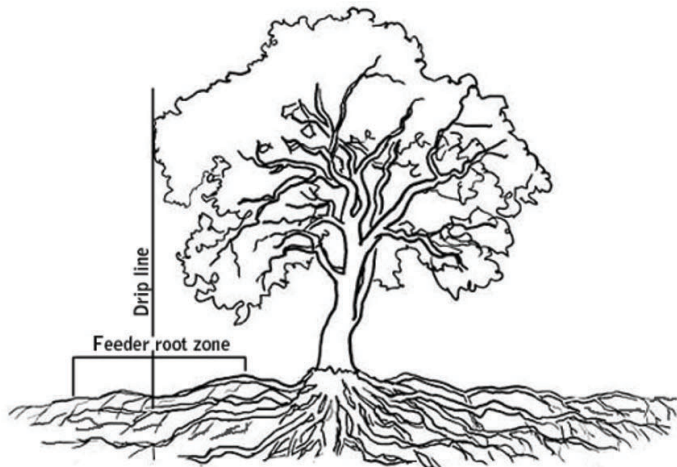


**Firm Foundations** - By Stan Southwick



You've heard that beauty is only skin deep, and that true character comes from deep within. Trees are not much different. Their beauty is seen above ground, but the real strength of the tree lies deep in the roots. We were able to work on a project that had over 50 large existing trees on site and an owner that wanted to keep as many of them as possible. The architect was eager to protect the large trees also and designed his building to fit in the open spaces where he could. At first the building lines and parking lot curbs were just outside of the tiny circle that the surveyor had drawn to represent the trunk of the tree. After several arboriculture

lessons, they started to understand the importance of protecting the part of the tree you can't see. The root system can spread out past the edge of the canopy of the tree. The feeder roots that take part in photosynthesis are near the edge of the root zone. Large trees can stand in strong winds because their root systems spread out in all directions. Well, we were able to save over 40 of those large trees. There ended up being a handful of trees that were still too close to the new construction for us to be comfortable with the survivability of the tree. Despite our warnings the design team felt it was worth the risk. During the strong winds we had last September two of the 50'-60' tall trees were blown over. In a profession where we focus on aesthetics, we begin by making sure the unseen foundation is firm.

“When solving problems, dig at the roots instead of just hacking at the leaves.”  
 — Anthony J. D'Angelo

**Favorite Flora:**

**Quercus fusiformis 'Joan Lionetti'- Joan Lionetti Live Oak-** By Jon Marenfeld



An evergreen tree that's quickly gaining popularity throughout the arid southwest is *Quercus fusiformis* 'Joan Lionetti'. The trees namesake, Joan Lionetti, is the executive director for the environmental non-profit Tucson Clean and Beautiful and its program Trees for Tucson which provides low cost environmentally appropriate trees for City of Tucson residents. A local commercial grower that had developed a new, arid climate specific cultivar of oak tree and opted to name it for her as

**Photo of the Month**



Texas Olive Bloom  
 Las Vegas, NV  
 Cassie Grimes

homage to her tireless efforts. *Quercus fusiformis* 'Joan Lionetti' is similar to the more common *Quercus virginiana* but is more tolerant of higher soil pH, long droughts, and freezing

temperatures. This 25' x 25' tree has an upright form, straight trunk, and dense canopy that provides deep shade. Because of its size and symmetrical canopy, it's an ideal residential or street tree. It has dark green leathery leaves that are soft and fuzzy underneath and it remains evergreen even in the coldest of winters but may briefly shed its leaves in spring to make room for fresh foliage. Plant the Joan Lionetti Live Oak in full sun to part shade and once established only needs an occasional deep watering. Pruning couldn't be easier – it should almost never need it! Plant with other desert adapted shrubs and groundcovers such as Bear Grass (*Nolina microcarpa*), Damianita (*Chrysactinia mexicana*), Chihuahuan Rain Sage (*Leucophyllum laevigatum*), and Sandpaper Verbena (*Verbena rigida*) for a thick, green, lush yet waterwise landscape.