THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ISA TEXAS CHAPTER

In the Shade

January, 2012

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ISAT Board Retreat 2011

by Emily King

From a distance, it may seem as though ISAT is somewhat of a self-propelling organization. Workshops appear throughout the year, the conference pops up in the fall like clockwork, and CEUs present themselves on a regular basis. It is pretty easy to be an arborist in Texas.

I have volunteered sporadically with ISAT at various events, most consistently with the Texas Tree Climbing Championship. Although a trained monkey could likely run a stopwatch as well as I, it is doubtful if even a sharp primate would leave such an event with the fulfillment that I gain watching outstanding athletes and socializing with old and new friends. After one such event, a newfound buddy suggested the possibility of volunteering at a different level with ISAT. Hindsight shows me that he was

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER by Keith Brown

The new year is upon us. In addition to my own new year's resolution, I always make one for my professional career. This year I'm going to work on a better process for handling incoming leads to my business. What is yours? Update online profiles? Improve marketing campaigns or community outreach? Address internal policies? There's no end to the options. My grandfather told me you are always moving. If you aren't making an effort to move forward, you're probably moving backwards.

There has been some chatter floating around for some time about licensing tree services at the state level. What do you think about this? Do we need to regulate our industry to help raise the level of professionalism across the board, or do you want the government to stay out of your business? Send me an email with your thoughts.

Instead of giving you my email address right here, I'm going to make you go to the website to get it. You should have that page bookmarked **www.ISATexas.com** . This is where you'll find updates about tree stuff going on throughout the state. Click on the link for the the board of directors to find my email.

Regards,
Keith Brown

Welcome, New ISA Members from Texas

Aaron Gregory Wagner, Santa Fe
Alex C. Scarborough, Lubbock
Bradford A. Phillips, Humble
Debora Sanches, Fort Worth
Francisco P. Ocampo, Jr, Little Elm
Garland Jeffrey Cisneros, Austin
George F. Leader, Jr., Johnson City
Jeffrey C. Fitzgerald, Woodway
Jeffrey R. VanFickell, Austin
John Sparks, Dallas
Josh Milne, Spring
Justin Branscum, Athens
Kelly A Futrell, Lubbock
Mark Roth, Pilot Point
Michelle R. Gorham, San Antonio
Paul Holowka, Nacogdoches
Rumaldo Sosa, Irving
Sam Neill, Victoria
Sammy Ramirez, Jr., Athens
Steven J. Terrell, Houston
Steven P. Wiggin, Fort Worth

SAAA Meetings: 2012

SAAA would like to announce the meeting schedule for the 2012 calendar year. We will meet at the TFS office the third Tuesday of the odd months (except November) from 12-1pm. The address is 15110 Jones Maltsberger, Suite 101, San Antonio Texas, 78247.

The dates are:
January 17
March 20
May 15
July 17
September 18
December location/date TBD.

The December meeting will be in conjunction with the TFS, Alamo Forest Partnership, and SAAA potluck.

Anyone interested in advancing the level of training, professionalism, and knowledge for the arborists in San Antonio is welcome to attend.

Certification Tests for 2012

Certification information and an application form can be obtained at **www.isatexas.com/Members/Certification_Information.htm** . As with all Certification Examinations the application must be in the ISA office 12 working days prior to the exam.

Test dates and locations:

Jan. 7	Humble
March 30	San Antonio
April 11	Round Rock
May 14	Fort Worth
August 15	Round Rock
October 5	Waco

In addition to paper-based exams offered by ISAT, the ISA Certified Arborist computer-based exam is now also available in Texas. View computer-based testing locations at **isa-arbor.com/certification/becomeCertified/examDatesAndLocations.aspx** .

To schedule a computer based exam, you *must* submit your application and/or retake form to ISA. The testing vendor will not allow you to schedule an exam directly through them.

Paul Johnson Wins TFS Technical Forestry Award

Paul Johnson, Regional Urban Forester, San Antonio, and former editor of *In the Shade*, is the winner of the Texas Forest Service 2011 Technical Forestry Award. The award was presented November 11 at the agency's annual personnel meeting and awards ceremony.

Paul is an in-demand speaker, service forester and educator. Over the past two years he given more than 70 presentations to the general public, students, teachers, arborists, green industry professionals, volunteers, and community leaders.

He has helped develop and revise tree ordinances which affect over a million forested acres of his region and has also helped with the development of the Aransas County tree ordinance, the first county tree ordinance in Texas.

At the national level, he is a member of the ISA Educational Goods and Services Committee and the ISA Certification Test Committee, and is the Texas Liaison for Society of Municipal Arborists (SMA). At the state level, he is vice president of the ISA Texas chapter. At the local level, he is chairman of Alamo Forest Partnership (AFP), coordinator of the San Antonio Arborist Association (SAAA), and member of Leon Valley Tree Board.

Paul has been a Certified Arborist since 1998 and this summer he earned his Board Certified Master Arborist, the highest professional certification in arboriculture. In addition, he is trained for regional and local emergencies as an Urban Forest Strike Team leader.

Paul helped create and implement the SAAA Spanish language tree worker workshop in 2010 and 2011, which reached over 250 tree care workers. He also helped create and coordinate the AFP Arboriculture Field Day in 2010. Paul chaired the Municipal Group for the 2009 Texas Tree Conference and coordinated the municipal track program. He initiated the 2010 and 2011 AFP tree adoption event at Solar Fest in San Antonio and the 2011 AFP Jamming Jams Fruit Tree Adoption at the Pearl Farmers Market. In addition to all that, Paul coordinated the statewide celebration of the 121st Statewide Arbor Day at the Alamo in 2010.

He is a regular contributor to the TFS Arbor News and he maintains Facebook pages for AFP and ISAT and a Twitter account for AFP. Paul has been featured on KENS 5 TV morning show, Texas Public Radio Living Green podcast, and KLUP's Garden Show. Using print, radio, television, and the internet helps Paul spread the word about trees to thousands of Texans.

In 2010 and 2011 Paul helped create and enact the Green Shade Tree Rebate program in the City of San Antonio. The 'tree for energy savings' rebate program, funded by a grant from the Department of Energy, is an efficient and effective model to turn dollars into trees.

TFS Director Tom Boggus presents the Technical Forestry award to Paul Johnson.

Another Perspective:

Urban Foresters and Landscape Architects Should Join Forces

by Cristina Talcott. Park Development Specialist, City of New Braunfels

I am a landscape architect, newly graduated from Texas Tech University and working in a municipality. As the Park Development Specialist for the City of New Braunfels Parks Department, I work under a licensed landscape architect as well as an urban forester and have seen many of the different facets of those professions.

The ISA Texas Tree Conference this year was the first one I had attended. I really enjoyed the incorporation of the landscape architecture presentations into the municipality portion of the conference. I also enjoyed seeing a booth from ASLA at the conference, as I am a member of that organization. I then wondered if the two organizations could in the future hold a conference together for greater educational opportunities.

Although landscape architects and urban foresters are trained very differently, combining their diverse knowledge could result in a better thought out design process. It is vital that the two professions take a respectful interest in each other's profession, as well as seeing the value in working together. I thank ISAT for having landscape architect-focused presentations and hope to see more in the future. It may also be beneficial to invite more landscape architects to be involved in ISA.

Highlights of Heat Island Webinar

Speaking by internet to the Dallas Urban Forest Advisory Committee, David Hitchcock of the Houston Advanced Research Center (HARC) gave a presentation in November on ways to reduce urban heat island effects. Here are a few highlights:

Urban heat islands occur due to the way the cities are built, as well as an area's climatic conditions. The effects are wide ranging, from higher energy costs to impacts on the quality of life. Reducing heat island effects requires substantial changes to urban surfaces, including the amount and type of tree cover, roofing and paved surfaces.

Trees

- Planting additional trees would help. Trees affect the general temperature of the area.
- Trees decline in number primarily through urban development. Number of trees replanted are not equal to the number removed.
- Conservation and maintenance of existing trees are essential to avoid increased heat island effects over time. Any drive toward conservation would have to start with a tree inventory.
- In Chicago, different species of trees that fare better in warmer weather were recommended for approval on their tree list.

Reflective surfaces

- Rooftops and pavement comprise most of the heat absorbing surfaces.
- Rooftops are 20 to 25 percent of developed urban areas. Surface temperatures of reflective roofs are much cooler, reducing the heat island effect.
- Green roofs can be almost 80 degrees cooler than neighboring conventional roofs. Cost and structural requirements make green roofs a difficult option for current buildings.
- Paved surfaces can be 30 to 45 percent of developed areas. Pavement stores heat during the day and releases it at night.
- Higher temperatures mean degradation of asphalt surfaces. Cooler paving lasts longer. There is a wide array of rated cool paving.
- Porous paving allows moisture to stay near the surface and cool by evaporation, while storing less heat than conventional paving. Porous paving has been used in Chicago to replace conventional paving for storm water management.

Paving is the most difficult area to change due to how the decisions are made at the time of development. Parking lots are the greatest percentage of heat absorbing surfaces, encompassing 20 to 30 percent of paving. Converting parking lots to cool paving and porous paving would have a positive effect on the urban heat island. Austin and San Antonio require porous surfaces for paving as it helps with storm water management and flooding. We also need mandates for cool roofing.

> "Any drive toward conservation would have to start with a tree inventory."

Currently, all we can do is make adjustments incrementally – one roof at a time, one tree at a time and one paving job at a time.

Resources

www.epa.gov/heatisland

www.epa.gov/heatisland/resources/compendium.htm

www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=roof_prods.pr_roof_products

www.coolroofs.org/index.html

www.asusmart.org

– From information supplied by Dallas Urban Forest Advisory Committee

Tree Appraisal News

by Greg David, Chairman, ISA-Texas Plant Appraisal Committee

CTLA continues to work diligently on the 10th Edition of the *Guide for Plant Appraisal*, with additional chapters of the new edition scheduled for committee-level peer review over the next few months. At this time, a publication date of late 2013 for the tenth edition would be a reasonable guess.

In the meantime, the current (9th) edition of the *Guide* recommends that regional tree cost data be updated on an annual basis. The ISA Texas Board of Directors recently approved an updated Unit Tree Cost of $78.00 per square inch of trunk cross-sectional area for use with the Trunk Formula Method on a statewide basis.

The new Unit Tree Cost took effect on January 1, and the "Texas Supplement to the Guide for Plant Appraisal - Third Approximation" has been revised to include the new cost information.

ISAT members may obtain a free copy of the revised "Texas Supplement" by calling the ISAT office at 512-587-7515, or by emailing isat@eccwireless.com. Non-members may purchase a copy of the revised "Texas Supplement" online at **isatexas.com**.

Board Retreat 2011

◀ *Continued from page 1*

cleverly recruiting a replacement for himself on the Board of Directors.

Three years later, I am here to report that this is not a self-propelling machine! It is amazing how much work diligent volunteers accomplish in order to bring Texas high quality educational opportunities and outstanding events. In order to bring everyone up to date with the direction that your chapter is heading, I am happy to report the outcome of the Board of Directors' Retreat.

In the interest of full disclosure, you should know that for ISAT, "retreat" really means "two-day meeting." Sure, in years past there have been shotguns and campfires along with the meetings. This year, there was way too much work to partake in such extracurricular activities.

The conference is always a hot topic; the big news here is that the conference will be planned four years ahead. A conference schedule that reaches out into the future will enable locations to be secured in advance; conflicts with other organizations' conference schedules can be minimized, and vendors and participants will be able to mark their calendars early.

Utility forestry is regaining its place within ISAT; the fall conference will again be expanded to host a third track for this area of specialization. Committee and working group assignments were doled out; this gives folks direction and ownership of various aspects of the operations end of the chapter. Visit **isatexas.com** to find out details. If any of these groups interest you, don't hesitate to contact the chair to find out how you can help.

A survey of the membership is planned; keep your eyes open for this opportunity to provide feedback. 2012 will be chalked up with educational opportunities and events set to occur throughout the state. If you aren't in the habit of visiting the website, be sure to read John G's email blasts and find ISAT on Facebook.

Texas Chapter membership is steadily increasing! The goal is to have over 1,000 members within two years. This might sound like a lofty target, but for perspective the Florida ISA chapter reported membership exceeding 1,000 this past July. We can do it! You can help! Share information regarding membership benefits with nonmembers in your community.

The ISA Learning Center is open for CEUs; if you need a few to catch up this is a great resource.

Budget for 2012 was approved; I will spare you the line-by-line details. Thank goodness for the type of people that are good at crunching numbers.

In addition to discussing the possible need of adding content to the consumer section of the ISAT website, the Board approved moving forward with partnering alongside the Texas Forest Service to produce a short video geared towards homeowners who will inevitably be asking drought-related questions regarding the status of their trees' life (or lack thereof).

I am happily optimistic for the future of our organization. 2012 is poised to hold great opportunities for all levels of arborists in our great state. Stay tuned.

Texas Tree Conference Commercial Track *by David M. Vaughan*

I was sweating blood and trying to stay calm. The room had a column in the center, we needed a splitter for the screens and they did not have one, the room was too small, and our coveted speaker for a six-hour academy had not called or arrived and it was an hour before start time. Todd assured me that Dr. John Ball was famous for arriving at the last minute and leaving as soon as he was finished. He was true to his reputation, arriving just in time to plug in, get some coffee, and start the program. And what a program it was – an academy designed to cover the whole tree and its environment, also including guidance on running a business, sales ethics, and some of the most graphic safety issues any of us had ever seen.

The Tree Conference had to be less stress. After all, Dr. Ball was already here. And he wowed the entire conference with his keynote on safety. He was nice to this audience because we had municipal types and he was worried about making them sick with the accident pictures. You should have seen the ones he put up in the academy. He toned it back a little, managed to keep everyone in the room, and presented safety issues that continue to be discussed where I work. True to form, he left for the airport as soon as he finished, on his way to teach an EMT class in South Dakota.

Now, we have not heard from Dr. Kim Coder who was scheduled to speak for an hour and a half today and another hour on Friday. Patrick Brewer delays his lunch and finds Dr. Coder in his hotel room taking a power nap. His flight was delayed and he got in very late. He gets to the lecture room 30 minutes before show time, loads his presentation, and is ready to go on time. Todd gets to put away his "just in case" presentations we had on standby.

Dr. Coder's booming voice never loses its volume for the next 90 minutes. His presentation on the Biology of Tree Growth and Development briefly covers the basics and then is full of new information that has me taking a page of notes. I seldom take notes.

The day is finished with two presentations on soils. David Kelley gives a good review of soils and some of the strategies he uses to investigate soils. Peter MacDonagh talks about urban soils and covers much of the information presented by Jim Urban in his Up By Roots program. A landscape architect attending the conference told me that Peter's presentation was the best of the conference and it would cause him to change his way of designing around trees. That's the good stuff!

> "The speakers were fabulous and well prepared."

Friday was almost stress-free. Dr. Coder had the morning hour and was already here. However, my cousin, who was presenting the business talk after the break, had decided to drive in from Dallas that morning and expected to arrive about an hour before his talk. He arrived about 30 minutes before he was scheduled to speak, as Dr. Coder was finishing his presentation.

Dr. Coder presented a very technical talk about essential element deficiencies in trees which left me trying to sort out what we have been doing and how we need to change our approach to chlorosis. So much to think about. Antagonism vs. Synergism. What's an arborist to do? Just how smart do we need to be?

Cliff Miercort, my cousin, presented this year's business talk. He was concerned he would bore us and assured me he would finish early. He told us his life story as an engineer in the oil and coal industry and that was anything but boring. Our audience started asking questions about halfway through the presentation, and Cliff finished a couple minutes past his allotted time.

We ended the conference with a presentation by our old friend Mark Peterson talking about the very timely topic of irrigation for trees. We like to end the conference with someone who is funny and entertaining and Mark usually fits that bill. Mark was entertaining and had a lot of information, using his entire time slot to present it. I have since copied the SAWS handout for watering trees and have already given out at least 100 copies.

So, in spite of all my worry, the academy and conference came off without a problem, everything ran on time, the speakers were fabulous and well prepared. Sometimes the coach needs to get out of the way and let the players play (Jason Garrett).

As I cycle off the Board of Directors, someone new will need to chair the committee that selects speakers for the academy and conference and someone new will need to chair the committee for the Master Series. It will be good to get new ideas and leadership on both committees. If your passion is education, these are great committees that need your input and time.

Volunteer to help. Committee service is the stepping stone to the Board of Directors, and the board runs this great organization. We need your help and ideas.

Preliminary estimates show hundreds of millions of trees killed by 2011 drought

As many as 500 million trees scattered across the Lone Star State died in 2011 as a result of the unrelenting drought, according to preliminary estimates from Texas Forest Service.

The numbers were derived by TFS foresters, who canvassed local forestry professionals, gathering information from them on the drought and its effect on trees in their respective communities.

Each forestry expert estimated the percentage of trees in their region that have died as a result of the 2011 drought. That percentage was applied to the estimated number of trees in the region, a figure determined by the agency's Forest Inventory & Analysis (FIA) program.

Using this approach, an estimated 100 million to 500 million trees with a diameter of 5 inches or larger were estimated to have succumbed to the drought. That range is equivalent to 2 to 10 percent of the state's 4.9 billion trees.

"In 2011, Texas experienced an exceptional drought, prolonged high winds and record-setting temperatures. Together, those conditions took a severe toll on trees across the state," said Burl Carraway, Sustainable Forestry department head. "Large numbers of trees in both urban communities and rural forests have died or are struggling to survive. The impacts are numerous and widespread."

The preliminary estimates indicate three multi-county areas appear to be the hardest hit:

- The area including Sutton, Crockett, western Kimble and eastern Pecos counties saw extensive mortality among Ashe junipers.
- The area including Harris, Montgomery, Grimes, Madison and Leon counties saw extensive mortality among loblolly pines.
- Western Bastrop and eastern Caldwell counties, as well as surrounding areas, saw extensive mortality among cedars and post oaks.

Localized pockets of heavy mortality were reported for many other areas.

TFS foresters plan to use aerial imagery to conduct a more in-depth analysis in the spring, which is when trees that may have gone into early dormancy – an act of self-preservation – could begin to make a comeback. A more scientific, long-term study will be completed as the agency collects data through its FIA program. Considered a census for trees, the program allows the agency to keep a close watch on trees –and how they're growing and changing – across the state.

For more information contact Dr. Chris Edgar, Forest Resource Analyst, cedgar@tfs.tamu.edu, or Burl Carraway, Sustainable Forestry Department Head, bcarraway@tfs.tamu.edu .

Arboriculture 101 is Back

Arboriculture 101, a four-day course designed to help aspiring arborists pass the Certified Arborist exam, will be held February 3-4 and 9-10 at the College Station Conference Center, 1300 George Bush Drive, College Station, Texas 77840.

Existing Certified Arborists will also earn valuable CEUs for attending the course.

Others who can benefit from the course include landscape architects, landscape managers, and architects who design and build structures around trees. The course is taught by Dr.Todd Watson.

This popular course uses lectures and a variety of hand-on instructional methods. For more information or to register online, go to **isatexas.com** .

Project Learning Tree

Project Learning Tree will hold a workshop for teachers and other environmental educators Saturday February 11 from 9:30 am to 4 pm at Landa Haus, 360 Aquatic Circle, New Braunfels.

PLT is an award-winning environmental education program using the forest as a window into the natural world. It is correlated to the K-12 curriculum.

Attendees are asked to bring $30 for materials and a brown bag lunch to enjoy in Landa Park. To reserve a spot call 830-221-4350.

PLT is designed to help students make informed decisions about conservation practices and resource use. More information about the program is available at **plt.org** .

Rainwater Harvesting

Rainwater harvesting is becoming very popular for both home and commercial landscapes. Mark Peterson of the San Antonio Water System recently spoke at the national Irrigation Association Conference in San Diego on "Rainwater Harvesting – Engineered Failures and Ways to Prevent Them." Using South Texas examples, Peterson provided a checklist of design and maintenance issues that need to be addressed in order to ensure landscape sustainability.

"Rainwater harvesting can be a viable supplemental water option if and only if the cistern and landscape are designed for sustainability and long-term maintenance."

For more information contact Mark Peterson, mark.peterson@saws.org .

EDITOR'S NOTE by Oscar Mestas

Happy New Year, fellow tree types! This is my first official editor's note as your new In the Shade newsletter editor. I hope everyone had an enjoyable holiday season.

I know many of you out there put on a different hat this time of year and were responsible for many of the wonderful decorations that were hanging or lighting up the trees in our cities and towns. Most likely you're busy now taking them down. If you are willing to share, I would like to see some of your decorating creativity. Send me a photo(s) of your decoration installations to omestas@tfs.tamu.edu . Once we have gathered a few photos we can place them in an album on the ISAT Facebook page so that others may enjoy your holiday handiwork.

Another piece we are going to attempt is one on tree identification. This will hopefully stimulate some brain cells and foster some friendly competition. In this issue and subsequent issues, be looking for a photo and clue to help identify a Texas tree.

I'm looking forward to serving as your editor and if you have any newsletter ideas give me a call 915-834-5610 or shoot me an email at omestas@tfs.tamu.edu .

Have a safe and prosperous New Year.

Historic Tree Coalition Dedicates Post Oak Grove

The Dallas Historic Tree Coalition (**www.dhtc.org**) held a special recognition October 29 of the Post Oak Grove in Pioneer Park Cemetary. The grove of 40 stately trees is an urban remnant of post oak forest that stretches from Oklahoma into sections of the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex. The trees shade the graves of Dallas' most recognizable names and are some of the oldest in the city. Many pre-date the signing of the United States Constitution.

"We have the founders of the cemetery to thank for these trees," stated Bill Seaman, DHTC past-president. "Their thoughtful selection of this beautiful site has protected these trees so that we can enjoy them for years to come."

The ceremony included a brief review of the cemetery's history, followed by the reading of a proclamation and presentation of a Historic Tree Certificate to Karen Woodard, Urban Forester for the city of Dallas.

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The Big Chill

By Oscar S. Mestas, TFS Regional Urban Forester, El Paso

While Texas has been dealing with heat and drought which are contributing to the stress and loss of many trees, West and Far West Texas have also been dealt the Big Chill of February 2011.

We are used to drought because most of my region only receives from 8 to 12 inches of precipitation annually. Drought is normal for us so I guess you can say we are a little more prepared to handle lack of or very little wet stuff falling from the sky.

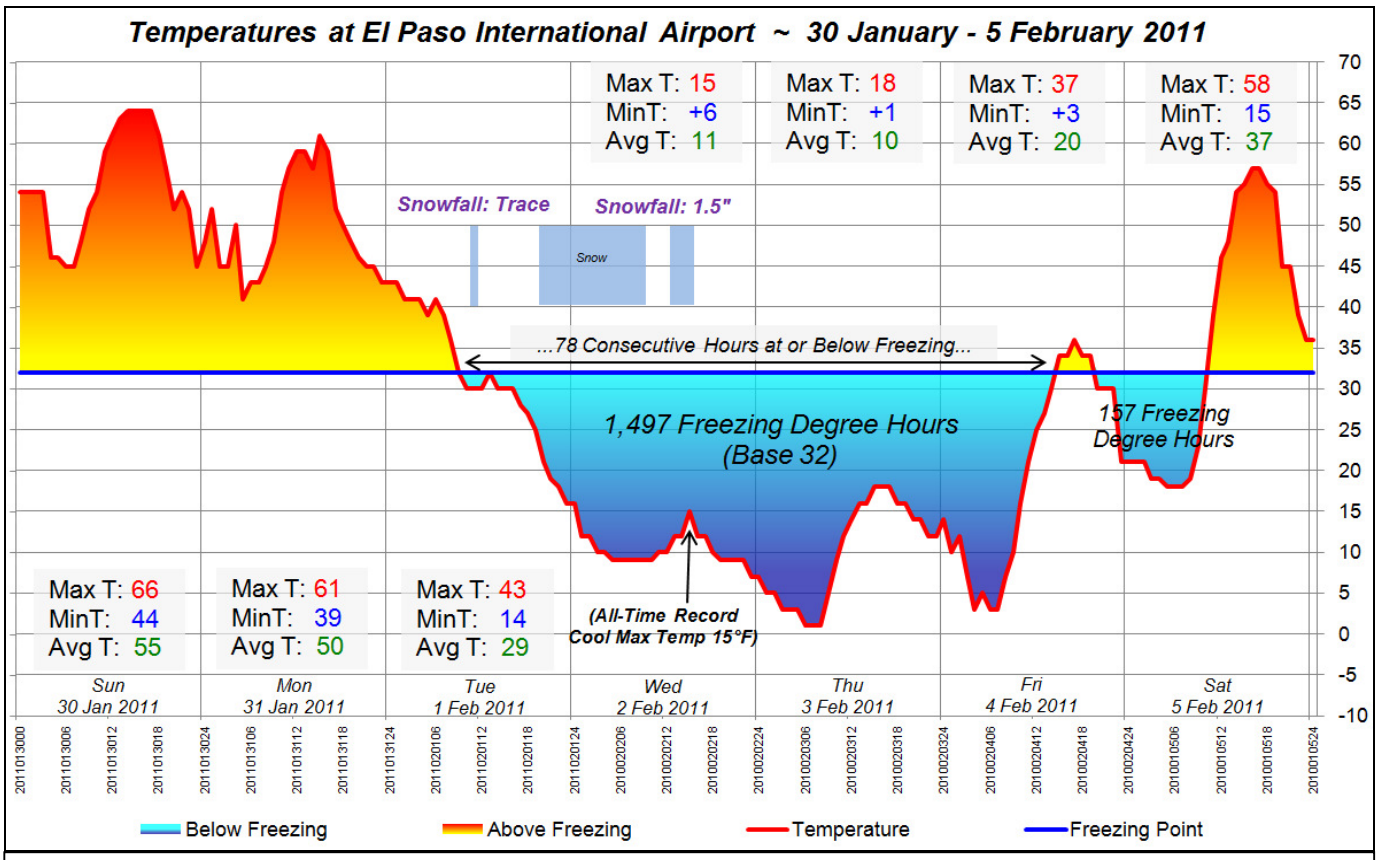
But something most of us were not prepared for was the Big Chill of February 2011. It has been almost one year now since El Paso and West Texas received those record-dropping temperatures. Recovery has been slow, and arborists and landscape contractors have been busy, removing and replacing dead or dying trees and other vegetation.

One of our concerns out here is what will recover and what will not? How long will it take to find out? The consensus of most plant experts out here went with the wait-and-see approach. After 6 to 8 months a lot of what we thought should be dead (palms mostly) were not, and until as late as October 2011 some palms were still budding out. Many of the non-native exotic and Mediterranean trees and shrubs showed considerable crown damage and loss but some are more root-hardy than expected and are sending up stump sprouts.

Bottom line: there is a reason we are called the high desert, and there are no native stands of retama (*Parkinsonia aculeata),* sweet acacia *(Acacia farnesiana)* or saguaro cactus (*Carnegiea gigantea)* in El Paso County.

The hardest hit palms were the Mexican fan palms *(Washingtonia robusta*). Date palms (*Phoenix dactylifera)* were virtually not affected. California fan palms *(Washingtonia filifera)* were a tossup, but more recovered than expected. Of the pines, *Pinus roxburghii (*Chir pine) was the hardest hit. None survived. Aleppo pine (*Pinus halepensis)* and Brutia pines (*P. eldarica var. brutia)* were also hit hard.

A lot of the damage that was visible was also variable even on the same site. This we attributed to genetics, microclimates and exposure to both the elements and/or tracking of the sun/ shade for that time of year. Afghan pines (*Pinus eldarica)* fared very well with minor damage. The hardest hit of this species seemed to be some of the younger, less established trees. ▶



Hourly thermograph for El Paso, TX, 30 January to 5 February 2011.

◀ European olive (*Olea europaea)* suffered severe crown loss but are stump sprouting. The Chilean and other South American mesquites (*Prosopis alba & chilensis)* suffered crown loss.

My point is if you are in the tree planting business, take a good look at the hardiness zone and think twice when recommending a tree, especially if you are planting a large number of them. I personally gamble with one or two trees if I'm iffy or just want to try something different, but to suggest that a mall complex be replanted with Mexican fan palms is just too much of a big gamble with your client's money.

Chilean mesquite and retama

Sweet acacia

Mexican fan palm

Afghan and Aleppo pine mix

Chir pine

Pest Post: Will my tree make it?

Assessing pine and shade tree damage from drought

by Texas Forest Service staff

Texas remains mired in one of the worst droughts in state history and it's creating disastrous effects on trees and forests across the state.

After one of the driest years on record, many shade trees went into dormancy as early as August, dropping their leaves and branches in a desperate act of self-preservation. Pine trees with normally thick, green crowns ended up cloaked in red, dead needles while foliage on cedar trees turned completely brown.

The sight has created a dramatic effect on the Texas landscape and left many landowners wondering whether or not their tree is dead — or if it might recover and produce new leaves next spring.

Assessing trees damaged or killed by drought can be tricky, according to Dr. Ronald Billings, Texas Forest Service Forest Health Manager. He suggests grouping the trees into three different categories: definitely dead, likely to live and questionable.

Definitely Dead

It is easier to make this call for pines, Ashe junipers (cedars) and conifers. The determination can be more difficult for hardwoods, which are more commonly thought of as shade trees. In most cases, a red pine is a dead pine, Billings said, explaining that the same can be said for cedars with red needles. Once all or most of the foliage of a pine or cedar tree turns red or brown, the tree is incapable of recovering.

Pine trees in this stage probably are already infested with tree-killing bark beetles and will eventually harbor wood-boring insects, termites and other critters. Such trees should be cut down and removed, particularly if they are likely to fall on homes, buildings or power lines.

Shade trees–like water oaks, for example–that have lost all their foliage and are beginning to drop limbs or lose large patches of bark are most likely ▶

◀ already dead and should be removed. Hypoxylon canker, a fungus that appears as gray or brown patches on the trunk of the tree, is another sign of a dead shade tree.

Likely to Live
This category includes shade trees with at least some green or yellow leaves still attached to the limbs. In fact, even those that have dropped all their leaves may still be alive. Some native shade trees, such as post oaks and live oaks, are more drought resistant than others like water oaks or elms.

You can use a scratch test to determine if the tree is dead or just dormant. If you scrape the bark off a small branch or limb and find green, moist tissue underneath, the tree is still hanging on, waiting for the next rain. That means you may need to wait until spring to see if the tree makes a recovery – unless the tree starts to drop large branches and patches of bark, which is a sign of death. If there is no green, moist tissue, the tree is likely dead.

An exception is the baldcypress, which also is known as a cypress tree. The tree is a conifer, but unlike pines and cedars, its foliage generally turns red and drops from the tree in the fall or during periods of drought stress. Cypress trees usually will re-sprout in the spring. If in doubt, apply the scratch test or wait until spring to be sure.

Pines with a few yellow or red needles scattered throughout an otherwise green canopy have a good chance at survival. Pine trees typically shed a large portion of their older needles every year as winter approaches, and then put on new needles in the spring. Though it's not as feasible to water your forest, any yard trees that show signs of life (green inner tissues or green foliage) should be watered deeply to reduce lingering drought stress.

Questionable
Questionable trees are those that appear to fit somewhere between the Definitely Dead and Likely to Live categories.

A pine that is topped with brown or red needles but still has green foliage in its lower branches is alive, but likely will eventually die. That's because bark beetles likely will invade the lower trunk at some point, killing the tree in stages.

When inspecting a questionable pine tree, look for popcorn-sized masses of resin (pitch tubes) or brown dust in the bark fissures. These are early signs of attacks by pine bark beetles. The foliage of the infested pine may still be green, but the tree is doomed. This is particularly true if you find bark beetle galleries or trails beneath the bark. Pines with these signs of bark beetle attack should be removed as soon as possible.

In the case of shade trees, those that have many dead or dying limbs or mostly bare branches may or may not survive. A few green, yellow or red leaves may remain for a while as the tree slowly dies, or it may recover when rains return.

It's important to note that not all trees may be stressed from the drought alone. Some trees may also be suffering from insect infestations, disease or other forest health problems.

Deciding whether to remove a questionable tree can be a tough decision for both property owners and professional tree care experts. Removal should be considered if a severely drought-stressed or fire-damaged tree is close to a house or other structure on which it might fall. If it is away from such areas, it may be more feasible to wait and see if the tree makes a comeback.

Resources
View examples of trees in each of the three categories on the Texas Forest Service facebook page: **http://on.fb.me/rB5946**

Need more help?
Visit the Texas Forest Service web site: **http://texasforestservice.tamu.edu**

Download the Texas Forest Service Professional Management Services Referral List: **http://tfsweb.tamu.edu/uploadedfiles/frd/referral.pdf**

Texas Forest Service Contacts:
Joe Pase, Regional Forest Health Specialist in Lufkin, 936-639-8170, jpase@tfs.tamu.edu

James Houser, Regional Forest Health Specialist in Austin, 512-339-4589, jhouser@tfs.tamu.edu

Dr. Ronald Billings, Forest Health Manager in College Station, 979-458-6650, rbillings@tfs.tamu.edu

Holly Huffman, Communications Specialist in College Station, 979-458-6605, hhuffman@tfs.tamu.edu

Harris County implements Wildfire Protection Plan

Harris County has become the largest area in Texas to implement a community wildfire protection plan, based on a collaborative effort by local officials and Texas Forest Service. The plan was signed December 12.

Fire protection plans help residents assess community hazards, identify potential risks, and set goals. They also give community leaders an opportunity to educate the public and develop strategies for emergency response and evacuations.

TFS works with interested communities to help craft plans tailored for their particular area. Harris County priorities include increasing public awareness about the dangers of wildfire, teaching residents how to better protect their homes with Firewise landscaping practices, completing community risk assessments, and identifying potential fuel-reduction projects.

For more information visit **http://texasforestservice.tamu.edu/main/popup.aspx?id=1599** .

Washing Pesticide-Contaminated Clothing

Applicators know how important it is to be careful when using pesticides. We all strive to use the least toxic, effective option, read the label and follow the directions, calibrate, measure carefully and wear the required personal protective equipment. But after you finish making a pesticide application, it is also important to be careful with the clothing you were wearing.

If you throw contaminated clothing in with the rest of the family's laundry, you risk exposing your family to that pesticide. Also, if you do not clean your clothing properly, you risk exposing yourself the next time you wear it. Here is a list of tips that should help you be safe. You might want to clip this list out and hang it by your washing machine.

- Discard clothing if it becomes soaked with a highly toxic pesticide.
- Do not wear contaminated clothing or boots into the house to avoid bringing pesticide residue into your living space.
- Take protective garments off inside out as you remove them to keep most of the pesticide inside and away from the surface that will be handled by the person doing the laundry.
- Pre-rinse clothing and boots outside using a hose or a designated and marked washtub.
- Wash goggles, respirator (remove the charcoal filter first), gloves and boots in hot, soapy water after each use. Store clean protective equipment away from where pesticides are stored.
- Designate a separate hamper to identify contaminated clothing so the person who does the wash knows it needs special attention.
- Make sure the person who does the laundry knows what pesticide was used, and reads the label for any special instructions for cleaning.
- Keep unlined rubber gloves in the wash room to handle the pesticide-soiled clothing. Carefully wash the outside of the gloves after every use and only use them for this purpose. Launder pesticide-contaminated clothing the same day to avoid having it sit around where family members could come into contact with it.
- Wash contaminated clothing separately from the rest of the family laundry.
- Use hot water.
- Use heavy-duty liquid detergent to remove oil-based pesticides. (Emulsifiable concentrates are oil-based.)
- Do not overfill the washing machine. Wash only a few garments at a time.
- Double rinse the load.
- Re-wash the contaminated clothing two or three times if necessary.
- Clean the machine after you wash the load by running one complete cycle on empty, using hot water and detergent.
- Line-dry the clothing to avoid contaminating the clothes dryer.

Source: Vegetable & Small Fruit Gazette, April 2011, Volume 15, No. 4, Penn State Extension via Rutgers Cooperative, Extension Plant and Pest Advisory, September 8, 2011

Sun Country Landscape Conference

by John M. White, Botanical Curator, Chihuahuan Desert Gardens, UTEP Centennial Museum

The month of October held a lot of surprises, and not just the ghoulish type, but the first ever bi-state Sun Country Landscape Conference held in Las Cruces, New Mexico, October 20, 2011. The event was co-sponsored by the West Texas Urban Forestry Council and the New Mexico State Forestry Division. The successful one-day event was held at the recently completed Las Cruces Convention Center and managed to draw over 100 participants from a 300 mile bi-state area.

The conference, which is usually held in El Paso, Texas, differed by offering 14 regional speakers divided into four day-long tracks with topics appealing to landscape architects, arborists, landscapers, municipal planners, city and state officials, as well as master gardeners.

ISAT was well represented at the conference with several Texas Forest Service personnel: Oscar Mestas, Mark Duff, and Paul Johnson. ISA Continuing Education Unit Credits (CEUs) were offered by the Rocky Mountain chapter for ISA certified participants, developing another nice partnership between states and chapters.

The Sun Country Landscape Conference was funded by a matching USDA Grant through New Mexico Forestry Division.

What's the Big IDea?

Can you identify this species? It is relatively uncommon in our state; found naturally only in deep East Texas.

For the answer visit the ISAT Facebook page, look for the post with the same photo. Try your hand at identifying this species.

Log on and type in both the common and scientific name. We will check the page daily until the tree has been correctly identified, confirming the correct answer.

San Antonio Arbor Day Celebration

by Mark Duff

San Pedro Springs Park, second oldest public park in the United States to Boston Commons (1630), was the site of San Antonio's Arbor Day Celebration on Saturday, November 12th. Sponsored by the Alamo Forest Partnership, CPS Energy and San Antonio Parks and Recreation Department, the celebration featured a 350-tree giveaway that included 150 one-gallon trees donated by City of San Antonio and 200 five-gallon specimens by CPS Energy made up of local species of live oak, cedar elm, Mexican white oak, yaupon holly, American smoke tree and Texas mountain laurel. For his efforts to protect and enrich the tree canopy in San Antonio, Richard Alles was recognized as the "Community Forest Volunteer of the Year." Mark Bird, City of San Antonio Arborist, emceed the event. Other special attractions included sawmill, wood lathe, and tree climbing and safety demonstrations.

The Woodmizer sawmill demonstration, by Dan Keierleber, Ron Smith, Jordy Hagan and Mark Duff, included a pecan, mesquite and gum bumelia lumber raffle. There was also a pen turning demonstration by Mark Duff with his lathe, and an exhibit of 50 fine turnings by Dan Keierleber and Gay Herold featuring 46 different species collected locally – all showing the benefits of harvesting urban timber by keeping it out of the landfills. The tree climbing and safety demonstration was put on by Etter Tree Care to illustrate the importance of hiring a qualified and fully insured arborist. To top it off, student volunteers helped plant sixteen #45 size native trees to enhance the canopy of the historic park.

Manned information booths were also present on the site from VIA Transportation, Alamo Forest Partnership, San Antonio Arborist Association, Keep San Antonio Beautiful, San Antonio Parks & Recreation, Gardening Volunteers of South Texas, Corona Vision, Sierra Club, Alamo Council of Governments, CPS Energy, Master Gardeners, San Antonio Library, San Antonio Botanical Center and Texas Rainfall Catchment. It was a beautiful crisp day. About 350 people attended the event.

More photos ▶

Raffling off pecan, mesquite and gum bully lumber.

Michael Nentwich, City of San Antonio Forester.

Dan Keierleber, Ron Smith and Jordy Hagen positioning a pecan log on the Woodmizer

Gay Herold showing off 50 turnings representing 46 local species.

◀ *Article & more photos*

Round Rock Christmas Tree

Round Rock's 2011 Christmas was the city's biggest yet, according to city forestry manager Emsud Horozovic, who cut down the 41-foot eastern red cedar at a nearby ranch. Ten city employees slowly lowered it with ropes to protect the branches. The 14-foot-diameter tree came from a ranch between Elgin and Giddings, and was donated to the city by the ranch owner. Emsud favors either eastern red cedars or Ashe junipers for the city's Christmas trees.

Tree Campus USA planted at Texas State University

Nearly 200 people turned out November 30 to kick off Tree Campus USA certification season and celebrate Texas State University becoming Texas' newest Tree Campus USA. Students, faculty and staff joined with San Marcos residents to plant 71 trees donated by Toyota through the Arbor Day Foundation.

The trees were specifically selected to thrive in the region's soil and climate conditions. They included arroyo sweetwood, Mexican plum, retama, cedar elm, live oak, eastern red cedar, Mexican white oak and Texas redbud. Re-use irrigation was installed to help the young trees become established.

Texas Forest Service and Arbor Day Foundation approved Texas State as a Tree Campus USA in part because of the current work the university is doing to involve its students in planting and caring for trees across campus and within the community.

Tree Campus USA recognizes the best practices in campus forestry throughout the country. The goal of the program is to honor college campuses and leaders of their surrounding communities for promoting healthy urban forest management and engaging the campus in environmental stewardship. ▶

Texas Forest Service, Texas State University, and Arbor Day Foundation dignitaries ceremonially plant the first tree.

A few of the 71 trees planted at Texas State University

Jay Cody, Texas State University, explains correct planting depth

To earn Tree Campus USA recognition, a school must meet five standards of tree care and community engagement: Establish a campus tree advisory committee; provide evidence of a campus tree-care plan; have dedicated annual expenditures toward the campus tree-care plan; hold an Arbor Day observance; and organize a service-learning project that engages the student body and connects them with the community.

For more information, visit the Arbor Day Foundation at **www.arborday.org/programs/treeCampusUSA/index.cfm**, the Texas Forest Service at **txforestservice.tamu.edu/**, or call Gretchen Riley, Texas Forest Service, 979-458-6650.

Texas State Horticulture club shows enthusiasm

COOL TOOLS by Patrick Wentworth

A tool we use daily has been re-invented. The carabiner is something every climber uses daily and has several in his or her possession. Black Diamond has been an innovator in the field of carabiners and climbing gear for a very long time. They are coming out with a new carabiner in July of 2012 that is a totally new concept. Instead of using springs and push button or spinning locking devices, this carabiner will use magnets.

The overall shape of the carabiner is the same and since it is not going to be a dual locking carabiner, it will not be used for climbing but should have a variety of uses in carrying tools on one's climbing harness.

The ease of opening the new carabiner with one hand will make this appealing to many.

They are coming out with two models. One is called the magnetron rocklock and the other is called the magnetron gridlock.

To see the product and to watch the video go to their web site at: **http://www.blackdiamondequipment.com/en-us/journal/climb/knowledge/magnetron-technology-the-reinvention-of-the-autolocking-carabiner-coming-july-2012**

No prices have been established at this time.

Magnetron Gridlock carabiner

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