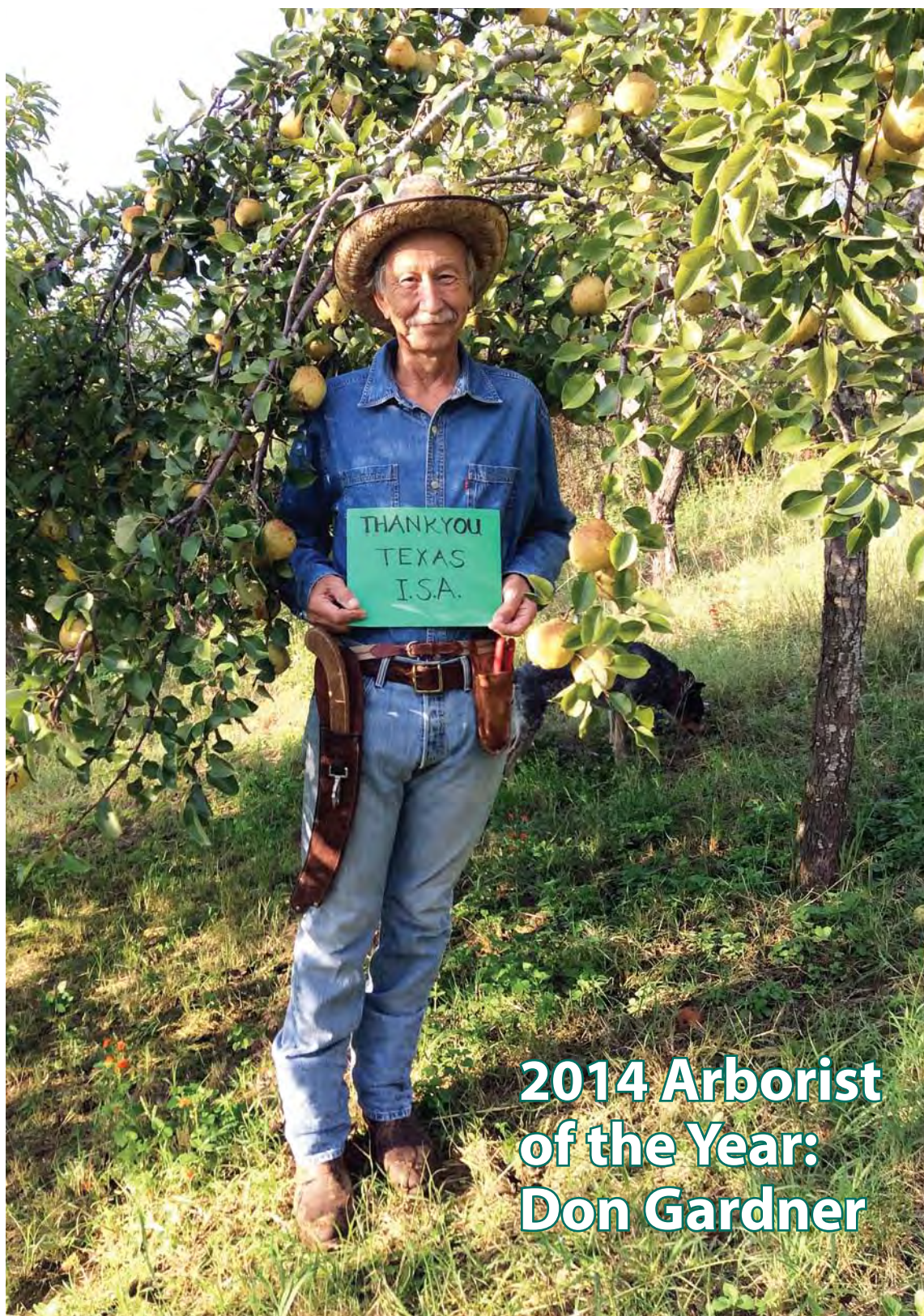


In the Shade

NEWSLETTER OF THE ISA TEXAS CHAPTER

Vol. 38, No. 4
November,
2014



**2014 Arborist
of the Year:
Don Gardner**

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER by Markus Smith

Hi, I'm your new president. It was a great conference, and thanks for coming!

Here are three of my goals for the coming year:

1. Strategic planning, especially succession planning for board and executive director positions.
2. Ask for help from more volunteers. Get involved!
3. Listen to ideas from you, the members, about what you want from ISAT.

Item 3 is especially important. After all, we're here for you, not the other way around. It would be nice to hear any and all ideas from members during the month of November. That gives me time to collect all your ideas and present them to the board at the annual retreat in December.

Send your ideas to me at markus@justtrees.com. Thanks!

In the Shade

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ON THE COVER

Don Gardner, the ISAT 2014 Arborist of the Year, has been taking care of trees and showing other people how to take care of trees for 40 years. More information about Don and the other 2014 award winners is inside, along with articles and photos about the 2014 Tree Conference.

Date Palm Quarantine

To prevent the establishment and spread of date palm lethal decline in Texas and to eradicate local infestations, the Texas Department of Agriculture has instituted a quarantine affecting certain areas outside of Texas and certain areas inside the state. This includes an emergency quarantine area in Houston. A link on the main page of the ISAT website (isatexas.com) will take you to the TDA site where more information is posted, along with a map of the quarantined area in Houston.

NEW MEMBERS

Pamela Abee-Taulli	Austin
Patrick Anderson	Charlotte
Brad Bradsher	Austin
Nathan Brummer	Round Rock
Robert Brundrett	Manvel
Samuel Cantu	Austin
Jorge Cantu	Edinburg
Clay Chaote	Argyle
Spencer Conroy	Bartonville
Justin Cox	Mc Kinney
Phillip Davis	Haltom City
Jeremiah Davis	Dallas
Cody English	Oklahoma City
Daniel English	Oklahoma City
Jason Fischer	Schertz
John Gurasich	Austin
Alan Halter	Austin
Theresa Hicks Jackson	Little Elm
Shawn Huff	Lago Vista
Cameron Johnson	Allen
Jason Junier	Lexington
Paul Lara	Round Rock
Karen Lawson	Waco
Colby Lee	Pilot Point
Bill Long	Midwest City
Mike McCroskey	Oklahoma City
Scoitt McManigal	Austin
John Murphy	Cypress
James Neeser	Forest Lake
Wade Ninemire	Austin
Michael Olivarez	Spring
Kent Pippin	Blanco
Tony Poncik	Lavernia
Sharon Reed	San Antonio
Joshua Roberts	Kerrville
Val Roming	Eddy
Kirsten Schneider	Austin
Joey Soileau	Kyle
Keith Swallers	Rosenberg
Kenneth Turner	Duncanville
Allison Watkins	San Angelo
Penny Whisenant	Marble Falls

2014 Texas Tree Conference wrap-up

by Kelly Eby

Fantastic speakers, great venue, loads of attendees, and the *extreme* sport of tortilla tossing made this one of the most memorable conferences to date.

2014 TTC set a new attendance record with over 1000 people! A 30% increase from last year!

This year the conference was all about *exTREEmes*, and we kicked that off with the Tree Academy on Wednesday. We had extremely knowledgeable and credible folks test the limits of our familiarity with numerous insect and disease issues on trees. Over 50 specimens covered the tables encircling the room; they consisted of some familiar and some not-so-familiar tree problems. Not to mention the largest specimen, a cross section of a tree trunk containing a huge burl, created by a bacterial infection.

The quiz was a flashback to school days and brought out some good competition and comradery among the attendees. The quiz was followed up by a thorough discussion of each specimen. There was plenty of interactive discussion among the attendees and the panel, making it a great setup for learning about tree symptoms and diagnosis from field to lab.

Wednesday Evening Social set new precedents. Good grub, networking, beer, and

tortilla tossing. It was difficult to forget that the clubhouse served our needs so well for many years, but with growing attendance it is hard to compare the great view from the bridge and a well catered picnic experience with friends among the brazen Longhorn steers.

Thursday and Friday brought many challenges to the forefront of the conference. It was encouraging to begin a discussion with peers and professionals on the issues that arborists in our area are currently facing. A wide spectrum of speakers spoke of the future and the planning that can begin now in regards to extreme drought, higher temperatures, stronger winds, new pests and diseases, and how to speak for trees by joining Team Lorax! Some outstanding information was presented by Dr. Ball, Melinda Adams, Dr. Ferrini, and Dr. Burkhard, and I know many

arborists will pause to think about what will grow in 2050 before planning their next tree planting. To review any of the fantastic information/ideas imparted by our fabulous speakers, visit the tree conference page of the ISAT website (isatexas.com) for pdfs of their presentations.

This was the second year that we partnered with TCIA to offer the Electrical Hazard Awareness



The sport of tortilla tossing was introduced at dinner on the bridge.

Program (EHAP). It was a big success with a great speaker and everyone was shocked to learn how powerful utility lines can be. The ARC demonstration by Jeff Quinters with ONCOR left no doubts about the danger of electrical power with the 25 participants. Gretchen Riley with Texas A&M Forest Service said, "It is powerful to witness how clothes that are an inappropriate material near utility lines can catch on fire and how quickly it can become a greater problem."

There was a pretty spectacular group of roughly 40 participants at the Texas Tree School (English) taught by Guy LeBlanc with Arbor Vitae Tree Care and Brad Hamel with Texas A&M Forest Service. Guy LeBlanc is a great speaker and credit to the Tree School. He is so sincere and down to earth about his beginning in the tree industry, helping paint a picture of the journey to experience. This was a very hands-on, interactive course with great indoor and outdoor training covering basic climbing, chainsaw safety, soils, the biology of trees, and more.

According to Brad Hamel, "Knowledge about tree biology can be sexy. It is ▶

Fifty-specimen tree quiz: a flashback to school days.





Upper left: Awards luncheon.

Above: Rolling in the burl.

Left: The room is packed for the Thursday morning General Session.

◀ something not well covered in school and people want to know more about it and more about trees and what we do as arborists.”

The Spanish language Texas Tree School was taught by Mark Duff, Texas A&M Forest Service; Dr. Raul Cabera, researcher with Texas A&M AgriLife in Uvalde; and Armando Cortez, tree inspector for the City of San Antonio. Mark Duff stated that the Tree School was fantastic and had over 40 students. There was great participation and questions! The attendees came from Dallas, San Antonio, and greater central Texas, from all different tree care backgrounds: private business, municipal, and the utility industry. Safety is paramount for tree workers, and the course focuses on proper pruning, chainsaw safety, electri-

cal safety and so much more. If you missed this one, keep your eyes open for one in your area in the spring.

Another important note: This was the first year the Texas A&M Forest Service offered eight scholarships to the Tree School to some of the area’s smaller municipalities. The scholarship program for the Tree Conference has been very successful, and they felt it was an opportunity to expand the program.

As professionals in the industry we are always striving to raise up the next leaders in arboriculture. This year the silent auction organized by Terry Kirkland and supported by our members helped raise \$3,782.47 for student scholarships to assist with college tuition. There was an incredible assortment of auction prizes. All

who participated by donating or bidding should feel a sense of pride in having a hand in the education and development of the next generation of tree care professionals.

As always there are many to thank for the great experience that we share at the Texas Tree Conference. The culture generated at the conference is so welcoming. The members, exhibitors, vendors, speakers, ISAT board, sub-committees, and volunteers speak volumes about our arborist community as a whole.

If you did not have the opportunity to experience the Tree Academy & Tree Conference, I feel it would be well worth your effort to attend next year. It just keeps getting better every year! ■

Don Gardner

Arborist of the Year

Don Gardner was selected because of his long service to his clients, community and the state of Texas as a tree care professional. He has been a consulting arborist since 1998. Previously he was owner of Austin Arborists, a tree care business, for 18 years.

Don has spent many years educating the public about tree care. He has taught master gardener tree classes; presented workshops at the Natural Gardener, Lady Bird Wildflower Center and elsewhere; and hosted the Tree Talk radio show on KLBJ AM. He also does tree appraisal and appears as an expert witness.

He is manager and co-owner of a 350-acre tree farm and wildlife preserve in East Texas and currently lives on a family-owned angora goat ranch and wildlife preserve west of Austin.

Milestones in his career include:

- starting the Texas Tree School at Austin Parks and Recreation, the first intensive tree training course in Texas
- planting the first tree in the Zilker Park Peace Grove, along with Ishmail Tanaguchi, the designer of the Japanese Gardens
- organizing the most recent (2009) pruning of the 500-year-old Treaty Oak, damaged by a vandal in 1989.

Don's love for and commitment to trees is shown in his service to his clients and the time he devotes to education. He is a consulting arborist with vast knowledge, excellent communication skills and a heart of gold.

Don and his sweetheart of 44 years, Pam Murfin, are on the left side of this family photo taken last Christmas. Their granddaughter Yema is kneeling. Their daughters, Riva, on the left, and Yema's mother, Aurora, on the right, are joined by their partners Dan and Justin. The family dogs are Scout, the pyrenees, and Varoo, the corgi.



City of Austin

Arboricultural Project of the Year: Barton Springs Tree Court

The Tree Court Improvement Project at Barton Springs Pool is a great example of arboriculture in action. Part of the major renovation of this popular area included revitalizing the tree court by the main entrance, where the health of the heritage pecans growing there was a primary concern.

A plan was put into action to care for the trees' immediate needs during the renovation and secure their health long term. The plan included alleviating the existing soil compaction, enhancing the soil with compost, expanding planting areas and creating an elevated walkway that appears to be at ground level. The walkway was placed on piers to minimize disruption of the critical root zone of the trees and will minimize tree roots disturbing the walkway in the future.



L to R: Patrick Brewer, Austin Urban Forestry Board; Jeff Clifford, Landscape Architect, Larson Burns, LLC; Brian Larson, Landscape Architect, Larson Burns, LLC; Gary Gregson, Project Coordinator, City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department; Angela Hanson, Urban Forester, City of Austin.

San Antonio River Authority

Gold Leaf Award–Landscape Improvement: San Antonio River Improvements Project

The San Antonio River Improvements Project is a comprehensive multi-year effort to restore and enhance 13 miles of the San Antonio River, both north and south of downtown. But it's more than environmental restoration. With this project, the San Antonio River Authority (SARA) has made significant contributions to reconnect the river and the community, increase ecological services, increase public use, and maintain flood protection for local properties. This project is restoring a strong connection between people, water, wildlife and trees for years to come.

Visit www.sanantonioriver.org for details on the project, including a brochure and maps. For more information about the San Antonio River Authority, visit www.sara-tx.org.



L to R: Tom Boggus, State Forester; Steven Schauer, Manager of External Communications, San Antonio River Authority, Michael Sultan, ISAT President.

Keep Denton Beautiful

Outstanding Arbor Day Activities: Denton Redbud Festival

Denton's official Arbor Day event, The Denton Redbud Festival, is a community-involved celebration of trees. In 2014 over 3,500 people attended the 21st year of this festival and participated in activities for all ages. Local music and food capped off a day of children's artwork displays, a TRASHion Runway show, educational workshops, and even a children's story time that featured "I Can Name 50 Trees Today" from the *Cat in the Hat* series. The Denton Redbud Festival is hosted by Keep Denton Beautiful. More on the festival and other programs at <https://kdb.org>



L to R: Kathy Glasschroeder and Karen McDaniels, Keep Denton Beautiful Board of Directors.

This was an excellent return to the conference for me after a two year absence and I appreciate the help from the TFS in getting me back to Waco. I'll see y'all next year to help get ready for the International!
 –Philip Erwin, City of Dallas

Beautiful city, great people, and forestry. Could not ask for a better conference experience. –Jorge Cantu, Graduate Research Assistant

Wednesday's Tree Academy was well done and informative. Hearing an international perspective during the conference was great.
 –Craig Fox, Urban Forester, Ft. Worth

I enjoyed this year's conference as I always do. It's always so good to be among your peers and mentors. After all these years everybody has turned into your extended family and you are meeting for a holiday catching up on things and checking out the new additions to the family.
 –Brent Pearson, City of El Paso

Texas A&M Forest Service has done it again! The TTC 2014 was one of the best I've attended. Thank you for the scholarship granted for the Tree Academy!
 –Juan Guerra, Senior Horticulturist, City of San Antonio

This year's Texas Tree Conference was great as usual. The speakers were excellent and I learned quite a bit. The topics related to drought were spot on. I'm never disappointed in this conference and consider it one of the best training opportunities out there.
 –Ron Lee, Parks Operations Manager and City Forester, Town of Addison

Thank you Texas A&M Forest Service for sending me to the 2014 Texas Tree Conference. It was a great opportunity to network, learn, and grow as a municipal arborist.
 –Justin Krobot, Assistant City Arborist, San Antonio

Tree Line USA

The Tree Line USA® program exists to recognize best practices in public and private utility arboriculture, demonstrating how trees and utilities can co-exist for the benefit of communities and citizens. The Arbor Day Foundation collaborates with Texas A&M Forest Service to deliver this program in Texas. The following are certified Tree Line USA utilities and were honored at the Texas Tree Conference: AEP Texas Central & AEP Texas North • Austin Public Utilities (not pictured) • CenterPoint Energy • Garland Power & Light (not pictured) • Oncor Electric Delivery



AEP Texas Central and AEP Texas North L to R: Tom Boggus, State Forester; Gretchen Riley, TFS; Grant Ehlen, AEP; Jared Carlson, Arbor Day Foundation; Paul Johnson, TFS; Michael Sultan, Davey Research Group.



CenterPoint Energy L to R: Tom Boggus, State Forester; Jared Carlson, Arbor Day Foundation; Rick Rankin, CenterPoint; Gary O'Neil, CenterPoint; Matt Churches, CenterPoint; Paul Johnson, TFS; Bob Maldonado, CenterPoint; Ray Davis, CenterPoint; Michael Sultan, Davey Research Group.



Oncor Electric Delivery L to R: Tom Boggus, State Forester; Jared Carlson, Arbor Day Foundation; Leslie Clark, Oncor; Jeff Quinters, Oncor; Ken Kinsey, Oncor; Gretchen Riley, TFS; Keith Brinkley, Oncor; Luke Miller, Arbor Day Foundation; Michael Sultan, Davey Research Group.

1



More TTC Photos

See lots more photos!

For many more photos and a few videos of the 2014 Texas Tree Conference see the link at the bottom of this page.

2



3



5



4



6



1. Dinner at the bridge
2. Silent auction
3. Reception with vendors and sponsors
4. Sarah Riggins, Director, EXPO Operations and Marketing with TNLA, having a talk with vendor Chris Lane of Topnotch Tree Farm
5. Taking the 50-specimen quiz
6. ISAT bookstore

More photos at:

<https://picasaweb.google.com/116982053780344052654/2104TexasTreeConferencePictures?noredirect=1>

Exhibits



I'd like to include a shout-out to all vendors & sponsors who participated in the conference, especially those who supported the silent auction and raffle with gifts! —Jim Carse

Thank you for putting in the work needed to pull off the annual tree conference. This was the first one I have attended and I thought it was very well done. I didn't have a chance to attend many presentations, but I thought the line-up was excellent. Our booth at the trade show stayed rather busy; and I came away with many new contacts. You can expect Arborjet to continue sponsoring this event. Please keep up the good work!

—Emmett Muennink, SW Regional Technical Manager, Arborjet, ISA Certified Arborist





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Mauget

Miguel Pastenes will represent ISAT at the 2015 ITCC

by Kevin Bassett, TTCC Chair



Guy LeBlanc, winner Miguel Pastenes, Steve Houser.

In concert with the 2014 ISAT convention, we held a Master's Challenge-only event in order to select the Texas chapter's climber to represent us at the 2015 ITCC to be held next March in Tampa, Florida. This competition was necessary due to the decoupling of the ITCC from the annual ISA conference. The short lead time between the ISAT conference and the 2015 ITCC made it impractical to hold a full TTCC.

The competitors were selected based on their performance at the TTCC event held last May in New Braunfels. Four of the five climbers qualified participated in this event, and a 2015 TTCC Champion was determined in the tree.

The four competitors were 2014 Champion Vicente Peña Molina, Miguel Pastenes, Otoneil Sanchez and Jimmy Prichard. Miguel prevailed and impressed with his nearly flawless climb of a huge pecan in Waco's Cameron Park. Second place was earned by an excellent climb by reigning Champ Vicente Peña Molina. Otoneil Sanchez won third place and Jimmy Prichard was fourth. Congratulations to each of these great climbers. Any one of them would have rep-

resented us well at the ITCC. Special congratulations are due to Miguel Pastenes as he climbed his way to an unprecedented 7th TTCC title! His name will be added once again to the Steve Houser Award of Excellence aka The Houser Cup. Miguel's climbing is a joy to watch as he manages to make a difficult job look effortless.

If you have not had a chance to see the TTCC please plan to join us next year when we gather to climb and compete again to select the champion to represent us when the ITCC comes to Texas in 2016! I will be posting information about the time and place for our next competition soon on the ISAT website along with the date and venue for the 2016 ITCC. Both of these events have yet to select a time and place but these decisions will be made soon and I will let you all know as soon as details are available. I hope that many of you will participate as volunteers as it takes a dedicated army of highly skilled arborists to make these events possible. It is a unique way to display the skills and care required for working aloft in trees. We reach out to the public to get our message out that getting your trees trimmed or removed (if necessary) requires a highly skilled professional. The TTCC gives us a platform to showcase those skills.

A special note of thanks goes out to our entire outstanding volunteer judges and techs who made this event run smooth as a Silky saw through wood. Please see the group photo below which shows most all of the judges, techs and competitors who participated in this event. My hat is off to each and every one of you along with my heartfelt thanks for the generous gift of your time and skills. You're the best! I look forward to seeing you at the next TTCC!!! ■



The ones who made it all happen.

Thank you, prize sponsors!

Special thanks to the following sponsors for providing the ArborMaster Climbing Kit Prize Package to the winner of our Master's Challenge climbing event held last month in Waco. The winner will represent ISAT at the 2015 ITCC next March.

The prize package includes: Helmet System with Hearing Protection, Husqvarna Axe, and Wrap Chaps provided by Husqvarna • Silky Tsurugi Curve Hand Saw • ArborMaster® Rope Friction Saver provided by Buckingham • 150' ArborMaster® Climbing Line with eye splice from Samson • OREGON® Tool Bag • Vermeer logo'd Arborwear Double Thick Pullover Sweatshirt • 50% savings for an ArborMaster® 2-Day or 3-Day Hands-On Training Module. The TTCC greatly appreciates the contributions by our prize sponsors. Please keep them in mind when making your next purchases.



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ISA Leadership Training: Wow!



Lara Schuman

Lee Evans

by Lee Evans, ISAT Treasurer and Lara Schuman, ISAT Vice President

We had the pleasure of attending the ISA Leadership Workshop in Champaign, IL this year and wow, what an experience!

Fourteen countries and the majority of chapters from the east to west coasts were represented. Some of the countries represented were Singapore, Canada, Brazil, New Zealand, Australia, Estonia, Spain, Netherlands, Mexico, Italy, Sweden, Texas and Malaysia (who is a Lumberjack—Ax'em Jacks!). It was very interesting hearing people talk about trees in different languages and getting to talk to them. Although some of the people we talked to were from the opposite side of the world, we quickly found similar interests and common issues, be it public perception, finding help, or uneducated practitioners.

We attended 2.5 days of classes covering strategies, speaking effectively, listening with intent, identifying personalities, how to lead effective meetings, identifying and understanding behavioral habits, and networking. It was really eye opening seeing the International component of ISA come together and how we are really a international association. The support of ISA headquarters is amazing. You do not realize how much work goes into the organization at this level. The staff is beyond courteous, helpful, and willing to assist us.

Thank you for allowing us to represent our membership! It was an eye opening experience.

UPCOMING EVENTS

November 3–4 and November 5–7 ArborMaster Open Enrollment Courses

Two locations in San Antonio. Nov. 3–4: Precision Tree Felling, Chain Saw Safety and Handling. Nov. 5–7: Tree Climbing Methods, Work Positioning and Best Practice.

Visit www.ArborMaster.com or call 860-429-5028.

November 5

Sun Country Landscape Conference

Network and learn more about trees. The conference will be held at the Tech2O Water Resources Learning Center, 10751 Montana Ave., El Paso. Visit the West Texas Urban Forestry Council at www.wtufc.org/ for details.

January 27 - 29, 2015

Multi-State Conference, Society of American Foresters

Texarkana Convention Center, Texarkana. Sponsored by Louisiana SAF, Ouachita SAF, and Texas SAF. Many tour opportunities, exciting presentations by key experts, and numerous SAF category 1 CFEs. Contact Eric Taylor, etaylor@tamu.edu.

February 1, 2015

Annual Tree Planting Competition

Sponsored by Houston Area Urban Forestry Council. Michael Merritt, 713-688-8931.

February 20, 2015

Emerald Ash Borer Workshop

The first workshop in Texas devoted entirely to EAB, which has been found in Southern Arkansas about three counties from Texas. This devastating pest has also been found to attack other species in the ash family such as Fringe-tree (*Chionanthus* spp.) Workshop sponsored by the Houston Area Urban Forestry Council. Michael Merritt, 713-688-8931.

Harvesting pine cones for reforestation

by James Tuttle, Tree Loving Care

Generally, when Texans think of the forest and forest health projects, they think of Lufkin, Lumberton or the Big Thicket, not Big Bend or anywhere in the Chihuahuan Desert. And, when folks from those areas talk about drought, they mean it hasn't rained that week. In the desert, we might mean it hasn't rained this year. Marfa did go 360 days without measurable precipitation in this drought.

This drought may be broken. We hope and pray that it is. The area around Fort Davis has had pretty good rain for the last year. We have had enough rain to still be in the Chihuahuan Desert. Many trees were lost during the drought and the resultant fires. The grass has come back and the trees will, too . . . in a few decades.

TFS and TLC to the rescue!!! The Texas A&M Forest Service contracted with Tree Loving Care to harvest pine cones from ponderosa pines in Fort Davis to be sent to Louisiana for seed extraction. Then the seeds will be delivered to the TFS West Texas Nursery in Idalou, Texas, near Lubbock, to grow seedlings to reforest areas in the Davis Mountains. Trees were selected in Fort Davis due to poor cone production in the mountains. The trees selected were transplanted many years ago from the local areas into town, maintaining the local gene pool. ■

Photo: Bob Dillard, Jeff Davis County Mountain Dispatch



Technical Aspects of Tree Appraisal

Earn CEUs with this 4-part Online Course

Tree appraisals play an important role in tree inventories, real-estate transactions, plant condemnation actions, insurance claims, and more. But, what exactly is involved in establishing a correct appraisal?

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Brian Gilles, RCA #418
Lisa Hammer, RCA #333

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TUFC Urban Forestry Micro Grant Program

by Paul Johnson

If you share the goal of engaging communities and expanding support for sustainable urban and community forest management in Texas, then you will want to learn more about the Texas Urban Forestry Council's *Urban Forest Micro Grant Program*. In addition to increasing the effectiveness and the awareness of TUFC, this program was created to promote the benefits and the value of our Texas urban and community forest resources, and recognize the contributions to public infrastructure and human health. Funding for the *Urban Forest Micro Grant Program* comes from the percentage of proceeds that TUFC receives from the state's Texas Tree License Plate Program.

One \$500 micro grant will be awarded each month, with applications due by the 15th day of the previous month. There is a minimum 1:1 match requirement that can be satisfied with cash or by documented in-kind services. Some of the criteria used in evaluating each grant application include the group's involvement with regional urban forestry councils and participation in programs such as Tree City USA and Tree Line USA. Consideration also is given to the use of partnerships and innovation or unique qualities that help differentiate a proposed project.



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In the first month we received thirteen applications, and we are really excited about the potential success of this program. The first two grant recipients were:



1. City of Frisco, Texas. Frisco has embraced the growing movement of urban agriculture by planting a fruit tree nursery. The produce will be made available to local families facing economic challenges. In addition to the micro grant from TUFC, Frisco will utilize donations from tree giveaway events to fund this project. The City is partnering with Frisco Family Services, Frisco Urban Forestry Board, and is being supported by both the Departments of Development Services and Parks and Recreation.

2. City of Missouri City, Texas. Missouri City has cultivated a relationship with CenterPoint Energy and is helping to create awareness of the potential conflicts between trees and overhead electric utilities. The micro grant from TUFC will be used to help fund the second phase of the *Right Tree Trail Arboretum*. In partnership with CenterPoint Energy and Missouri City Green, the City is creating a live demonstration arboretum that promotes the important message of Right Tree Right Place. This project not only is innovative in how it shares the message of appropriate tree selection, but also highlights the value of local municipalities working together with electric utilities.



As excited as we are about the initial interest in this program, we want to see more applications and we need your help in sharing information about the program. In addition to promoting this program directly, we also encourage you to participate in the Texas Tree License Plate Program. The success of the Urban Forest Micro Grant Program is dependent on participation in the license plate program. Visit texasurbantrees.org for more information on both programs, and thank you for helping promote urban and community forestry in Texas! ■



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Revenue from the Texas Urban Forestry Council license plate helps fund the TUFC Micro-grant Program

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See the video





EDITOR'S NOTE by Oscar Mestas

This year's Texas Tree Conference brought about a few new firsts for me. First I would like to give a great big THANK YOU to **Cory Cason**. Cory works for Personal Touch Tree Service in East Dallas. Cory helped me out in a time of need: On Thursday night at the hotel parking lot I discovered I had my first flat on my Ford Escape. As many of you know, these new vehicles are all different in placement of the spare and tools and where to place the jack. I discovered I'd placed the jack in the wrong place after I removed the flat tire and the vehicle was not jacked up high enough. I had maxed out the jack height and I could not put on the donut spare.

While I was trying to figure out how to fix my predicament, Cory stepped up and offered assistance; he drove his truck up and shined his headlights (I did not have a flash light) into the working area, pulled out his larger jack and saved the day. So the moral of the story is an old SFA Jack can learn new tricks from a younger SFA Jack in the proper placement of a vehicle jack. Also thanks to **Matt Weaver** with the TFS office in Houston for taking my vehicle to get my tire fixed while I was busy being the A/V person for the Commercial track sessions Friday morning.

Other firsts: We had a new all-time attendance record. The bookstore had its highest level of sales. It was the first time to have our networking get-together beverage-and-fried-chicken dinner at a new location on the old bridge, and it was the first time many of us had the opportunity to toss tortillas from the bridge.

Once again, we had a successful conference thanks to both the committee and to all of you that attended. Let's do this again next year, and if some of your compadres missed it this year invite them next year. As always, please send your newsletter articles, comments, questions or suggestions to me at omestas@tfs.tamu.edu



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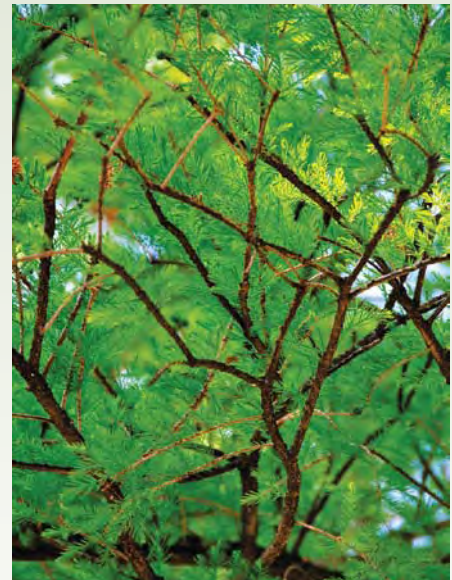
What's the Big IDea?

Can you identify this native Texas tree?



If you know this tree, correctly identify it on our facebook page. If you don't know it, check the page for the answer in a few days!
Hint: Remotely similar to neighbors.

September tree: bald cypress



Juan Guerra, senior horticulturist for the City of San Antonio, correctly identified our September BigIdea tree: bald cypress, *Taxodium distichum*.