

Excerpt from Sparky the Legend, Ray Hazel, 2018

...“Sparky,” he said, “that butternut is standing stately all alone against all odds. It has a very strong root system. It always bears fruit for the deer and other wildlife to reap its harvest. The maples and that butternut tree consistently give the gift of nourishment asking nothing in return. Early in my youth I learned that just one tree could willingly provide the nourishment for many.”

When I was a young pup, Ray would often share bits of his simple philosophy while we bonded. He would just grin knowingly and pat my head affectionately. I always respected that tree and Ray’s simple insights on the value of giving something from yourself that money can’t buy.