

## LIFESTYLES

# Owl sculpture installed in Tosa yard

Artwork memorializes 180-year-old tree felled in 2016 storm

**A** 180-year-old white oak tree suffered damage during a storm last summer, and that presented a Wauwatosa homeowner with an opportunity.

“I had to have the tree removed after a storm revealed that it was rotting and could fall at any time,” Carl Johnson said. “I wanted to memorialize it, so I came up with the idea of a sculpture.”

The July 21 storm brought down several major limbs, Johnson said.

At first Johnson wanted to carve a sculpture out of the 6-foot stump that was left after the tree was removed, but the stump was too rotted to be used. Then sculptor Bryan Berenson, whom Johnson contacted about his idea, suggested using it as a pedestal for a wooden sculpture he would create.

Together, Berenson and Johnson came up with the idea of placing a nearly 5-foot wooden sculpture of a barn owl on the stump of the white oak.

“I looked online and studied barn owl anatomy,” Berenson said. “Then I drew it to full scale, made a small model and obtained a



Chris Zangl of Milwaukee Landscape and Design assists in the installation of a wooden sculpture at 8125 Milwaukee Ave., Wauwatosa. The sculpture sits atop a stump left after a storm necessitated taking down a landmark tree.

piece of white oak to do the carving.”

The sculpture was installed June 15 on the stump at the residence in the 8100 block of Milwaukee Avenue. A truck-mounted crane operated by a team from Milwaukee Landscape and Design hoisted the sculpture into place.

The piece of art is 58 inches tall and 2 feet wide and weighs about 400 pounds.

Berenson works out of his Hartland home and trained for five years as a wood and stone sculptor ap-

prentice in Austria. After his apprenticeship, he passed the wood and stone sculptor's exam and in 2013 he returned for still more training. In 2015, he earned the title of master sculptor.

“To keep the owl in good shape, I used several coats of varnish, and we installed it with a gap on the bottom to keep it off of the tree,” Berenson said.

Johnson said he plans to place lights around the owl so neighbors and passersby can enjoy the art.



A sculpture of a barn owl sits atop a stump at a home in the 8100 block of Milwaukee Avenue in Wauwatosa. It was placed there June 15, 2017 after a 180 year old white oak tree had to be taken down due to a rotten core.



Chris Zangl (left) and Dennis French position an owl sculpture for placement atop the stump of a white oak tree at a home in the 8100 block of Milwaukee Avenue in Wauwatosa.

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