



Totem Pole Sculpture Graces HSV Segovia Park

Description

Segovia Court Townhome Residents Clean up Former Neighborhood Eyesore, Creating a Park; World-renowned Artist is Commissioned to Carve Unique Totem Pole Sculpture for the Site

Crown Jewel of Segovia Park

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Chainsaw Carving Adorns Segovia Neighborhood in Hot Springs Village

At the center of Segovia Park stands a fourteen-foot-tall one-of-a-kind work of art that can't be overlooked. This majestic statue was created by world-renowned Chainsaw Artist, Gary Keenan.

The large carving in Segovia Park was sculpted from a mammoth oak tree that was topped to a height of fourteen feet. The tree is still rooted in the ground. When asked if the tree was a structure, Board Vice-Chair, Tucker Omohundro, responded, "It has roots. Therefore it is not a structure."

The figure is crowned with the head of a conquistador and features four more well-known Arkansas icons – a mocking bird, pine tree, black bear, and Arkansas Razorback. Last but not least, a golf ball adorns the bottom of the statue, in the representation of Hot Springs Village, home to many golfers and the largest gated community in the United States.

From Eyesore to Excellence

While the Segovia Courts Neighborhood in HSV now showcases this beautiful art piece, located in a small enclave in an out-of-the-way cul-de-sac overlooking Lake Segovia, the spot wasn't always this beautiful. Previously the area had been abused by the dumping of leaves, concrete, and other debris.

Two Townhome Association (THA) members got together and came up with a special idea. Why not turn the eyesore and dumping ground into a pleasant outdoor area? Neighbors, Joe Campbell and Phil

Gustafson, saw a problem, tackled it and made their neighborhood much better, one flower (plus more) at a time.

One Thing Led to Another

Campbell said the project began with cleanup and gardening. “I am kind of a gardening nut,” explained Campbell, bringing plants purchased in '93 when he lived in Oregon with him when he moved here. Originally, Campbell took notice of THA common property that was being used as a dumping ground. He said people have been dumping there for 30 years. He also noticed there were rocks in the area and realized that at one time, someone had made a rock-lined flower bed. He unearthed the bed and replanted it in 2021. Campbell and Gustafson also paid for the area to be thinned.

Campbell thought it would be nice to put a picnic table on the property so that the neighbors without lake access would have a place to fish and hang out by the water.

While on vacation in 2021, Gustafson met Chainsaw Artist, Gary Keenan. This led to the two Villagers deciding to cut off the top of the oak tree and commissioning the carver to sculpt a totem pole. Campbell realized it really is a small world when he found out that Keenan resides only a couple of miles away from his lowan sisters.

Campbell and Gustafson, after obtaining permission from the Hot Springs Village Townhome Association, proceeded with their totem pole project. The two THA members self-funded the entire project.

The artist erected scaffolding around the tree, completing the totem pole in only four days.

Not Everyone was Happy with the Project

One resident, objecting to the project, contacted the Hot Springs Village Property Owners Association. It was determined that the HSV Townhouse Association has authority over the common property owned by the THA, thus having the final determination on such matters. This is the way that John Cooper originally set up the Townhome Association governing documents.

Looking to the Future

Campbell said this is an ongoing beautification project. There are future plans to plant more flowers and bushes at Segovia Park. Additionally, a sign with the park's name is awaiting installation in the near future.

Townhome Association members have the responsibility of maintaining this park into perpetuity.

About the Artist

Gary Keenan is a versatile sculpting artist that has traveled the world, competing and doing well, both in the United States and abroad. In 2007, Gary was the only American invited to England to participate in “Sculptree” – Westonbirt Festival of the Tree, which was not a competition, but a celebration of art and nature in which only 12 honored sculptors participated. Gary spends his time traveling to fairs and

festivals where he demonstrates his craft.

[Click here](#) to visit Gary Keenan's, Facebook Page.

[Click here](#) to visit Gary Keenan's website, *Carving by Keenan*, where a multitude of Keenan's artwork is displayed.

CHERYL DOWDEN, March 10, 2022

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