



# HARRISONBURG | VA FRIENDLY BY NATURE



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## Ash tree lives on in gift to retiring master firefighter

HARRISONBURG, Va. – Ash trees that fall victim to the emerald ash borer in Harrisonburg continue to get new life.

Two City staff members, working with local company Willow Run Custom Lumber, recently took an ash tree that was removed from Westover Park and turned it into a life-long tribute to the service of Harrisonburg Fire Department Master Firefighter BJ Clark. The log was processed into usable lumber and then transformed by HFD Lt. Jeremy Holland into a shadow box to house an American flag created out of fire hose.

The shadow box was presented to Clark in honor of his 30 years of dedication to fire service. “As much as I was saddened to retire, I truly appreciate that a part of the City will remain with me,” Clark said.

And that’s a big goal of the program that provided the wood.

“Anytime we can take a tree that was lost for unfortunate reasons, and give it new purpose as opposed to it going to waste – that’s what the Harrisonburg Urban Wood Utilization Program is all about,” Jeremy Harold, Harrisonburg’s green space manager, said.

The Harrisonburg Urban Wood Utilization Program seeks to find new ways to repurpose fallen or removed trees. Due to the invasive emerald ash borer beetle, numerous ash trees have had to be removed the past few years at City parks.

More information about the program, and on how to obtain wood for projects, can be found at [www.harrisonburgva.gov/urban-forestry-program](http://www.harrisonburgva.gov/urban-forestry-program).

**The City of Harrisonburg** is centrally located in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. It is home to approximately 54,000 people. More information about the City of Harrisonburg is available online at [www.HarrisonburgVA.gov](http://www.HarrisonburgVA.gov).



(Top) Retired Master Firefighter BJ Clark stands with his retirement gift. (Bottom) The shadow box was created out of wood from an ash tree.



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