



## Crowning Our Champion

at the Texas Tree Climbing Championship


by Emily King & Keith Brown

THE TTCC WAS HELD IN BEAUTIFUL bur oak-filled Trinity Park in Fort Worth on May 19 through 21. (Thanks, Melinda Adams, for rolling out the red carpet for us!) Of course volunteers were on the ground (actually above the ground) much earlier in the week preparing the site for the competition. The dedicated team of volunteers worked under the leadership of Chris Brewer, Keith Brown and Nevic Donnelly to ensure the best possible event staging. This sort of task doesn't complete itself though, so please join me in giving recognition to the large team of folks that pulled together to make this event great! Way to go guys and gals! Cheers to the sponsors as well; visit the ISAT website for a list of this year's sponsors. Poston-Bandit really stepped up to cover a lot of our expenses this year and we're happy to welcome TOPE Equipment for their first year at the event.

The competitors maintained healthy, good natured competitiveness, and the volunteers worked well together to make the event nearly seamless. From the vantage point of running a stopwatch for the footlock event, things were pretty exciting. Kevin Bassett was the lead judge for this event and really rounded up the team to ensure that all safety precautions were taken and all climbers were given equal opportunity. Fifty feet in sixteen seconds is pretty amazing to watch!

A storm rolled through on the first day of the competition and we were forced to end the day early. Attitudes were quite positive as the entire TTCC party huddled under one pavilion while waiting on the hail and sideways rain to

Continued on pages 10 – 11 ►



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## PRESIDENT'S LETTER by Todd Watson

Spring has sprung, fall has fell, summer is here and hot as . . . oh well, let's just say that it's hot. Really hot! It's hotter than a set of jumper cables at a redneck funeral. I don't ever remember it being this hot this early in the season. If I didn't have a calendar, I would swear that it is August. Take care of your people that are working out in the field. The heat is taking a toll on them.

Not only is it hot, it's dry. Really dry! It's drier than happy hour at the Betty Ford Clinic. This is taking a toll on our trees. If we don't get some rain soon, we will be doing a lot of removal work. In some parts of Texas (like my area), it has been the driest period from October to May on record. In many areas, April was the hottest and driest on record. Pray for rain! And while you're at it, ask for a little cooler weather.

Things have been hot at ISAT. Since the last newsletter, your chapter has been involved in many great programs. We were at the 122<sup>nd</sup> state Arbor Day celebration, and we played a role in the dedication of the arboretum at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center. We had a booth and speakers at the Texas ASLA Conference and the Rio Grande Valley Tree Conference. We have put on Tree Risk Assessment Workshops, and we helped with the Oak Wilt Workshop and the Planning the Urban Forest Workshop. We also had an ISA Certified Tree Worker workshop and a Spanish language tree care workshop. I hate to quote Paris Hilton, but "That's hot!"

And of course, we had our annual Texas Tree Climbing Championship in Ft. Worth. Congratulations to Abram Zies, who won the competition and will be representing ISAT at the International Tree Climbing Championship this summer in Australia. For those going to Australia to the ISA Conference, I hope you find a little cooler weather. Since Australia is on the bottom of the earth instead of the top, I hope Abram remembers that he is upside down and climbs the other direction.

Speaking of conferences, the best dang tree conference on earth will be held in Waco on October 5–7. You don't want to miss it. We have a great lineup of speakers for this year's Texas Tree Conference. We are also hoping to have more vendors this year. The brochures will be out soon, so watch the mailbox, or sign up for our email blasts at [www.isatexas.com](http://www.isatexas.com). When you sign up on our website, you will also get information about other tree-related activities that will interest you. We promise not to overload your inbox with emails.

While you're watching your mailbox, keep an eye out for a ballot to elect people to the ISAT Board of Directors. We have received the nominations that you sent, and it looks like we have a good slate of folks for you to choose from. I hope they are ready to go to work because this Board doesn't sit around and stare at their belly buttons. If you are mailing in your ballot, you might as well put a check in there for your ISAT dues if you haven't done so already. As you can see, you are getting your money's worth!

Yours treely,  
W. Todd Watson

## TNLA Expo in Dallas

It is TNLA Expo time again. This year the Expo will be held at the Dallas convention center. Setup will be August 18 and takedown on the afternoon of August 21. We need people in the Dallas/Ft. Worth area to work the booth.

This is a great event and wonderful opportunity to talk about trees with other green industry professionals. The website is [nurserylandscapeexpo.org](http://nurserylandscapeexpo.org). Please contact Mike Walterscheidt, 512-587-7515 or [isat@eccwireless.com](mailto:isat@eccwireless.com) if you would like to volunteer.



## Tree Climbing Workshop

San Antonio Arborist Association is hosting a one-day climbing workshop September 15 with Guy Leblanc, former Texas Tree Climbing Champion. Cost will be \$99 per person, with a \$10 discount for San Antonio Arborist Association members. Details at [sa-aa.com](http://sa-aa.com).



## Tree Worker Test

Certified Tree Worker Climber Specialist testing is scheduled for November 11 and 12 in San Antonio. More information soon at [sa-aa.com](http://sa-aa.com).



## ISA Certified Arborist Exams

Only three certified arborist exams remain in 2011:

- July 21 in San Antonio
- August 25 in Round Rock
- October 7 in Waco

For more information go to [isatexas.com](http://isatexas.com).



# Planning the Urban Forest Workshop

by James Carse, Regional Urban Forester, Texas Forest Service, Austin

The ISA Texas Chapter partnered with Texas Forest Service (TFS) to help deliver an informative and interactive workshop at the Waco Convention Center June 2.

The workshop had about 55 attendees from throughout the DFW, Houston, and Austin metropolitan areas. Representatives from cities as small as 5,000 to those with over half a million were on hand.

Created by the American Planning Association (APA), the workshop was designed to help communities plan and conserve their urban forest and green infrastructure. It's based on a 2009 report developed by the

American Planning Association, International Society of Arboriculture, American Forests and U.S. Forest Service. This was the first workshop to be given after APA introduced the program at their national convention in Boston in April. Future workshops are available for hire through APA.

The two main training professionals were R.J. Laverne from the Davey Tree Expert Company, and David Rouse from the planning and landscape architecture firm Wallace, Roberts,



and Todd. Local case studies were delivered by Jack Tidwell, North Central Texas Council of Governments, and Micah Pace, TFS Dallas.

The workshop is geared toward community planners, landscape architects, engineers, public works managers, elected officials and civic leaders statewide. It aims to help officials learn how to integrate urban forestry with community and regional comprehensive planning processes.

“The intent of this workshop is to help planners and allied professionals and tree advocates reposition trees as a strategic public investment rather than the cost center they have been perceived to be,” said Jim Schwab, a senior research associate with APA and project manager for the 2009 Planning the Urban Forest report. “The urban forest returns numerous quantifiable benefits.”

This workshop was part of the Texas Emerging Communities initiative from TFS. The agency is making an effort to hold technical workshops in addition to their current plans of hosting regional workshops around the state. Their target audience is small to medium sized communities that are forecasted to grow rapidly over the next 20 years. Program topics include: sustainable planning, water conservation, urban forestry, wildfire preparedness, and emergency management.

Thanks to all for attending!

## SLOGANS R US



“More Trees, Please!”, the slogan used on the ISA 2011 Arbor Day T-shirt, was submitted by our own editor, Paul Johnson. Paul is also an ISA Texas board member.

A limited supply of “More Trees, Please!” shirts is still available from the ISA webstore at:

<http://secure.isa-arbor.com/webstore/2011-More-Trees-Please-T-shirt-P456.aspx>





## Leafsnap: an electronic field guide

Leafsnap is the first in a series of electronic field guides being developed by researchers from Columbia University, the University of Maryland, and the Smithsonian Institution. This free mobile app uses visual recognition software to help identify tree species from photographs of their leaves.

Leafsnap contains beautiful high-resolution images of leaves, flowers, fruit, petiole, seeds, and bark. It currently includes the trees of New York City and Washington, D.C., and will soon grow to include the trees of the entire continental United States.

Go to [leafsnap.com](http://leafsnap.com) to see all the tree species included, the collections of its users, and the team of research volunteers working to produce it.

Free iPhone app available now. Free iPad and Android apps coming soon!

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## Wildfire across Texas

**T**EXAS FOREST SERVICE ground and aviation personnel evacuated the TFS Olive office in Hardin County June 5 as a fast-moving wildfire ran through 1600 acres of pine plantations and jumped U.S. Highway 69. Two heavy airtankers responded from Abilene.

This was one of 9,286 Texas fires that burned 2,757,625 acres and destroyed 1,195 structures this year through June 7. As of June 22, TFS was currently responding to 17 large fires that had burned a total of 145,633 acres. The East Texas complex—encompassing three fires in four counties—was burning an area of 28,722 acres. Of the 254 counties in Texas, 227 reported that they had burn bans in effect.

Updates are available at [governor.state.tx.us/wildfires](http://governor.state.tx.us/wildfires), the state wildfire site. Some incredible photos of Texas fires can be viewed at: [theatlantic.com/infocus/2011/04/texas-wildfires/100050/](http://theatlantic.com/infocus/2011/04/texas-wildfires/100050/).

— Thanks to Pat Wentworth



## A new wrench for monkeys

Last summer in *Climbing Lines* I did a three-part series on single rope technique (SRT), in which a variety of the climbing hitch supplements and replacements were described. If you read the series or are otherwise familiar with SRT you will recall that the reason such things are necessary is due to one of the principles of physics that govern SRT – namely that 100 per cent of the weight of the climber is on the hitch cord or mechanical device, as opposed to much less than that in a traditional doubled rope technique (DdRT).

For this reason, a traditional hitch system simply will not work with SRT. The cord will bind once fully weighted, making descent next to impossible. This led to the use of other devices like

the Unicender to replace hitches, but it also led to techniques for modifying the traditional hitch cord configuration, notably the Figure 8-Revolver technique (F8-RT) – all described in my SRT series. Now comes an altogether new piece of equipment, also conceived and designed by the inventor of the F8-RT, Kevin Bingham. It is actually an improvement of the F8-RT using a piece of equipment designed specifically for it, which Kevin named the Rope Wrench (RW).

I was lucky enough to win a Rope Wrench at our last climbing competition, courtesy of Kevin and the ever-generous Rich Hattier of Anchor Bridge Ropeworks (a soothing consolation for my second place finish behind Abram Zies). The weekend after competition I tried it out with fellow competition climbers Jimmy Pritchard, Dorian Davey and Jackson McIntosh. You may recall that both Jimmy and Dorian are SRT enthusiasts. Jimmy used an SRT ascent in the Masters this year, and Dorian climbs SRT exclusively in his daily work. Although Dorian usually uses a Unicender, he and Jimmy are both experienced with the RW, and they instructed me in its use.

Kevin actually carved his prototype RW out of hickory. While it was highly functional and attractive to boot, the model now available for sale (at [treestuff.com](http://treestuff.com)), the ZK-1, is made in Detroit out of beautiful stainless steel. Despite its sturdiness, it is important to remember that the Rope Wrench is not for life support.

Like the various versions of the F8-RT, the RW works simply by taking some tension off of the single line and putting it onto a second line, in this case an accessory cord tether that runs from the one end of the RW and back to the climber, usually by terminating onto a Hitch Climber pulley (see photo). When descending, the RW and

the tether take a lot of the climber's weight off the hitch, allowing it to work the way it normally would in DdRT. Because the climbing hitch cord is what actually secures the climber to the climbing line, the RW and tether do not have to be rated for life support, but it is best to use a tether that is not going to break. As the climber descends, the tether also pulls the RW down along the single line, keeping enough weight off of it for the climbing hitch to function smoothly.

When the climber is ascending, or coming in from a limb walk, the tether goes slack, allowing the RW to sit loosely on top of the climbing hitch, advancing with absolutely no extra effort. For an explanatory video, search You Tube for "Singing Tree Rope Wrench ZK1."

As with most SRT systems, the key to success with the Rope Wrench is taking the time to personalize the initial adjustment of the system, in particular the tether length. It is also critical that you adjust the tension bolt of the RW specifically for your line and weight. As with any other system, it is also critical to get a good match between your climbing line and your hitch cord. We used Velocity and Tachyon. Dorian uses a great new line from Allgear called Rocket. For hitch cord, Jimmy used 10mm Tenex, Dorian uses Ocean, and I used 8mm Beeline.

One minor drawback I think this tool has is that in order to be attached mid-line, or to accommodate a spliced-end rope, the tension bolt must be taken out (and then put back). I think it would be much better if this could be done easily, and I hear that on future models it will be. And as with any new technique, go *low and slow until you know!*

*The author is the owner and operator of Arbor Vitae Tree Care in Austin. He has over 30 years experience and is available for worker safety and tree care workshops. He may be reached at 512-301-8700.*





## Webcasts

### Urban Natural Resources Institute webcast series

UNRI scientists provide online educational presentations on timely topics and current research and development. To join in, you log into the UNRI web cast site for the visual component of the presentation, and then call the toll-free telephone number to participate in the audio portion. Some upcoming webcasts:

July 20: Social Networking Tools:  
Managing Information

August 17: Fire Performance Database

September 21: Green Infrastructure/  
Urban Stormwater

October 19: Mapping Community Tree  
Risk

November 16: Urban Wildlife:  
Managing a Delicate Balance

December 14: A Closer Look at Tree  
Benefits

Go to [unri.org/webcasts/](http://unri.org/webcasts/) for more information

### Alliance for Community Trees archived webcasts

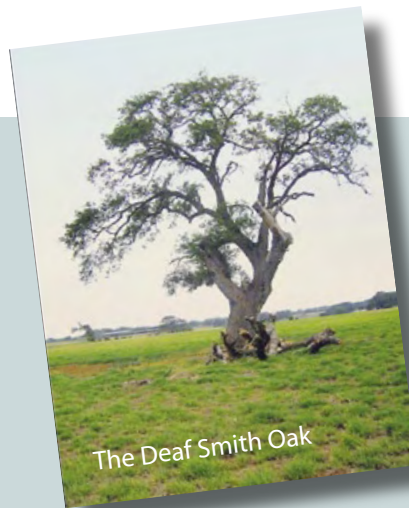
On the third Thursday of each month, the Alliance for Community Trees (ACT) hosts a national webcast at 1 p.m. EST. These webcasts are designed to provide information and training for urban forestry volunteers, community planners, and other professionals.

Past webcasts are archived on the ACT website and are free to view. Sessions last approximately one hour and highlight successful programs and practices from across the nation.

Recent webcasts available for free download include:

- Storms Over the Urban Forest- Part I: Natural Hazard Management Planning
- Tapping Carbon Markets for Urban Forests
- Tree Technology- Part II: CRMs
- Reaching Bilingual Audiences

To view archived ACT webcasts visit [actrees.org/site/resources/webcasts](http://actrees.org/site/resources/webcasts)



## Carving into Texas history

In early May the Texas Association of the Deaf (TAD) contacted the Texas Forest Service to gain access to the famed Deaf Smith Oak, located about three miles north of LaVernia near Cibolo Creek west of San Antonio. Mark Duff, TFS Staff Forester—San Antonio, met with historian Steve Baldwin on the grounds of this historic tree to cut and collect wood from its large declining branches.

The idea is to salvage and auction off some of this wood – for conversion into art or fine turnings – at the upcoming TAD conference. The Deaf Smith Oak is still struggling to stay alive during the drought; Mark recommended watering it and applying some mulch under the canopy to help protect the tree from further damage.

The historical significance of this tree dates to 1835 when Erastus “Deaf” Smith climbed into its canopy to spy on Mexican troops camped out on Cibolo Creek. According to Baldwin, “General Sam Houston personally chose Deaf Smith as a private to head the spy and scout unit of the Texian army. . . . While his dog served as his ‘ears,’ Smith was also called the ‘eyes of the (Texian) army.’” Smith played a tremendous role in the independence of Texas in 1836.

—Mark Duff



Steve Baldwin – Mission accomplished!



Mark Duff sawing deadwood from the Deaf Smith Oak



James Dossett (Bartlett Tree Experts) on the benefits of root reinvigoration

# Second San Antonio Hispanic Tree Care Workshop

by Mark Duff, Staff Forester, Texas Forest Service, San Antonio

Two hundred workers and trainers attended the Second Hispanic Tree Care Workshop May 24 at the City of San Antonio NE Service Center (The Tool Yard). The event, conducted entirely in Spanish, was co-sponsored by the ISA Texas Chapter and the San Antonio Arborist Association.

Indoor and outdoor concurrent sessions were featured during the morning and afternoon. Workshop planners included City of San Antonio (COSA) arborist Mark Bird, San Antonio Arborist Association president Booker Arradondo, COSA tree inspector Armando Cortez, CPS Energy forester James Koenig, citizen Lissa Martinez and foresters Paul Johnson and Mark Duff from TFS—San Antonio. A special thanks goes to James Dossett and the Bartlett Tree Experts staff for donating equipment and time to demonstrate the air spade root invigoration system.

Mark Duff emceed the event and gave presentations on oak wilt and pruning. Jorge Gomez and two other employees from McCoy Tree Surgery gave an impassioned account of their experiences and the importance of becoming an ISA Certified Arborist. Armando Cortez from COSA gave an excellent talk describing the city's tree preservation ordinances and their relevance. Salvador Alemany, TFS Regional Urban Forester for the Rio Grande Valley, captivated the audience on the benefits of trees. At the indoor lunch, Bob Reeder, retired safety consultant with Trees, Inc, entertained the entire group with his lifelong experiences as a bilingual safety mentor for the tree care industry.

The outdoor concurrent sessions featured Jim Dossett, regional safety and training coordinator, and two of Bartlett's finest, with root reinvigoration treatments on five cedar elms and live oaks, along with target pruning demonstrations. Jose Mercado from Los Angeles gave demonstrations on climbing, chainsaw, work zone and chipper safety, bouncing skillfully between English and Spanish when needed.

At the conclusion of the event raffle ticket winners took home climbing ropes, chainsaws, books, hand saws, loppers and t-shirts. Participants were given certificates of completion that counted as part of COSA's annual CEU requirements for tree care workers. Five ISA CEUs were also offered for the Certified Arborist, BCMA, Municipal and Tree Worker credentials.

In addition the planning committee would like to thank Asplundh Tree Expert Co., Bailey's, City of San Antonio, CPS Energy, Davey Tree Surgery, Precision Saw and Tool, San Antonio Arborist Association, Sherrill Tree, Texas Forest Service and Vermeer Inc. for contributing equipment, volunteers and raffle items to the event.



Bartlett Tree Experts showing the results of the root reinvigoration system

From left to right Paul Johnson (TFS), Mark Bird (COSA), John Worrell and Jacob West (Bartlett Tree Experts)



Jose Mercado speaking on work zone safety



Organizers of the 2011 Texas Tree Conference October 5–7 in Waco anticipate over 500 attendees and a variety of outstanding programs. There will be a track for utility arborists, sessions focusing on landscape architecture with trees in mind, and a tree school for Spanish-speaking arborists.

In addition ISAT will continue its tradition of providing outstanding education programs featuring nationally known speakers. This year's speakers are:

• **Dr. John Ball**, Professor of Forestry, South Dakota State University and a Forest Health Specialist with the South Dakota Division of Resource Conservation and Forestry. An arborist for more than 30 years as a company manager and a college educator, he is the author of more than 120 articles on tree health care. He is also a former tree climbing champion.

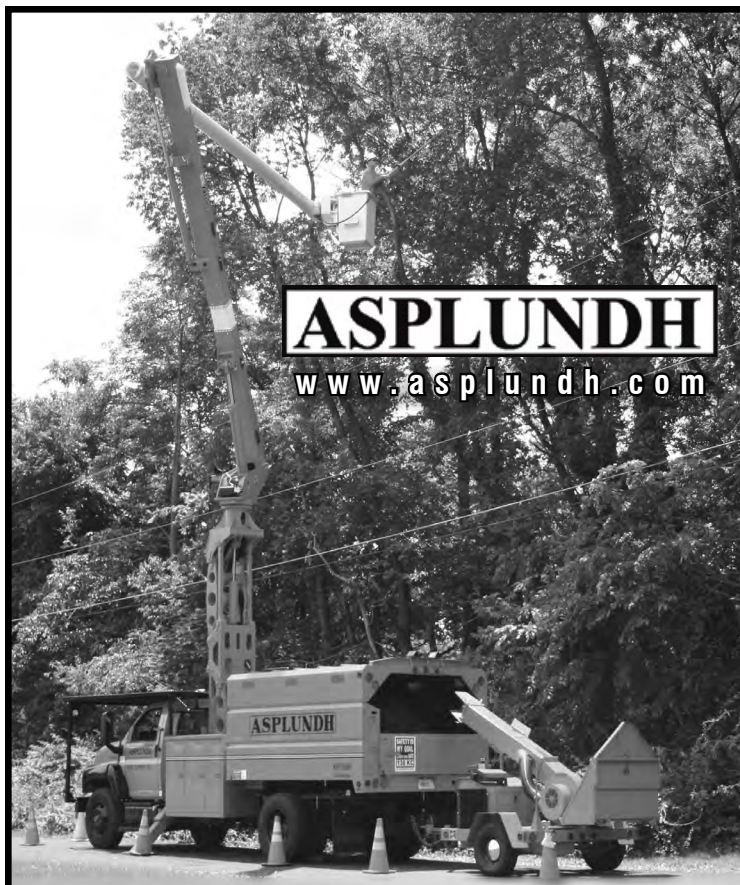
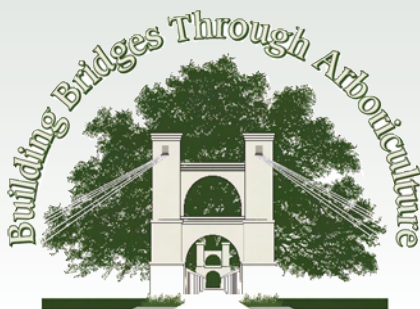
• **Dr. Kim Coder**, Professor of Tree Biology and Health Care at the University of Georgia and a past president of ISA. He is an international lecturer and consultant on tree health care, tree biomechanics, abiotic tree stress, risk management, tree physiology, and community forest ecology.

• **Dave Dockter**, Managing Arborist in Planning, City of Palo Alto, CA. He has been instrumental in re-inventing approaches to planning and has a unique perspective on the urban forest. He has helped amend several municipal tree ordinances throughout California and is principal author of the *Palo Alto Tree Technical Manual*, now in its ninth year of use.

• **Derek Vannice**, Vice President of Operations, CN Utility Consulting. He currently manages all operations for one of the fastest growing utility consulting companies in North America. He is a former director of certification for ISA and a former executive director of the Utility Arborist Association.

As always the conference will feature the latest in tree research and arboriculture, an awards luncheon, a trade show with many vendors, and numerous networking opportunities. Stay tuned to [isatexas.com](http://isatexas.com).

## TTC Preview



## A Better Way

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# Texas Tree Climbing Championship

◀ *Continued from page 1*

quiet down. Despite the unplanned break, the competition wrapped up timely on Saturday with the Masters' Challenge. This year the finalists were Abram Zies, Guy LeBlanc, Miguel Pastenes, and Jimmy Prichard. These finalists truly deserve to compete in the event titled Masters' Challenge; what skilled climbers! I'm tickled to report that Josephine Hedger from the UK/Ireland Chapter also competed; she did a really great job and from a spectator's point of view it was refreshing to see a lady competitor! Josephine is the reigning 2010 International Tree Climbing Champion in the women's division.

Abram Zies defended his title as the 2011 Texas Tree Climbing Champion. This follows up a spectacular performance in the first ever North American Tree Climbing Championships in South Carolina where Abram finished in the top five to qualify for the Master's Challenge. Good luck in Australia, Abram. We know you will strongly represent Texas in this year's International Tree Climbing Championships. We're all rooting for you!



## BREAKDOWN OF EVENTS:

### Masters Challenge

*Judges:* Nevic Donnelly, Markus Smith, Larry Maginnis, Jose Mercado, Tom Dunlap

*Spy Tech:* Bill Koenig

*Special Advisor:* Steve Houser

*Rescue Tech:* Jeremy Williams

*Final Competitor Results:*

1. Abram Zies
2. Guy Leblanc
3. Miguel Pastenes
4. Jimmy Prichard

*Top preliminary finalists and*

*Master's Challenge qualifiers:*

1. Abram Zies
2. Miguel Pastenes
3. Guy Leblanc
4. Jimmy Prichard

### Footlock

*Head Judge:* Kevin Bassett,

*Stopwatchers:* Chris Pierce, Emily

King, Jerry Weathered, Tony Gonzalez

*Event Techs:* Scott Stephens, Curtis

Schoessow

*Final Competitor Results:*

1. Miguel Pastenes 16.58 sec
2. Abram Zies 17.20 sec
3. Vicente Navarro 21.68 sec

### Belayed Speed Climb

*Head Judge:* Wild Bill Koenig

*Stopwatchers:* Chris Brewer, Kenneth Smith

*Event Techs:* Jessie Neumann, Jim Dunlap

*Final Competitor Results:*

1. Abram Zies 32.74 sec
2. Guy Leblanc 34.69 sec
3. Jehu Cortez 35.67 sec

### Aerial Rescue

*Head Judge:* Larry Maginnis

*Judges:* Jim Dossett, Gene Bassler

*Event Techs:* Rich Hattier, Jake Kenzie, Daniel Priest

*Final Competitor Results:*

- Jason Diehl (out of town)
1. Jimmy Prichard
  2. Miguel Pastenes
  3. Jackson Macintosh



### Work Climb

*Head Judge:* Markus Smith

*Judges:* Brennon Magee, Jose Mercado

*Techs:* Onecimo, Joe Harris, Marcel Rosales, Santos Zetino

*Final Competitor Results:*

1. Abram Zies
2. Guy Leblanc
3. Miguel Pastenes

### Throw Line

*Head Judge:* James Tuttle

*Judges:* Nick Martinez, Keith O'Herrin

*Tech:* Francisco Lares

*Final Competitor Results:*

1. David Ruiz
2. Jimmy Prichard
3. Andrew Machuca

### Additional Huge Shout-Outs

So many dedicated folks volunteer every year, as well as new faces joining in the fun, it is really difficult to list all the contributors by name. Here are some who pulled together to make this work:

- Larissa Swindle had a big hand in pre-event coordination & awards.
- Steve Barrett and Vincent with ISA headed up the Score Tally and Results Processing Team.
- Steve Houser was invaluable as Special Advisor.
- Tom Dunlap kept it safe by serving as Head Tech.
- John Horton and Crew helped massively with event setup and takedown.
- Margaret Hall Spencer documented the entire event with photographs.
- Chris Pierce drove day and night to see us.

*Thank you all!*







## April dedication of the Mollie Steves Zachry Texas Arboretum at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center



The Texas Arboretum will open to the public next year. Highlights are:

- A central meadow of native grasses dotted with wildflowers and surrounded by several hundred Texas trees
- A display of all 53 species of oak trees native to Texas
- Specimen trees, including black walnut, bald cypress, pecan and sycamores
- Informal gathering areas, such as picnic groves with wind chimes in trees
- Descendants of famous Texas trees, including the Treaty Oak, Alamo Live Oak, Sam Houston Kissing Bur Oak and Goose Island Big Tree.
- Formal demonstration areas, such as a collection of plants acclimated to drier conditions and one featuring trees for use under utility lines.



## 2011 TEXAS TREE CONFERENCE CALL FOR SILENT AUCTION ITEMS!!!! (auction supports ISAT research projects & scholarships)

Dear ISAT Members, Conference Sponsors & Exhibitors:

The Silent Auction at the annual Texas Tree Conference is an important means for ISAT to extend the great research work we fund each year, and provides resources for educational scholarship opportunities to deserving individuals.

ISAT is currently seeking large and small items of interest to tree professionals – anything from a gift certificate for your services to artwork, maybe a tree from your operation or a round of golf at your home course. Perhaps your spouse, a friend or family member owns a business that would donate a prize? Does your city tourism board have a gift package that spotlights your

city or the local college? Do you have any awesome things laying around your house that a fellow tree person would love to bid on – like rare tree books, tree knickknacks, or tree art? Small items are OK – we can put them together with other items to make a great package.

The conference is October 5– 7. We would like to have confirmation of items by the week of September 26.

Please contact ISAT board member Heather Brewer at (512) 930-6113 or [heather.brewer@georgetown.org](mailto:heather.brewer@georgetown.org) if you have ideas or items available for the auction.







## EDITOR'S NOTE by Paul Johnson

It's summer time and the living is... hot and dry. We have had about 5 inches of rain in San Antonio since October. I hope Mother Nature has been more generous with you. I may be hot and dry, but I am also really excited. There are so many great things going on in Texas when it comes to trees and tree care.

The Texas Tree Conference is shaping up to be wonderful. We will hear from the greats such as Dr. John Ball and Dr. Kim Coder. This will be 'must see TV' without the TV. We will have three tracks of presentations including municipal, arboriculture, and utility. We will also have an aerial rescue workshop and a Spanish language tree school as options. I will see you in Waco.

The TTC will cap off a very busy year. We have hosted two Tree Risk Assessment Workshops, the Texas Tree Climbing Conference, a Planning the Urban Forest workshop, and a Certified Tree Worker Test; co-hosted the Spanish Language Tree Worker Training; and updated the Texas Supplement to the *Guide for Plant Appraisal*.


The San Antonio Arborist Association is planning a climbing workshop with Guy Leblanc on September 15 and a CTW test on November 11 and 12. It just keeps getting better.

What would you like to see from this organization over the next 5 years? Pull out your crystal ball and gaze deep into it and help point us in the right direction. Send your suggestions to me at [pjohnson@tfs.tamu.edu](mailto:pjohnson@tfs.tamu.edu). We are growing and need your input.


Troops are "First Responders" to put things back together after a hurricane. The 2011 hurricane season is right around the corner. Take some time to plan and predict what could happen... especially in the wake of the Japan earthquakes!

– Steve White



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# Anti-tree bills defeated

by Richard Alles, Citizens Tree Coalition, San Antonio

I am happy to report that we defeated every anti-tree bill in the Texas Legislature. At the same time, I am deeply grateful for the many people who called legislators, sent emails, wrote letters and testified in person against these bills.

Although these developer-backed bills died when the Legislature's Regular Session ended, we are continuing to monitor bills filed in the First Called Session that began May 31. We cannot let our guard down until adjournment sine die of this special session.

If not for the work of Former Mayor Phil Hardberger, Mayor Julián Castro, Senator Leticia Van De Putte, Senator Jeff Wentworth, Representative Trey Martinez Fischer, Representative Roland Gutierrez and Senator Kirk Watson (D-Austin) I believe these bills would be awaiting Gov. Perry's signature.

Just as importantly, I want to thank all of the people in San Antonio and across Texas who worked to defeat these bills. Your response was overwhelming. Numerous organizations, governments and agencies joined the fight, including:

- \* US Army – Camp Bullis
- \* City of San Antonio

- \* Austin Heritage Tree Foundation
- \* TX Municipal League
- \* Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance
- \* San Antonio Express-News
- \* USGBC Central TX-Balcones
- \* Alamo Group of the Sierra Club
- \* SA Conservation Society
- \* Dallas Historic Tree Coalition
- \* TX League of Conservation Voters
- \* Save Barton Creek Association
- \* Save Our Springs Alliance
- \* Bexar County
- \* San Antonio River Authority
- \* San Antonio Water System
- \* City of Austin
- \* City of Dallas
- \* City of Houston
- \* and others.

## Final outcome for anti-tree bills

### The Clearcutting Bill

*SB 732: Sen. Robert Nichols (R-Jacksonville); HB 1388: Rep. Chuck Hopson (R-Jacksonville)*

This bill would have allowed developers to clearcut most of the remaining undeveloped land surrounding San Antonio by nullifying the tree ordinance in the ETJ. It was blocked from coming to a vote in the Senate by a coalition of Senators assembled by Leticia Van De Putte and Jeff Wentworth.

After the bill stalled, Sen. Troy Fraser executed a sneak attack by attaching it to another bill that passed out of the Senate. When the bill went back to the House, Fraser's amendment was overruled on parliamentary grounds and the bill was returned to the Senate where the amendment was removed.

### The Mitigation Fee Bill

*SB 1741: Sen. Troy Fraser (R-Horseshoe Bay)*

This bill would have killed virtually all protection for large Heritage trees and allowed developers to destroy 80-94% of the trees on a site without paying a penny in mitigation fees. It was blocked from coming to a vote in the Senate by a coalition of Senators assembled by Leticia Van De Putte and Jeff Wentworth.

The House companion never got a committee hearing because Rep. Harold Dutton (D-Houston) was listed as the bill's sponsor even though he never assented to sponsoring it.

### The Takings Bill

*SB 1201: Sen. Dan Patrick (R-Houston)*

This bill would have nullified San Antonio's strong protection of trees standing in floodplains. In addition, certain impervious cover limits in our aquifer protection ordinance would have been negated. It did not even get a committee hearing.

### The Grandfathering Bills

*SB 1442: Sen. Florence Shapiro (R-Plano) & Sen. Jeff Wentworth/HBs 3534 & 3535: Rep. Tim Kleinschmidt (R-Lexington)*

SB 1442 would have made it easier for developers to get exemptions from the tree ordinance (and others). It seemed headed for final passage but failed to beat the session's clock.

HBs 3534 & 3535 would have exposed cities that denied developers' grandfathering claims to great litigation risk. Neither bill made it out of committee.

*The Citizens Tree Coalition is a volunteer group dedicated to preserving trees and educating the public about the environmental and economic benefits of the urban forest in Bexar County.* <http://www.treecoalition.org>



# More on the tree bills

## Thanks from San Antonio

by Mark C. Bird, City Arborist, San Antonio

As the City Arborist for the City of San Antonio I would like to thank all of the citizens across our great state who, through your efforts, inspired our elected officials to work hard to oppose legislation that would remove municipal regulations that protect trees and existing green infrastructure and natural resources.

To our elected officials who made great sacrifices to oppose the bills that would have impacted the trees, natural resources and green infrastructure of our communities, I thank you. Special thanks go to our state legislators: Senator Jeff Wentworth, Senator Leticia Van De Putte, Senator Kirk Watson, Representative Trey Martinez Fischer

and Representative Roland Gutierrez. At a Senate committee hearing on Tree Mitigation, Former San Antonio Mayor Phil Hardberger, current San Antonio Mayor Julian Castro and current San Antonio Councilman Reed Williams testified against the bill.

## Update: tracking tree legislation online

by Emily King, Parks and Recreation, City of Austin

ISAT board members are keeping an eye on bills that may impact urban forestry in Texas. Go to Texas Legislature Online ([www.legis.state.tx.us](http://www.legis.state.tx.us)) to track bills that pertain to urban forestry.

Some of the bills I've been tracking are:

House Bill 1388 and companion Senate Bill 732 relate to the prohibition of

certain regulations by a municipality in its extraterritorial jurisdiction involving trees and vegetation. Last action HB 1388 04/19/2011: Committee report sent to Calendars. Last action SB 732 04/07/2011: Not again placed on intent calendar.

House Bill 2673 and companion Senate Bill 1741 relate to the calculation of tree mitigation fees charged by a municipality in connection with a permit. Last action HB 2673 03/16/2011: Referred to Urban Affairs. Last action SB 1741 04/26/2011: Not again placed on intent calendar.

More interested in the federal level? Check out [www.govtrack.us](http://www.govtrack.us) to track Congress' activities. Some issues that I have on my tracker include agriculture and food, air quality, climate change, and environmental protection.



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## FLASHBACK

by Heather Brewer

At the 1989 Texas Tree Conference in Kerrville, the Grow Gun Corporation had a vendor booth showcasing their new fertilization tool called the Grow Gun.

The Grow Gun worked like this: compressed air went in one side and liquids went in the other. The Grow Gun consisted of a hopper that you fill with granules, such as dry fertilizer, micronutrient pellets, vermiculite, and other soil amendments. When you shoved the point into the ground and squeezed the trigger it blasted all this stuff laterally into the soil.

It was apparently pretty entertaining to watch the demo because about a 5-foot radius of ground would just kinda jump up all of a sudden when they pulled the trigger.

The Grow Gun was made in Denver but never made much headway here in Texas. It was cumbersome and it turned out that in clay-like soils the soil would separate in layers so all the good stuff just ended up in one big layer rather than scattered throughout the soil.

Some of the folks in the photos are John Giedraitis (Texas Forest Service), who currently serves on the ISAT board; Patrick Wentworth (Austin Tree Specialists), who also currently serves on the ISAT board; David Hintz (Arbor Care), and Bob Dewers, a retired A&M professor and former ISAT president.

*Heather Brewer is Urban Forester, City of Georgetown.*





# Save the Date

July 21, San Antonio

ISA CERTIFICATION TEST. [isatexas.com](http://isatexas.com)

July 23 – 27, Parramatta, Australia

ISA ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND TRADE SHOW. The premier event for arborists from around the world. [isa-arbor.com](http://isa-arbor.com)

AUGUST 18–21, Dallas

TNLA EXPO. ISAT will have a booth at this landscape industry event. [www.nurserylandscapeexpo.org](http://www.nurserylandscapeexpo.org)

August 25, Round Rock

ISA CERTIFICATION TEST. [isatexas.com](http://isatexas.com)

September 15, San Antonio

TREE CLIMBING WORKSHOP. One-day workshop with Guy LeBlanc, sponsored by San Antonio Arborist Association. [sa-aa.com](http://sa-aa.com)

October 5–7, Waco

32<sup>ND</sup> TEXAS TREE CONFERENCE. “Building Bridges through Arboriculture.” [isatexas.com](http://isatexas.com)

October 7, Waco

ISA CERTIFICATION TEST. [isatexas.com](http://isatexas.com)

November 11 & 12, San Antonio

CERTIFIED TREE WORKER CLIMBER SPECIALIST TESTING.

One-day workshop with Guy LeBlanc.

[sa-aa.com](http://sa-aa.com)



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## Join us on the Great Texas Tree Trail

- Do you love trees?
- Do you want to share your love of trees with kids?
- Do you live in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex?
- Then sign up to be a “Trail Boss” on the Great Texas Tree Trail

Texas Chapter ISA, the Texas Urban Forestry Council, the Texas Forest Service and others are joining together to map all the trees at K-12 schools in Texas. These maps will be put online for kids and teachers to use to study the trees in their schoolyards.

Since everything is bigger in Texas (9,000 schools and 5 million kids), we

need lots of local Trail Bosses to help us map schools in their home towns – and that’s where you come in.

It’s easy and fun to be a Trail Boss. It takes about an hour for you to map a school and all you have to know is the names of the trees in your area.

In the future, we will be mapping schools all over Texas but for now, we are just looking for volunteers who live in the D/FW Metroplex.

If you are interested in sharing your love of trees with kids, contact John Giedraitis at [jpg@tfs.tamu.edu](mailto:jpg@tfs.tamu.edu) for more information.

## State-ranked Lindheimer Plaza tree receives support

At Lindheimer Plaza in New Braunfels, the Texas Forest Service recently examined a unique and beautiful desert willow tree believed to be approximately 75 years old. It was determined that this tree now ranks as the Number Two Champion Desert Willow in the state. Tree measurements helped to determine this ranking for the Big Tree Registry, an initiative designed to promote and preserve Texas heritage.



“City staff was concerned about the lack of support for two main branches of the tree,” said Kelly Eby, Urban Forester. “The New Braunfels Parks Foundation came forward and facilitated the installation of a support system. Preservation of landmark specimens is important for future generations to enjoy and also to increase the appreciation of species native to our area.”

The New Braunfels Parks Foundation is a 501(c)3 organization formed to promote, protect and enhance the parks system of New Braunfels through education, resource development and community partnerships. Visit [www.nbparksfoundation.org](http://www.nbparksfoundation.org).

– Sheri Reinhold, City of New Braunfels Parks & Recreation



## Get a free adult beverage ticket at the 2011 Texas Tree Conference in Waco!

Bring your old ISAT event photos and we will give you a free beverage ticket for the Thursday night social. We are looking for photos from past tree conferences, workshops, climbing competitions, or local events ISAT helped to sponsor. One ticket per person, not per photo.

Photos can be printed or on CDs. The higher the resolution, the better. Please save files as a jpg or a format that can be edited. We will take photos from recent past events but are really hoping for some photos from waaay back. We will want to know what the year was and what the event was. If you can ID any people in the photos, that would also be helpful. Photos can be emailed in early to [heather.brewer@georgetown.org](mailto:heather.brewer@georgetown.org) or hand-delivered at the conference to Heather Brewer, chapter historian.







## The demise of a champion

by Oscar S. Mestas, Texas Forest Service, Regional Urban Forester

This is a sad day for me; the National Champion Rio Grande cottonwood *Populus deltoides subsp. wislizeni* has been a standing title holder in my region for many years. This magnificent monarch, which stands tall and alone in a pasture, has been severely burned and its prognosis is not good.

Just two months earlier in March, Pete Smith (Big Tree coordinator), our new forester Gretchen Riley, myself (Oscar Mestas), Derrick Nahill (FIA forester) and his sidekick Charles Stair (resource specialist) were busily measuring the tree and recording it for American Forests, the keeper of the National Registry. I even went to bat for this tree back in 2005, when New Mexico was claiming that they had the new champion. I traveled all the way to Albuquerque and measured the contender several times before the local tree folks up there would give in.

As many of you may have heard, one of the worst and largest fire storms in Texas literally blew through the small west Texas community of Fort Davis on April 9 of this year. As of May 12, over one month after the fire erupted, the Rockhouse fire, which started in Presidio County and ended up in Jeff Davis County, has consumed 314,444 acres. Twenty-four homes and two commercial structures were destroyed in the Fort Davis area in the initial burning period. The town is recovering, the Trans Pecos is still burning, and the champion is waning away.

I'm glad over time this tree has been memorialized in photographs, books, and paintings. Several years back, cuttings were taken by Patty Manning of Sul Ross State University, so somewhere out there hopefully exist little clones of this giant.

## 2011 Tree Appraisal Supplement free to Texas Chapter ISA members

Members of the Texas Chapter ISA can obtain a free copy of the 2011 *Texas Supplement to the Guide for Plant Appraisal* by contacting Mike Walterscheidt at [isat@eccwireless.com](mailto:isat@eccwireless.com).

Non-members can purchase a copy online at [isatexas.com](http://isatexas.com) and as a bonus, you will also receive a free \$40 membership in the Texas Chapter ISA.

The Texas supplement is intended as a companion to the 9th Edition of the *Guide for Plant Appraisal*, written by the Council of Tree and Landscape Appraisers and published by the International Society of Arboriculture. The *Guide for Plant Appraisal* is for use by professionals who need to perform plant appraisals involving casualties, damages and takings of plant materials. It is available for purchase at [isatexas.com](http://isatexas.com).

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