

# FUTURE MIGHTY OAK



Staff photo by Jerry Baker

Members of the Conroe Beautification Association and local dignitaries, including Greg Poole, from right, Keep Montgomery County Beautiful board member; Chuck Segrest, chairman of the board of K.M.C.B.; and Montgomery

County Judge Alan B. Sadler, center, assembled for the ceremonial Treaty Oak planting at the Lone Star Convention Center on Thursday. The tree is an offspring of the famous Austin oak tree.

## Young tree has distinguished lineage

BY NANCY FLAKE  
COURIER STAFF

The acorn may not fall far from the tree, but one in particular has traveled a great distance from its legendary ancestor to live and grow in Montgomery County.

An 8-foot live oak tree, grown from an acorn off the historic Treaty Oak in Austin, was planted during a Thursday morning ceremony outside the Lone Star Convention Center in Conroe.

It is the first of what will be a broad avenue of trees between the convention center and the Lone Star

Expo, according to Montgomery County Judge Alan B. Sadler.

"This will become a 'Memory Lane' of trees to honor various people and organizations," Sadler said.

Sadler, along with members of Keep Montgomery County Beautiful, the Judge Nathaniel Hart Davis Chapter of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas and Boy Scout Troop 1893 were on hand to mark the ceremonial planting and its historical significance.

The Treaty Oak, thought to be about 500 years old, is, according to legend, the spot where Stephen F. Austin signed a boundary treaty with

local Indian tribes.

One of 14 trees known as the Council Oaks, the Treaty Oak was the only survivor of development in Austin, and in 1927 was proclaimed the most perfect specimen of a North American tree. But in 1989 the tree was deliberately poisoned, and a desperate battle was fought to save it.

About 35 percent of the tree now remains, and acorns harvested from the Treaty Oak in 1997 have grown into trees that have found homes around Texas and other states.

The young tree that now graces

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Montgomery County was grown in Florida, authenticated as a descendant of the Treaty Oak and purchased for \$400 by Keep Montgomery County Beautiful.

It will be taken care of by members of Boy Scout Troop 1893.

"The troop is going to ensure proper care of the tree through whatever means are necessary," said Keith Valigura, one of the troop's leaders. "This is a fantastic opportunity for Montgomery County and these boys. It's a great history lesson for them.

"We're going to make sure the tree sticks around."

be donated by David Kleimann, owner of U.S. Trees of Texas. The trees will be primarily live oaks, with some other species also included, according to Sadler. The county hopes to install an irrigation system in the area by 2006, he said.

A marble marker will be placed near the Treaty Oak ancestral tree, noted Chuck Segrest, chairman of the board for Keep Montgomery County Beautiful.

"Planting the tree is the easy part," he said. "We want to make sure it lives to an old age."