airport, according to the National Weather Service.

With more rain in the forecast through this weekend, Hartzel said, "TxDOT asks for the public's patience

as our crews work to patch the roadways. Our crews have been working steadily to fill potholes as quickly and as safely as possible."

The buckling on I-35E is not the only major issue on the interstate this month. Last week, a portion of roadway broke off on northbound I-35E south of Whitlock Lane and Sandy Lake Road, according to Carrollton police.

The pothole caused tire

damage to several vehicles and forced a shutdown of the right and center lanes until TxDOT crews could make repairs. It was unclear whether weather caused that pothole.

Staff writer Loyd Brumfield contributed to this report.

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