

confiscated 18 guns and ammunition. The commission wants to ment work best.

Trees

3-11-70

Rare Oak May Be Safe

By MEL BAUGHMAN
Sentinel Staff Writer

Can a rare, 100-year-old cork oak tree survive surrounded by asphalt in the lot of a self-service gas station?

Part of the answer to that question may be given Friday when executives of a Fort Collins, Colo., gasoline company meet to consider revision of plans to save the tree.

The firm, Pat Griffin Co., presently is clearing a site for a station at the southwest corner of Soquel Drive and 7th Ave.

Workmen Tuesday began preparations to cut the giant tree down, only to meet with a chorus of vigorous protests by neighbors and conservationists.

Wayne Kneale, assistant vice president of operations for the company, said today that he is flying to Fort Collins on Thursday and will present new information that may lead to changes in station plans.

Dr. Kenneth V. Thimann, provost of Crown College at UCSC and internationally known botanist, inspected the tree today and confirmed its rarity.

He estimated its age at more than 100 years, noting that the first cork oaks were planted in California about 1860. They are a native of Spain and Portugal and are the principal source of cork for fine bottled wines.

Dr. Thimann said he was unaware of the tree's presence until contacted by The Sentinel on Tuesday afternoon. He said similar trees grow in Southern California, in the Riverside and San Diego areas.

Dr. William Nolan of Cabrillo College called the tree "the most magnificent specimen in Northern California." He said it is well known among tree-lovers.

Kneale stated that the firm's

president, Pat Friffin, is an ar-tree should be between 300 and 400 years.

dent conservationist. Thus it may be possible to revise plans A smaller cork oak tree at the rear of the lot may be served the tree for future generations.

Dr. Thimann stated that, Chairman Dan Forbus told The Sentinel Tuesday that he would barring the woodman's saw and ax, the life expectancy of the look into the possibility.



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