Monkey puzzle tree honors activist

Denis Hayes, a Camas School District alumnus, coordinated the first Earth Day

Over the years, thousands of trees have been planted in honor of Earth Day.

But recently, a tree was designated in honor of Denis Hayes, the founder of the annual environmental awareness-based Earth Day.

The monkey puzzle tree came as part of a thank-you to Hayes for serving as keynote speaker at the annual meeting and luncheon of the Parks Foundation of Clark County on June 12.

Hayes, who grew up in Camas, received Clark College’s Outstanding Alumni Award in 1978 for his work as coordinator of the first Earth Day, head of Earth Day network, president and CEO of the

Denis Hayes is not only the coordinator of the first Earth Day in 1970, but he’s also a Camas School District alumnus.

Bullitt Foundation, and chairman of the board of the Energy Foundation.

Last year, Camas School District named its alternative program, Hayes Freedom High School, after

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the famous alumnus.
The designation is part of

the “Witness Tree” program

of the Vancouver-Clark

Parks and Recreation Urban

Forestry Commission. The

program allows people to

adopt trees in memoriam or

honor of a special person or

occasion.

The parks foundation

worked with the college to

find an appropriate tree.

“We felt that the

uniqueness of the tree,

and its location next to the

science building, were both

great tributes to Hayes’

contributions throughout

his life,” said Clark College

President Robert K. Knight.

A plaque will be placed

next to the tree, which

Knight expects to be in place

in time for the college’s 75th

anniversary on Oct. 1.

“The parks foundation was

pleased to partner with

Vancouver-Clark Parks and

Recreation and Clark College

in honoring Denis through

the Witness Tree Program

for his outstanding

contributions to

environmental education

and awareness,” said parks

foundation Executive

Director Cheri Martin.