



# In the Shade

Vol. 30, No. 3  
November 2006

## Record Attendance at TTC



Over 300 attended the Texas Tree Conference at the Round Rock Marriott October 4–6 and heard from the experts on “What Works For Texas.” The conference this year was two complete days of presentations plus two pre-conference workshops. Attendees earned up to 16 ISA Certified Arborist CEUs and 17.5 SAF Certified Forester CEUs!

There were two pre-conference workshops, one on tree protection ordinances in Texas and the other on developing Firewise communities. The first included municipal foresters and employees from around the state exchanging ideas and listening to presentations. The Firewise workshop explored the history of fire in Texas and how to better help communities prepare themselves.

The conference itself included presentations on Marketing and Ad Response from Kevin Tuerff of Enviromedia and J. Davis of J. Davis Tree Care. Pat Wentworth gave an interesting talk on How to Diagnose Tree Problems followed by concurrent sessions Thursday afternoon. The afternoon sessions included Tree Injection, Pesticides: How They Work, Municipal Forestry in ISA, Tree Inventories and Implementing Urban Forestry Policy.

The conference concluded on Friday with the always entertaining Dr. Todd Watson speaking on Hazard

Tree Dynamics. Kerry Kellum of Horton Tree also spoke to this topic. And finally the afternoon included presentations on Cabling & Bracing, Lightning Protection, Fertilization, Organic Tree Care, Sales and the ISA Hispanic Committee update.

A special thanks to our sponsors and exhibitors for their involvement. This year’s conference was one of the best ever and was well attended.

If you attended, please go to the ISAT website ([www.isatexas.com](http://www.isatexas.com)) and fill out a 2006 Texas Tree Conference Evaluation Survey. Your feedback will be helpful to the conference organizers. If you did not make it, hopefully you will be able to in 2007!

–Courtney Blevins

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# President's Message *by Gene Gehring*

Wow! What a conference. More than 300 people came to see Pat hand me the gavel as I officially became president of ISAT. OK so maybe it was the quality lineup of speakers or just for the CEUs. There are now more than 500 certified arborists in Texas, and Pat Wentworth has already lined up six exams for the coming year. At least one more exam will be scheduled during the 2007 annual conference.

The upcoming year is going to be busy. The second of the oak wilt specialist workshops was held on Oct. 27-28, and the third will be held in the Dallas-Fort Worth area in May 2007. John Giedraitis is serving as chair of the Education Services committee (formerly Workshops committee) and is planning several workshops. For more information about upcoming workshops, see the ISAT website at

[www.isatexas.com](http://www.isatexas.com). If you have an idea for a workshop or would like to assist with one in your area, contact John at [jpg@tfs.tamu.edu](mailto:jpg@tfs.tamu.edu).

As you are aware, ISAT will host the second National Oak Wilt Symposium in Austin in June. It features an outstanding lineup of researchers from around the country. Mark your calendars now, and plan to attend. Go to [www.texasoakwilt.org](http://www.texasoakwilt.org) for more information. The last time a symposium of this caliber was held was 15 years ago.

Keith Brown is chairing the Texas Tree Climbing championships again this year. He is ahead of the curve by already having a committee together. They will make a decision soon on exactly when and where. If you are not a participant, please consider volunteering to assist with this event.

The TTCC requires a lot of volunteers to be successful.

Planning for the 28<sup>th</sup> Texas Tree Conference is in the preliminary stages. We have been alternating between Waco and Austin or the DFW Metroplex. We are considering holding the 2007 conference in Fort Worth or Grand Prairie. If you have a strong opinion either way, drop me an email at [genegehring@hotmail.com](mailto:genegehring@hotmail.com). While you're at it, tell me what you thought about the 2006 conference. Did you like having 15 speakers rather than one big name speaker? How about the two full days of presentations? (Mark Duff still had almost 100 people who stayed until the very end.)

I'm looking forward to serving as this year's president. I can be reached by email at [genegehring@hotmail.com](mailto:genegehring@hotmail.com) or phone (817) 307-0967. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns. Remember almost everything within ISAT is accomplished through volunteers putting forth the effort.



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## Join Fort Worth's Forestry Team

Positions now available: Forestry Field Operations Crewleader \$15.46 per hour, and Forestry Field Operations Supervisor \$46,339 annually. For more information and to apply visit Fort Worth's website at [www.fortworthgov.org](http://www.fortworthgov.org) or call City Forester, Melinda Adams at 817-871-5705.

Tree workers/climber positions available with the City of Fort Worth, starting January 1st. Positions will be posted as Arborists on the City of Fort Worth's website at [www.fortworthgov.org](http://www.fortworthgov.org) in November. For more information call City Forester, Melinda Adams at 817- 871-5705.

# Congratulations, Award Winners!

## ARBORIST OF THE YEAR

### Jim Rooni

Jim Rooni has held a variety of professional positions in both the public and private forestry sectors, and has served in numerous capacities on forestry advisory boards and committees. Currently he serves as Chief Regional Forester with the Texas Forest Service, overseeing program delivery and field operations for the Forest Resource Development and Sustainable Forestry Programs in Central and West Texas. He and his staff are working in close collaboration with TAMU faculty and the ISAT in the development and delivery of a state-wide oak wilt certification course for ISA Certified Arborists.



L to r: Texas Forest Service Associate Director Tom Boggus, Arborist of the Year Jim Rooni, and State Forester Jim Hull.

## DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

### Mark Peterson



Mark recently left the Texas Forest Service after 23 years with the agency. Mark was one of the first TFS Urban Foresters and spent that entire time managing the Alamo Region, based out of San Antonio. His experience will be greatly missed.

Mark Peterson

## PROJECT AWARDS

### Old Settler's Park Tree Mitigation Project IKEA and BWM Group

The award recognizes Swedish home furnishings retailer IKEA and BWM Group, landscape architects and planners, for planning and implementing a 600-tree mitigation project in Round Rock's Old Settler's Park. The planting, which took six weeks, equals six years of typical Arbor Day tree plantings and makes an immediate and dramatic improvement in the park's beauty and shade.



L to r: Jeff Ostranus, Store Manager, IKEA- Round Rock; Brent A. Baker, Senior Project Manger, BWM Group; David Buzzell, Park Development Manager, Round Rock PARD; Tim Bargainer, Principal, BWM Group.

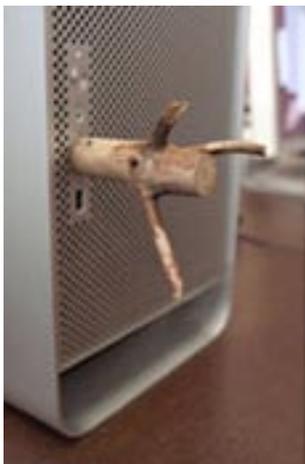
### *Saving the Caswell Oak* Austin Tree Specialists Patrick Wentworth, owner

The Caswell Oak is a live oak (*Quercus fusiformis*) growing on a difficult site. With most of its roots cut to allow for construction of condominiums, the tree was in danger of falling over. A heroic effort allowed the tree to be stabilized mechanically. On May 2, 2006 the tree was cabled and on May 4, Austin received one of the worst windstorms in its history. The Caswell Oak withstood the storm and continues to stand. It faces an uphill battle as the arborists try to help the tree re-establish its root system.



Patrick Wentworth

# Cool Tools *by Patrick Wentworth*



Almost everyone has a computer nowadays. The advent of flash drives has allowed us to move information around much easier than the “old days” when we had to use 1.4 MB floppy disks.

The latest innovation of the flash drive is the “true Memory stick.”

While those who have a drill press could make their own, those less mechanically inclined can now order Memory Sticks from a Netherlands company called Oooms (<http://www.oooms.nl/>).

Bring a little nature into your office space with these unique USB 2.0

memory sticks. Made with uniquely shaped pieces of wood that have been hand picked for their beauty and then transformed into 256MB, 512MB or 1GB storage devices, they’re compatible with Windows, Linux and Mac systems. **Wooden memory Sticks, \$57-\$90.**

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## Tree Ordinance Workshop

The October 4 Texas Tree Ordinance Workshop was a great addition to the Texas Tree Conference this year. Almost 100 people attended. Arborists, foresters, landscape architects, urban planners, and tree board members came from throughout the state to learn and network with other professionals.

The speakers discussed issues such as tree mitigation, tree surveys, and preservation standards from four diverse cities in Texas.

Thanks to the volunteers who assisted, and to the speakers, all of whom donated valuable time to make this event a success. And especially thanks to those attendees who volunteered to promote future workshops.

Please visit the ISAT website at [www.isatexas.com](http://www.isatexas.com) for more information on the workshop (survey responses, speaker Q & A) and to volunteer with the ISAT Municipal Working Group.

—Jim Carse.

## Position: Arborist/Representative

The Southwest Division of the F. A. Bartlett Tree Expert Company is seeking a person with a high level of customer service, technical, sales, and communication skills to fill a position in the Austin or Dallas area. This is an unusual career-level opportunity in a highly successful company. Applicants should be positive, enthusiastic, goal-oriented, and have excellent time management skills. The Bartlett Company provides the highest level of training and technical support in the industry supported by the Bartlett Tree Research Laboratories.

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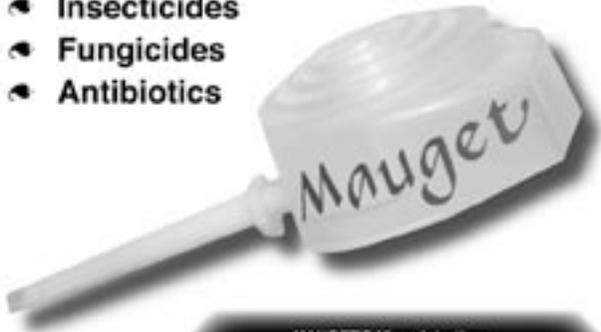
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## FOR SALE

After 35 years in the tree care and pest control business in northeast Tarrant County, Texas, it's time for me to "sit under the tree in the shade and relax."

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Inquiries can be made to  
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## ISA & Student Members

*By Cicilia Oliver, ISA/SAC Student Representative,  
Tarleton State University*

The ISA Student Activities Committee (ISA/SAC) organizes, facilitates and participates in activities geared toward getting students involved. The mission statement explains their function as "promoting student issues and facilitating the development of student-focused programs and resources within ISA."

The committee representation consists of students from two- and four-year schools, instructors, ISA board members, educational administrators and ISA staff contact Jessica Lum. More information can be found on the ISA student web site, which is still a work in progress and is one of the primary projects the ISA/SAC is currently working on:

(<http://www.isa-arbor.com/students/students.aspx>).

The committee would like to be made aware of all student activities including scholarships and intern postings, even if they are focused on a particular school or area.

The ISA/SAC helps students in numerous ways, including:

- Introducing them to the professionals in their particular field of the green industry;
- Helping them narrow down a field or area to focus their studies;
- Introducing green industry students to arboriculture as a profession;
- Providing affordable educational materials;
- Providing a source for contacts that can may help students with further education or locating jobs or business opportunities;
- Providing discounts on conventions, seminars and workshops, and assistance with flight and hotel costs through travel scholarships;
- Providing the opportunity to be in a professional setting and to interact with professionals at meetings and events;
- Offering academic scholarships;
- Encouraging the students' interest in arboriculture by becoming ISA members;
- Letting students know there is more to a career than just showing up for work everyday. It can be fun at times!

SOMEONE'S SITTING IN THE  
SHADE TODAY BECAUSE SOMEONE  
PLANTED A TREE A LONG TIME  
AGO.

—WARREN BUFFETT



# INDUSTRY CALENDAR

## **November 9 - 11, 2006**

**TCI EXPO 2006** will be held at the Baltimore Convention Center with pre-conference seminars starting on Wednesday, Nov. 8, 2006. Contact TCIA at [www.tcia.org](http://www.tcia.org) for more information.

## **December 3-6, 2006**

**ASCA Annual Conference** –Silverado Country Club & Resort Napa, CA. For more information contact ASCA at [www.asca-consultants.org/conferences.html](http://www.asca-consultants.org/conferences.html).

## **January 12–13 and January 26–27, 2007**

**Arboriculture 101** – Round Rock, TX. A four-day short course to help you get ready for the Certified Arborist Exam or just brush up on your skills. Taught by Dr. Todd Watson. For more information, visit [www.isatexas.com](http://www.isatexas.com).

## **January 27**

**First Certification Examination of 2007** – 301 W. Bagdad Rd., Bldg. 2, Round Rock, TX, Cut-off date for registration is January 10. See page 10 for the entire 2007 schedule of certification tests. Visit the ISAT website ([www.isatexas.com](http://www.isatexas.com)) for details and registration forms.

## **February 18–23, 2007**

**2007 Municipal Forester Institute** – Lake Arrowhead, CA. Registrations are due November 20, 2006. Municipal & community foresters and arborists are encouraged to be a part of this elite training event. Learn leadership and management tools of administration, coalition building, planning, policy, public relations, and risk management, all in a comprehensive week-long intensive professional educational growth opportunity. For details contact: <http://www.urban-forestry.com>

## **February 20-23, 2007**

**2007 ASCA Consulting Academy** – Hyatt Regency Hotel, Sacramento, CA. [www.asca-consultants.org/conferences.html](http://www.asca-consultants.org/conferences.html).

## **May (date TBA)**

**Identification and Management of Oak Wilt Workshop** – DFW Metroplex (location TBA). Third workshop for ISA Certified Arborists on how to identify and manage oak wilt. Registration will begin April 1, 2007. Watch for more information on the ISAT website, [www.isatexas.com](http://www.isatexas.com).

## **June 5, 6, & 7, 2007**

**National Oak Wilt Symposium** – The Texas Chapter ISA is sponsoring the Second National Oak Wilt Symposium. at the Hilton Austin. (The first was in 1992.) Speakers from throughout the nation will discuss the latest information about the spread and control of oak wilt. Information will be sent to all ISAT members and others around the country who are interested in oak wilt. Registration will be limited. Be sure to sign up early. This event may not come around for another 15 years! Learn more at [www.isatexas.com](http://www.isatexas.com).

## **July 28 – August 1, 2007**

**ISA's 83<sup>rd</sup> Annual Conference and Trade Show** – Honolulu, HI. Stay tuned.

# Scenes from the Conference

John Davis of J. Davis Tree Care Solutions, speaks on marketing your tree care business. ▶

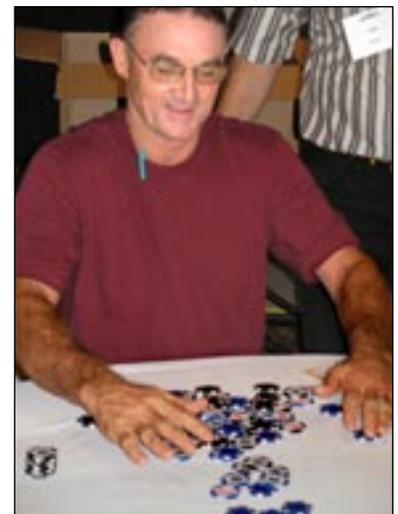


▲ Exhibitors set up in the main conference lobby just outside the meeting rooms, assuring them of constant traffic. ▶



▼ Texas Hold'em Fundraiser

Robert is the big winner and loads up with chips and prizes. ▶



## In the Right Place at the Right Time

The last two installments of *Climbing Lines* addressed the importance of being within an arm's length of a branch in order to maximize the quality of your removal cut. This is easy enough when you're in the interior of a tree. But what about *waaayyy* out there, within a few feet of the branch ends?

Being tied in allows the climber to distribute his weight between the tie-in point and the branch he is standing on. The higher the tie-in point, the farther out on the branch one can safely go. It seems to me that in northern U.S. trees, a good, high central tie-in is more commonly available than I usually find in central Texas, where most of my pruning is done on live oaks, which are often at least as wide as they are tall. This is where I find a lanyard particularly valuable.

The lanyard should be considered a mandatory piece of climbing equipment, since ANSI standards require climbers to always have an alternate method of tying in available, and to be tied in at all times (Z.133 9.1.2 and 9.1.3). The lanyard serves both these purposes. But the lanyard has evolved from just a short piece of rope with a snap on each end into a very versatile tool, and is nowadays more frequently used as a positioning device than just something to keep one secure between tie-ins. This allows a climber to disperse his weight among three branches, improving his reach even more.

Now almost all lanyards are adjustable length. The Sherrill Arborist Supply catalog is a great place to view (and purchase) a wide selection of them.

The original adjustable style of an eight-foot, three-strand rope with two snaps is still available, although I don't know anyone who uses one anymore. Much more common are lanyards that can extend to 15 feet or more. And instead of adjusting with a climbing hitch, hardware such as the microcender is now commonly used.

I used a microcender for years, on a half-inch 16 strand, but I found that it was just a hair too small for this line, and I didn't like the bulk. When lines of less than half-inch became "legal"



(they must comply with breaking strength minimums) I switched to a system that allowed me to have 16 feet of lanyard with less weight and bulk. It's called a "two in one," and it gives me a third way of securing myself. These can be purchased pre-made through suppliers, but I like to make my own stuff whenever I can. It's cheaper, and I can customize. Mine has 5/16 diameter line tied to a flat aluminum snap on each end with a double fisherman's (although a buntline is also a good termination knot). A "hip prussik" is attached to the line, creating two lanyards in one. It allows me to ascend without having

to use my climbing line until I reach my final destination.

This is another example of old things becoming new again (like "traditional tooth" hand saws), as this style of lanyard reverts to adjusting via a hitch. One problem with some mechanical adjusters, like the microcender, is that you cannot lengthen the lanyard while it is under tension. Newer devices, like the grillion or the ART Positioner, do allow such adjustment, but in my opinion, all these devices have three significant drawbacks: bulk, cost,

and the fact that they are mechanical. In my mind that makes them harder to inspect for safety, and more prone to failure.

Two-time world tree climbing champion Mark Chisholm of New Jersey also prefers a rope hitch adjustment for his lanyard. He does not prefer the two in one type, however. He says that he rarely finds the need for it. But in the Northeast, trees are typically much larger, and the space between

branches is much greater, making a "lanyard ascent" impractical. Mark uses a VT style hitch, tied to and tended by one of his hip D-rings, to adjust his lanyard. This works best on saddles with small hip D's, like the Buckingham component style saddles, so the hitch won't invert through the D-ring.

Whichever type you choose, any lanyard will allow you to get in close enough to make the perfect cut. Making it, however, is up to you. Climb safe.

*The author owns and operates Arbor Vitae Tree Care and has been in the tree care business for 30 years.*

# Certification Corner *by Pat Wentworth*

## Texas Forest Service/ ISAT Oak Wilt Specialist Certification



ISA Texas and the Texas Forest Service have teamed up to train ISA Certified Arborists to become oak wilt specialists.

Thus far two classes have been held – one in San Antonio in June and one in Austin in October. Texas now has over 90 Certified Oak Wilt Specialists.

ISA Texas and the Texas Forest Service will conduct the next Certified Oak Wilt Specialist training for ISA Certified Arborists in the Dallas/Ft. Worth Area in early May of 2007. The class will be intensive training for oak wilt identification and treatment. Classes will run for 8 hours each day and ISA CEUs for Certified Arborists and BCMAs will be available for attendees.

At the end of the course, each attendee will receive an Texas Oak Wilt Certification number and will be put on a preferred vendor list ([www.texasoakwilt.org](http://www.texasoakwilt.org)).

Stay tuned to the ISAT newsletter or check the web site ([www.isatexas.com](http://www.isatexas.com)) for the exact date, location and times. The class size will be limited to 60 people. Registration will be on a first come/ first serve basis. Certified Arborists only for this course.

### Don't Forget

... to go to the ISAT website ([www.isatexas.com](http://www.isatexas.com)) and fill out a 2006 Texas Tree Conference Evaluation Survey. Register your opinions on all the conference events, plus suggest topics for next year.

## Congratulations to the Newest Certified Arborists in Texas

The following became Certified Arborists on October 4, 2006:

Micah Burns  
Thomas Carey  
Kyle Franklin  
John Heallen  
Mathew Keller  
Miles Lefler  
Neville Mann  
Joe Marmolejo  
Micahel Mauer

Todd Miller  
Wes Moorehead  
Luke Phillips  
José Rodriguez  
Corey Ruff  
Matthew Stanger  
Kevin Swafford  
Ben Thomas  
Jason Traweek  
Rachel Zammit-Hagan

Additionally, the following received their Municipal Specialist Certification:

Mark Baker  
Neviticus Donnelly  
Markus Smith

## 2007 Certification Test Dates

Date	Location	Check In	Application Cut Off Date
Jan. 27, 2007	Round Rock, TX <i>301 W. Bagdad Rd., Bldg. 2</i>	5:00 pm	Jan. 10, 2007
Feb. 3, 2007	Humble, TX <i>Mercer Arboretum 22306 Aldine Westfield Rd.</i>	8:30 am	Jan. 17, 2007
March 29, 2007	Round Rock, TX <i>301 W. Bagdad Rd., Bldg. 2</i>	12:00 noon	Mar. 12, 2007
April 20, 2007	San Antonio, TX <i>CPS Energy Management Training Center 4514 Frank Bryant Lane</i>	12:00 noon	April 3, 2007
June 15, 2007	Fort Worth, TX <i>Tarrant County College Northwest Campus 4801 Marine Creek Parkway</i>	TBA	May 31, 2007
Aug. 30, 2007	Round Rock, TX <i>301 W. Bagdad Rd., Bldg. 2</i>	12:00 noon	Aug. 7, 2007
Oct. (TBA), 2007	TBA	TBA	TBA

Check the ISAT website – [www.isatexas.com](http://www.isatexas.com) – for updates. Lead Proctors are: Pat Wentworth for Round Rock, James Koenig for San Antonio, and Dave Hintz for Humble. Thanks everyone for your support of the Certification Program.

–Pat Wentworth, ISA Texas Certification Liaison

# Arboriculture 101 Coming in January



Get ready to take the Certified Arborist Exam or just brush up on your tree skills. Arboriculture 101 is a four-day short course designed to provide practitioners with an in-depth knowledge of how to care for urban trees.

The course will be given January 12–13 and January 26 – 27, 2007 in Round Rock, TX. Details will be posted on [www.isatexas.com](http://www.isatexas.com).

Dr. W. Todd Watson, an ISA Board-Certified Master Arborist and Montague Teaching Scholar, integrates research and practical experience into a university style arboriculture course built around the 12 domains of the Certified Arborist Exam.

Former students have responded that the “quality of teaching was excellent,” that the course was “very informative,” and that they appreciated the “attention to real world issues.”

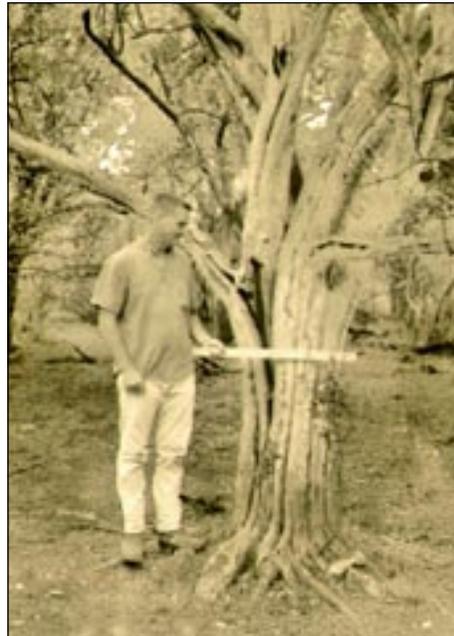
Course attendees routinely score significantly higher on the Certified Arborist Exam than the national average.

## Still Nominating After All These Years. . .

The search for the biggest trees in Texas is too big a task for one person or even one group. That’s why we depend on others to find big trees and tell us about them. Some are tree owners who are rightfully proud of their own trees, but others are plant aficionados whose sharp eyes spot something unusual wherever they go around the state, or even their hometown.

One such gentleman is Bill Graves of Uvalde, TX. Bill is listed as the nominator of two national champion trees – Texas Persimmon (*Diospyros texana*) and Evergreen Sumac (*Rhus virens*) – and has been nominating trees for over 40 years! Thanks, Bill, and thanks to all the big tree nominators who keep their eyes open for the next big find.

–Pete Smith



Bill Graves measures the national champion Texas Persimmon in 1965.



Forty years later, Bill Graves stands next to the former national champ Wright Catclaw in 2006.

### Job Posting

**The City of Pflugerville  
Job Posting**

**Job Title: Arborist  
Job Number: 20-400-061002**

**Full-time with great benefits  
Salary: \$31,693-\$39,616 (annualized)**

Be a part of the future. Join the City of Pflugerville Parks and Recreation Department and become an integral player in the growth and development of a rapidly growing community. Pflugerville is primarily residential and close-in suburb of Austin, TX which values its green space and parks and trails system.

For full details on the position and to download an application, go to [www.cityofpflugerville.com](http://www.cityofpflugerville.com) and click on Jobs. E-mail application to [staffing@cityofpflugerville.com](mailto:staffing@cityofpflugerville.com).

All applicants must complete a City of Pflugerville Application form. Resumes may be attached to completed application. Resumes *will not* substitute for a completed application form. Applications also available at: 100 E. Main, Ste 100, Pflugerville, TX 78660. Equal Opportunity Employer.

# News from Around the Tree World

## Alex Shigo, Father of Arboriculture, Dies

Dr. Alex Shigo, “the father of modern arboriculture,” died unexpectedly on October 6 from a fall at his summer home on Mendums Pond, New Hampshire. Dr. Shigo spent most of his adult life studying, lecturing, dissecting and writing about trees.

His research led him to dispute many commonly-held concepts. “Either the books were wrong or the trees were wrong. I chose to go with the trees,” Dr. Shigo said.

He spent many years in the Forest Service and eventually became chief scientist. After retiring in 1985 he began a second career as a lecturer and author of books on tree care, tree biology and tree anatomy. He was responsible for changing the way trees are pruned, resulting in healthier trees.

More information, as well as books, booklets and CDs, are available at [www.shigoandtrees.com/](http://www.shigoandtrees.com/).

## Awards of Excellence for Community Trees

The Home Depot Foundation has announced the opening of the application period for the Second Annual Awards of Excellence for Community Trees.

This program gives innovative, grassroots, citizen-based, tree organizations a great opportunity to increase the public’s knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of trees and their role in creating healthy, sustainable communities. Consider applying for this award, as a way to showcase public-private partnerships and join a national sponsor in advocating for urban forestry.

The deadline for first round applications is December 8, 2006. The application can be accessed by going to [www.homedepotfoundation.org/awards\\_trees\\_apply.html](http://www.homedepotfoundation.org/awards_trees_apply.html).

## Forest Service Offers Software for Managing Community Forests

Developed by USDA Forest Service Research, State and Private Forestry, and other cooperators, i-Tree is public domain software that can be used by communities of all sizes to strengthen their urban and community forest management efforts. It also can be used by state forestry agencies, municipal foresters, non-profit tree advocates, commercial arborists, environmental consultants, planners, and others interested in their community forests and the environmental benefits they produce.

The software is available from the Forest Service by request. For more information, visit the [www.itreetools.org](http://www.itreetools.org) website.

## Enterprise Makes 50-Year Commitment To Plant 50 Million Trees

Enterprise Rent-A-Car has agreed to underwrite the planting of 50 million trees over the next 50 years at a total cost of \$50 million. For more information, see [www.arborday.org/enterprise/about/about\\_history.cfm](http://www.arborday.org/enterprise/about/about_history.cfm).

## Avoiding Excess Soil Over Root Systems

A set of guidelines on avoiding excess soil over root systems of trees is available as a downloadable file from the Morton Arboretum website. These guidelines were developed by an industrywide working group to help growers, landscape professionals and arborists learn to recognize, prevent, and take action to correct root systems that are too deep—an important cause of tree decline and death.

At <http://www.mortonarb.org/research/treeroots.html> go to the bottom of the page under Green Industry Publications, then choose “Avoiding Excess Soil Over the Root Systems of Trees: A Best Management Practice.”

## Action Alert for Urban Forestry

U.S. House of Representatives and Senate appropriations staff are reportedly now working, pre-conference, to develop joint budgets for the FY 2007 federal budget for Urban and Community Forestry and other key Forest Service programs. For advocates, the biggest challenge right now is to make an impact in the Senate. From what we hear, Senators generally have not been vocal in their support for the Urban and Community Forestry program, with the exception of a small handful of lawmakers. For more information, and how to contact your Senator, see [http://actrees.org/site/whatwedo/policyalerts/action\\_alert\\_for\\_helping\\_the\\_u.php](http://actrees.org/site/whatwedo/policyalerts/action_alert_for_helping_the_u.php)

## SWPRTI ARBORIST SCHOOL

Southwest Park and Recreation Training Institute (SWPRTI) will be conducting an Arborist School and Certification Examination on February 2 – 4, 2007 at Western Hills Guest Ranch located 8 miles east of Wagoner, Oklahoma.

Certified Arborists – This school will give you 11 CEU’s at a classroom registration cost of \$80. For complete information go to the SWPRTI webpage [www.swprti.org](http://www.swprti.org) and follow our link to the Arborist School.

Questions? Please call Susan Campbell, Urban Forester, City of Allen, TX, (214) 509-4833

# Personal Observations *by Patrick Wentworth*

*It is not "hard science" or "pure research," just things I have noticed mostly from observation and repetition.....*

Everyone has seen this before (if you haven't it's because you don't work on live oaks.) The live oak in the client's yard has hundreds if not thousands of root sprouts coming up all round the base of the tree. Sometimes they spread out from the tree to a radius of 12 feet or more. I've seen them so thick that they looked like an intentionally planted ground cover. The one thing you will always see with this condition is that the trunk of the tree comes out of the ground with very little flare at the base.



Base of live oak (*Quercus virginiana*)

Live oaks, like all trees, should have their trunk collar (the portion of the trunk that flares dramatically at grade) exposed. When it isn't, the tree will put out numerous adventitious roots that will quickly become root sprouts. Clients will have put too much mulch against the tree or around the base of the tree and root sprouts will occur. Or they will be raising the soil a little to allow the grass to grow just that much closer to the tree and root sprouts will occur. Or they will bury those exposed roots that they keep hitting with the lawn mower and root sprouts are the result. Sometimes this condition is caused by weed blocking fabrics as well.

The cure for this problem is often more than that client is willing to spend. The best way to approach the issue is to use an Airspade® to uncover the root collar.

When this is done well, a twisted tangled mat of roots will be found just below the surface. Small roots can be carefully snipped off back down to the large root flares or back to the main trunk. Hand tools (hatchets, pruning shears, loppers) are the quickest way to remove them.



Airspade® used to uncover root mat/ girdling roots

Once cleared of the root mat, the root flares should be left exposed and above grade. The area can be left uncovered or covered with a light dusting (1/2 inch or less) of mulch.

Root mat / root-collar excavations are a hard sell because they're tedious, time consuming, and therefore can be expensive. The real trick comes in figuring out how to bid the job before beginning. Any time you're excavating roots, you never know what you're going to run into or how long it will actually take.

For years, we've been told to plant trees at the same level they come in the container. This assumes that they were grown at the correct level from day one. A shallow moat is placed around the newly planted tree and a layer of mulch



Removal of root mat and girdling roots with hand tools

is added to keep the soil moist. What invariably happens is that too much mulch is used and the shallow moat collapses in on the tree, burying it too deep.

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**THE NEWSLETTER OF  
THE ISA TEXAS CHAPTER**

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## *Personal Observations*

*Continued from page 13*

We might be better off if we change planting specifications to plant trees 2 inches higher than the surrounding soil. By the time the well collapses, too much mulch is used, and the tree settles in the hole somewhat, it may wind up at the correct level instead of being buried 3 to 4 inches too deep. It would prevent a lot of girdling roots.

Root mat removed; flares left exposed.



## *Utility Corner* by James Koenig

The recent Texas Vegetation Management Association meeting in Kerrville October 23–25 was well attended. Approximately 210 attended with more than 25 exhibitors. Session topics included:

- Vegetation Management, the UAA Perspective – Jim Orr (Asplundh)
- Drift Minimization – Dennis Markwardt (TXDoT)
- TDA Rules & Regulations – Randy Rivera (TDA)
- Wire & Fire: A Historical Perspective on Ecosystem Management in Texas Hill Country – Donnie Frels (TPWD)
- Aquatic Vegetation & Herbicides – Dr. Earl Chilton (TPWD)
- Consortium Building – Anne Beard (PNM)
- Easements and Environmental Responsibilities – Clover Clamons (LCRA)
- NERC Vegetation Clearance Standards: One Utilities Perspective – Lynn Grayson (AEP)
- Oak Wilt in Texas – Eric Copeland (TFS)
- Formosan Termites – Karen Woodard (TFS)
- Salt Tolerance of Plants for South Texas Revegetation Programs – Leroy Rock (TAMU- Kingsville)