



In the Shade

Arborist of the Year

Russell Peters, a consulting arborist with Arborilogical Services, Inc. was the recipient of the Arborist of the Year award. Following is a little bit of history on him.

Russell was first nominated as a board director at the 1989 Kerrville meeting. Chapter membership was about 194 at the time. Russell was assigned to the committee "Out-of-State" membership; he was probably just trying to get ISAT to cover travel! Really, it was because at the time Oklahoma, Arkansas and Louisiana did not have chapters and International suggested we reach out to

them, and it was possible that our Chapter was going to also include those states. During that time he also worked on a committee that attempted to unite the different groups within the "Green Industry" called the Texas Landscape Council as well as helped organize the program for the 1989 conference in Arlington and worked on the 1991 conference in Austin helping to coordinate vendors.

In 1991, certification was new to Texas and Russell worked to help start the program. The first exam was offered at the Oak Wilt Symposium in Austin June 22, 1992. If

you wanted to buy a study guide, you had to contact Russell and send him \$65 as a member or \$95 as a non-member.



In October of 1992, Russell became the VP of ISAT and was on the membership committee. No doubt his long-time

Certification News

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has officially approved the ISA's *Certified Arborist*, *Utility Specialist* and *Certified Tree Worker Climber Specialist* exams. These exams, in conjunction with specific education and experience

requirements, lead to individuals being certified in specific ISA disciplines. The Department of Veteran Affairs has formally agreed to pay for ISA certification costs for qualified U.S. military veterans and eligible

persons. The ISA certifications exams have been approved as legitimate and valid exams, which will lead to more successful job opportunities for interested veterans.

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Arborist of the Year *continued from pg. 1*

pal Jim Houser, the ISAT president, talked him into this.

In 1994, Russell is president-elect and works on the appraisal committee for the ISAT in the creating, printing, selling and distribution of the Texas Supplement to the Guide for Plant Appraisal. Again, if you want this document, you have to contact Russell and send him \$5.

During his presidency, he helped organized the 1995 conference, presented a scholarship, went to the state's Arbor Day celebration and worked on a committee to hire an Executive Director for the ISAT board. In October in Houston at the conference, Russell handed over the gavel and became past president.

In 1996 as Past-President he works on the Awards committee, the Nominating

committee, the group that worked on hiring an ED, and you still have to go through him for the Supplement and the Certification Guide at this point. He eventually becomes the point person to whom ED applicants submit their applications.

In 1997, Russell is still back on the board as a director and again in 1999.

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Flying Spiders *Dr. Mike Merchant, TAMU Dallas*

In recent days numerous reports have been received of mysterious gossamer streams hanging from shrubs, trees and car antennae. Contrary to stories you might hear, this phenomenon is neither evidence of biological warfare nor is it unusual.

According to entomologists, if anything is unusual about this event it may be that it is happening a little later this year than normal.

"Spider ballooning is a relatively common seasonal event that occurs in the spring and fall months," says spider expert Allen Dean of Texas A&M University. "Normally this occurs in Texas in May and September. Apparently September's peak was delayed this year until cooler conditions prevailed."

"Spiders use their silk as a way to disperse," said Dean. A variety of spiders use their silk as a simple parachute to carry them from one place to another. Light winds and rising thermals favor spider dispersal in this manner. The spider stands facing the air current from the top of a grass blade or other platform. Then, [standing on tip-toe and with its abdomen pointed toward the sky](#) it releases a stream of silk from its spinnerettes. When the wind currents catch the threads the spiders release their launching pad and off they go.

Normally it is the smaller adults and immatures of larger species that balloon. When millions of spiders are doing this at the same time it is not unusual for flying silk to become noticeable on lawns, trees, and even getting caught in hair.

Despite the logical scientific explanation, people never cease to speculate about the origins of the mysterious floating threads. According to Dean, during WWII large mats of orange sheets fell from the sky leading people to think they were experiencing some new type of biological warfare. Callers to Texas A&M following 9/11 wondered if the silken threads adorning trees were all part of some vast terrorist plan.

The simple explanation does not take away from the amazing ingenuity of spiders in their quest to spread and

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Certification News

Continued from pg. 1

The number of certified arborists continues to grow. Certification has been shown to increase job opportunities and income for arborists.

If you are a U.S. veteran or are interested in any of ISA certification exams, please contact ISA at 217-355-9411, through the internet at www.isa-arbor.com, or email us at cert@isa-arbor.com.

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Arborist of the Year

Continued from page 3

In 2000 he becomes the Liaison to International and helps out at the Jamboree with the Scholarship fundraising events.

Once again in 2001 he works on the committee to develop a 2nd approximation of the Supplement.

In 2002 he is on a committee to work

on the upcoming conference. In May 2002 he is renominated for VP and becomes VP in 2003. He works to plan the conference for 2003.

In 2003, the Supplement comes out and he works again on the conference for 2004.

In 2004 he is president-elect and serves his presidency in 2005. One of the things he did this year was teach a class at the Southwest Parks and Recreation Training Institute's Arborist school on

tree disease diagnosis and treatment. He also hosted the Case Studies in Arboriculture session at the 2004 conference.

Russell's presidency began in full swing again in 2005 where he once again started over working on things like 2005 conference.

This is only a summary of things he has done with and for ISAT. It seems like he has worked on every committee since he began in 1989!

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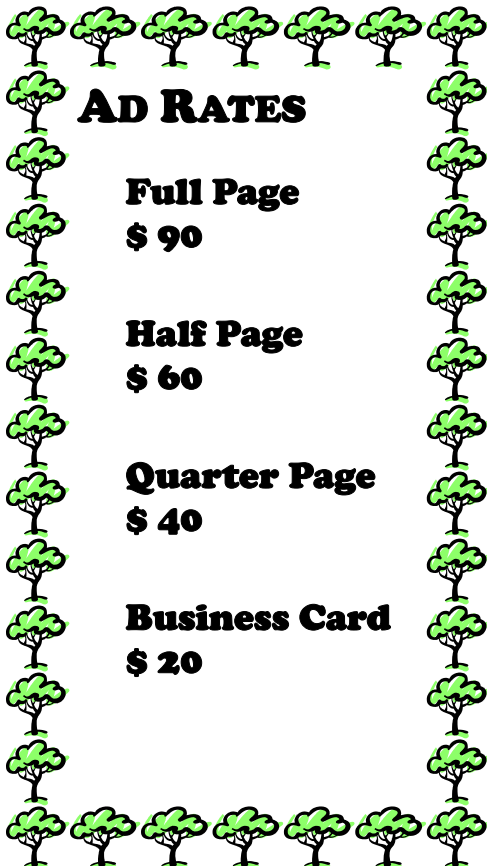
**Randy Gray at
1-985-419-1116**

Flying Spiders cont'd

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colonize new sites. The nineteenth century naturalist Charles Darwin noted ballooning spiders landing on ship up to 60 miles off the coast of South America. Modern biologists have collected spiders floating on air currents at altitudes over 10,000 feet.

- For more information about spiders around the home and their control, see <http://tcebookstore.org/pubinfo.cfm?pubid=252>



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Houston's Regional Forest: *Structure • Functions • Values*

From the region's pine forests and bottomland hardwoods to the street and yard trees that grace our neighborhoods, each tree in the eight-county region surrounding the city of Houston is an integral part of the region's tree cover. ***Houston's Regional Forest: Structure • Functions • Values*** represents the latest effort to quantify the green infrastructure of the region and is the first report of its kind in Texas. Local leaders can use this new information to help craft effective programs and policies that will sustain tree cover in the region for generations to come. A sample of the findings is included here:

Major Findings & Conclusions

Houston's regional forest provides impressive value to its citizens:

- The replacement cost of the region's 663 million trees is valued at over \$205 billion.
- Trees store \$721 million worth of carbon.
- Trees generate \$456 million worth of environmental benefits annually.
- Trees save \$131 million in residential energy costs and avoided power plant emissions each year.
- Houston's trees remove over 60,000 tons of air pollution per year.

Large trees and urban trees have greater roles in producing forest benefits:

- Only 30 percent of the region's trees are five inches in diameter or greater, but they generate over 60 percent of total environmental benefits.
- Very large trees—20 inches diameter or greater—contribute 90 percent of the \$205 billion replacement value of the regional forest.
- Urban trees work harder: the average urban tree stores 75% more carbon and has a 76% higher replacement value than the average rural tree.

Land use change and invasive tree species pose significant threats to the future extent and composition of the regional forest:

- Land cover in 2000 consisted of roughly one-half **Agriculture/Range**, one-quarter **Forest**, and one-quarter **Urban** cover classes.
- Between 1992 and 2000, **Forest** cover classes declined by 17 percent—a decrease of 486 square miles—resulting in a net loss of over 78 million trees.
- Chinese tallow is now the single most common tree species in the region, at 23 percent of all trees.

About the Report

Houston's Regional Forest report represents a three-year collaborative effort between federal, state, and local researchers to measure and evaluate the tree and forest resources of the region. The report is organized to provide answers in three categories and make useful recommendations for policy-makers. It describes:

Forest structure includes tree species, diversity, size, health, leaf area, biomass, and other elements that make up the "regional forest":

- Data collected from 332 field plots throughout the eight counties surrounding the city of Houston: Harris, Waller, Montgomery, Liberty, Chambers, Galveston, Brazoria, and Fort Bend.
- Region mapped by residential, commercial, forested, and agricultural areas.

Forest functions are the environmental services that trees and forests perform:

- Urban FORest Effects (UFORE) model used to quantify air pollution removal, carbon sequestration, carbon storage, and energy savings.
- Functions not included in analysis: habitat for wildlife, stormwater management and flood prevention.

Forest values are the quantified dollar values of forest functions and structure:

- Functional values quantified: air pollution removal, carbon sequestration, and energy savings.
- Structural values quantified: carbon storage and the replacement value of the forest.
- Values not addressed: mental health benefits, property value increases, and floodwater retention .

The full report is available on **October 24, 2005**. For a printed copy, call the Texas Forest Service (713-688-8931 or 979-458-6650) or the Houston Advanced Research Center (281-364-4007); for the web version, go to

www.HoustonRegionalForest.org or <http://texasforests-service.tamu.edu>.

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Concho Valley Certification Training & Exam

San Angelo, Texas

Beginning on January 6, 2006, the Texas Forest Service will host a four week in-depth training series in San Angelo that will assist participants in becoming ISA Certified Arborists and enhance the level of tree care in Texas communities. Each session will deal with specific subjects related to tree care and the Certified Arborist exam, which will be held at the conclusion of the series on February 3, 2006.

A similar course was held in the Midland/Odessa area this spring and was very successful. Almost half of the attendees to the spring workshop are now ISA Certified Arborists. Registration for the series includes all four training sessions,

membership in ISA and ISAT, the ISA Certification Study Guide and the ISA Certified Arborist Exam.

The sessions will be held Friday's in

January from 10am-3pm and include lunch. Registration deadline will be December 16, 2005. Final details are still to be determined. For further questions you may contact Eric Copeland, with the Texas Forest Service in Abilene.

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