

In the Shade

NEWSLETTER OF THE
ISA TEXAS CHAPTER
APRIL, 2019



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President's Letter

Emily King



Greetings,

As a member-driven, nonprofit organization, ISA Texas relies on volunteers to be successful. Over the years as the membership has grown, the chapter has increased service. We have reached a point of growth where we need more staff support. To meet this need, Gene Gehring, former chapter president, board member, and volunteer extraordinaire, has joined ISA Texas as the Education Program Manager. We are lucky to have him! Please help welcome Gene into his new role.

Last year, the chapter adopted a strategic plan. The board of directors used this plan to build a 2019 work plan; this plan allowed us to focus on our goals for the year. At the March board of directors meeting, we were able to check in on the progress made on our annual goals. Curious about the strategic plan, the 2019 work plan, or any other items related to the foundation of this organization? Visit the website to learn more: <https://isatexas.com/about/isat-documents/>.

If you find yourself interested in the inner trappings of ISA Texas, you are a great candidate to volunteer with us. There are many ways that you can pitch in: social media posting, newsletter indexing, digital photo organization, student mentoring, and more!

In addition to the many upcoming workshops, the Texas Tree Climbing Championship is coming up in May in Georgetown. If you've never attended a tree climbing championship, I encourage you to make the trip, it will be worth the while.

Cheers!

Emily

NEW MEMBERS

Cynthia Abbott Austin
Jason Batley Kerrville
Michael Bilbrey Lubbock
Gerald Scott Bradburn Keller
Caitlin Campbell Austin
Jay Carbullido Austin
Thomas Jason Chambliss Jasper
Gerrod Dobecka Paradise
Andy Scott Ferguson Dallas
Charles Forbes Rockwall
Grant T. Gallagher Bryan
Chad Goen San Angelo
Gerardo Gonzalez Laredo
Dustin Goodman Texarkana
Zane Elijah Guevara San Antonio
Geoffrey Hall Sachse
Taylor Horton Austin
Alonso Iruegas Austin
Scott Jecker San Marcos
Isham Khan Houston
Harry Louque Whitney
Enrique Maiz-Torres Austin
Henry Peebles Dallas
Richard J. Rodriguez Abilene
Justin R. Smith Del Valle
Daniel Walton Houston
Justin Weatherby Cedar Park
Christine Westerman Pipe Creek
Alexander J. Wietecha Bastrop
Marco Antonio Ybarra Houston

ON THE COVER

Emily King's son, Dominic, enjoying the shade on a recent sunny fishing trip.

In the Shade

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*“Spring has
returned. The
Earth is like a
child that knows
poems.”*

—Rainer Maria Rilke

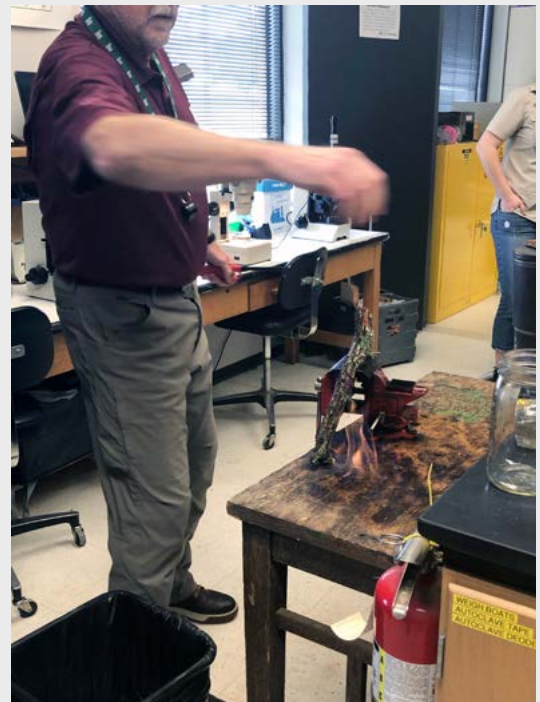
From Field to Lab

A Hands-On Tree Diagnosis Workshop–Beta class

March 11 and 12 saw the launch of a new ISA Texas workshop: From Field to Lab–A Hands-On Tree Diagnosis Workshop. Twenty-four participants got a tour of the diagnostics lab, an introduction to field diagnosis, and instruction in creating slides and samples to test for disease.



Preparing a slide to look at powdery mildew. Photo by Curtis Hopper.



Sterilizing with ethanol and fire. Photo by Misti Perez.

Group shot. Photo by John Giedraitis.





Intake in the "dirty lab." Photo by Scott George.



Powdery mildew spores from rye grass. Photo by Keith Babberney.



Field diagnosing. Photo by Misti Perez.



Preparing an oak wilt sample. Photo by Curtis Hopper.

What Can We Learn from A Fire Hydrant?

commentary by Steve White

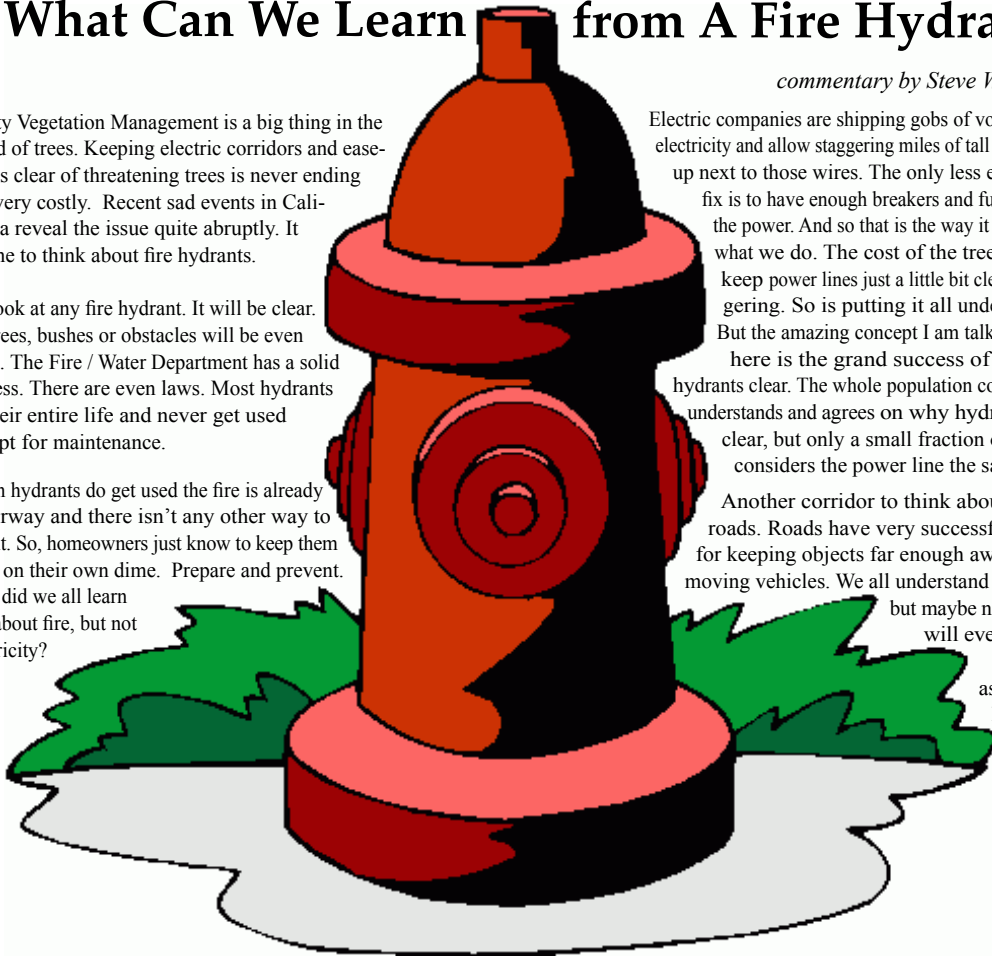
Utility Vegetation Management is a big thing in the world of trees. Keeping electric corridors and easements clear of threatening trees is never ending and very costly. Recent sad events in California reveal the issue quite abruptly. It led me to think about fire hydrants.

Go look at any fire hydrant. It will be clear. No trees, bushes or obstacles will be even close. The Fire / Water Department has a solid success. There are even laws. Most hydrants sit their entire life and never get used except for maintenance.

When hydrants do get used the fire is already underway and there isn't any other way to stop it. So, homeowners just know to keep them clear on their own dime. Prepare and prevent. How did we all learn that about fire, but not electricity?

Electric companies are shipping gobs of volts of live electricity and allow staggering miles of tall trees right up next to those wires. The only less expensive fix is to have enough breakers and fuses to kill the power. And so that is the way it is. That is what we do. The cost of the tree work to keep power lines just a little bit clear is staggering. So is putting it all underground. But the amazing concept I am talking about here is the grand success of keeping hydrants clear. The whole population completely understands and agrees on why hydrants are clear, but only a small fraction of people considers the power line the same way.

Another corridor to think about is our roads. Roads have very successful plans for keeping objects far enough away from moving vehicles. We all understand that too, but maybe none of it will ever be as perfect as the fire hydrant.



THE CHAMPION

Last fall my client called me to come out and take a look at the Mexican plum in her yard. When I arrived, to my astonishment I saw the largest Mexican plum that I had ever seen. I suggested that she call the Texas A&M Forest Service to have it measured to see if it was a champion in Harris County. Matt Weaver with TFS came and measured the tree and sure enough not only is the tree the Harris County Champion, but it is also the Texas State Champion and – wait for it – it is the National Champion. This all goes to show that if you have a client with a large specimen tree it would be worth the suggestion to have it measured. You never know that you might be caring for a one of a kind specimen like the Mexican plum found in Hockley, Texas.

–Ed Dolphin, Bartlett Tree Experts

Letter to the Editor *David M. Vaughan*

I enjoyed the very thorough article on Fertilization of Trees by Keith Babberney. I have changed my approach to this practice over the years. For the first half of my career, I fertilized or recommended fertilization for every tree in my care on an annual programmed schedule. Carl Pool granular applied in 2-inch augured holes, then Bartlett Boost deep root, Doggit Evergreen deep root, and eventually Bio Pak Plus deep root. Early on, I even used some RapidGro for super stressed trees needing immediate help. The last 15 years I have changed to just fertilizing trees that are competing with lawn grass and for injured trees. Today, I am even changing that approach.

Daniel A. Hermes in his continuing education (CEU) article, Understanding Tree Responses to Abiotic and Biotic Stress Complexes, *Arborist News*, December 2016, talks about the natural defenses of trees to insects and pathogens. He is referring to things like foliar pubescence, toughened cuticle, indigestible structures of lignin and cellulose, and most important, the toxic and deterrent effects of allelochemicals (secondary metabolites).

He disagrees with the premise that environmental stress decreases a tree's resistance to insects and disease by weakening natural tree defenses. He states that many reputable studies have found that concentrations of allelochemicals and insect resistance increase in response to nutrient limitations, drought, defoliation and other stresses. He also says there are other cases where stress does weaken tree defenses. (My comment: to the practicing arborist's dismay, there are no definite answers in biology. Mostly it does, but sometimes it does not).

Then he says, "Numerous studies provide strong evidence that fertilization decreases tree resistance to both chewing and sucking insects. Reliable studies have shown fertilizer to increase growth and decrease concentrations of defensive chemicals and insect resistance. Plant resistance to disease is also generally (but not always) decreased by fertilizer. When nutrient stress is severe, only then can fertilization increase tree resistance to defoliating insects."

We have equated rapid growth with tree vitality/tree health. Twig elongation, thick growth rings, large green leaves with good color, etc have been measures we use to determine a tree in good condition. We stress maximum growth with many of our maintenance operations. Rapid growth uses a high proportion of tree resources, diverting them from storage and defense. In many cases, fast growing trees are more susceptible to stress and less resistant to pests. Fertilized trees often require regular irrigation and pesticide application. That's the formula used by the lawn care companies that we so often criticize for creating the problems they need to treat. We may be doing the same thing without realizing the consequences of our actions.

Dr. Michael Raupp in his presentation to the ASCA Conference in 2018 stated that much of the nitrogen we apply for trees is taken up by the insects that are feeding on our fertilized trees. He says we are creating superbugs. He points out that the nitrogen recycled in a climax forest is a little over one pound nitrogen per thousand square feet per year. We typically apply 3-6 pounds in this same area with our fertilization programs.

Dr. Linda Chalker-Scott, in her presentation at the 2018 Texas Tree Conference talking about Arboriculture Myths, said there is no reliable supporting science showing that tree fertilization is beneficial. She says that because tree fertilization is not science-based, it should not be recommended. She has provided the same message in presentations to the International Tree Conference.

There are no easy answers here. In my career, I have sold and applied more than a million dollars of fertilizer (plus or minus). Our clients want their trees fertilized and growing fast. This practice is very profitable and the companies we work for or own require profit. It is one of the few maintenance operations we can schedule with an annual program. One man in a fert rig can often bring in daily the same amount of income generated by a three-man pruning crew and at a higher percentage of profit.

If our goal is to grow strong, resilient, climate change-tolerant, stress-tolerant trees, we must rethink our approach to fertilization. In the long run, are we doing more harm than good? How do we decide if fertilization is the best approach for a tree when we now have good evidence that it is usually not? How do we wean our companies off a well-established practice that is so profitable? How do we convince our clients that some stress is good for a tree? We experienced this same dilemma when Dr. Shigo let us know we should not be cleaning, filling and reinforcing cavities, a practice that was a major percentage of tree care business at the time.

Personally, I have switched to recommending compost and mulch in almost all cases. Easy for me to do now that I am just consulting and no longer needing the wonderful profit generated by a tree care fertilization program.

A note from the Editor: we encourage a healthy exchange of ideas and are happy to print responses to articles we publish, if we have space. We encourage you to visit our Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/ISATexas/>) and start a conversation with your fellow arborists.

Post-fire Tree Triage

by Greg David, Consulting Arborist, TreeConsult, LLC

With continuing development and construction in naturally-forested areas, arborists often are called upon to deal with the aftermath of wildfires and structure fires. Knowing a little bit about fire behavior and heat transfer will go a long way toward helping arborists answer the question: “Just how toasted is that tree?”

ISA Texas’ new Wildfire Risk Reduction Qualification, developed in tandem with the Texas A&M Forest Service, offers arborists an excellent way to learn about fire behavior and fire mitigation within the wildland urban interface (WUI). After a fire, an arborist will need to consider many factors in order to determine the long-term health and structural integrity of a fire-damaged tree.

Wildland fires can be creeping ground fires, intense understory fires, or raging crown fires, and, in many cases, they are a combination of all three. Trees situated near a burning house or building may incur additional damage from high levels of radiated and convected heat from longer-burning fuels, intense heat from burning gasses and liquids, and injury from releases of toxic chemicals.

Tree damage assessment generally involves knowledge of how well various tree species tolerate fire, along with a consideration of the amount and location of bole char on the affected tree (the amount of cambial damage on the trunk and buttress roots), and the percentage and location of canopy scorch.

In most cases, unless a tree has been completely destroyed in a crown fire, the damage to the vital cambial layer (just below the tree’s bark) tends to be the primary factor that influences long-term survivability after a fire. It is thought that cambial cellular injury results from heat-induced protein lesions which cause cell wall damage (denaturation).

Anatomical features also directly influence a tree’s vulnerability to heat damage. These include bark thickness, canopy density, bud protection, susceptibility to decay, and root structure. Thick-barked trees tend to withstand fire better than thin-barked trees, so, for example, post oak tends to tolerate fire better than red oak. Tight canopies accumulate and hold heat longer than open-growing canopies, so ponderosa pine tolerates fire better than Douglas-fir. Similarly, some pines have large, well-protected buds that withstand heat better than the unprotected buds of most hardwoods.

Root structure also affects tree survivability when fire damages large, exposed buttress roots. These roots not only hold the tree upright during strong winds, they connect the tree to vast portions of the tree’s feeder-root system. Root bark is

generally thinner than trunk bark, so exposed buttress roots are often more susceptible to cambial damage than tree trunks. Damage to key buttress roots often results in both a long-term loss of tree stability and a shorter-term increase in canopy dieback.



C. Ophardt, c. 2003

- Other factors to consider when assessing fire injury include the tree's pre-fire health, pre-fire soil moisture levels, and pre-fire food reserves. Weak and drought-stressed trees tend to recover poorly following a fire.

Fire Characteristics

Pre-fire fuel moisture levels directly affect the intensity and duration of the heat that a tree is exposed to during a fire. Fuel types and fuel loads are typically classified by size – so, for example, fast-burning “flashy” fuels, such as grasses, typically transfer less heat to a tree trunk than longer-burning fuels such as fallen logs, accumulated understory woody debris, or burning structures.

As mentioned previously, cambial tissues are sensitive to high temperatures. Studies have shown that cambial cellular injury occurs when the cambium reaches 140°F. Some US Forest Service post-fire tree mortality studies are based upon estimated tree trunk flame-impingement temperatures of 932°F during wildfires, so you can see how a hot fire might quickly heat a tree's cambium to temperatures exceeding the 140°F damage threshold.

Assessing Tree Losses

Estimating long-term tree survival rates usually requires combining the amount of a tree's canopy scorch with the percentage and location of bole char and cambial damage. Trees with more than 25% circumferential cambial injury are at high risk of long-term decline, either directly due to vascular compromise, or due to stress related factors such as bark beetle and borer attack, disease pressure from hypoxylon canker (*Biscogniauxia atropunctatum*) and other opportunistic pathogens, or other stressors. Trees with more than 50% circumferential cambial loss are typically considered to be total losses, from an appraisal standpoint.

Dieback and tree loss from bole char often takes several years to show up, and it is not at all uncommon for a fully-foliated tree to be considered to be a total loss. This is especially true in areas where the tree assessor must be mindful of the long-term stability of a tree that sits near sensitive targets such as a building or roadway, where the eventual failure of the tree, due to the progressive decay of damaged trunks or roots, might pose an unacceptable level of risk. ■



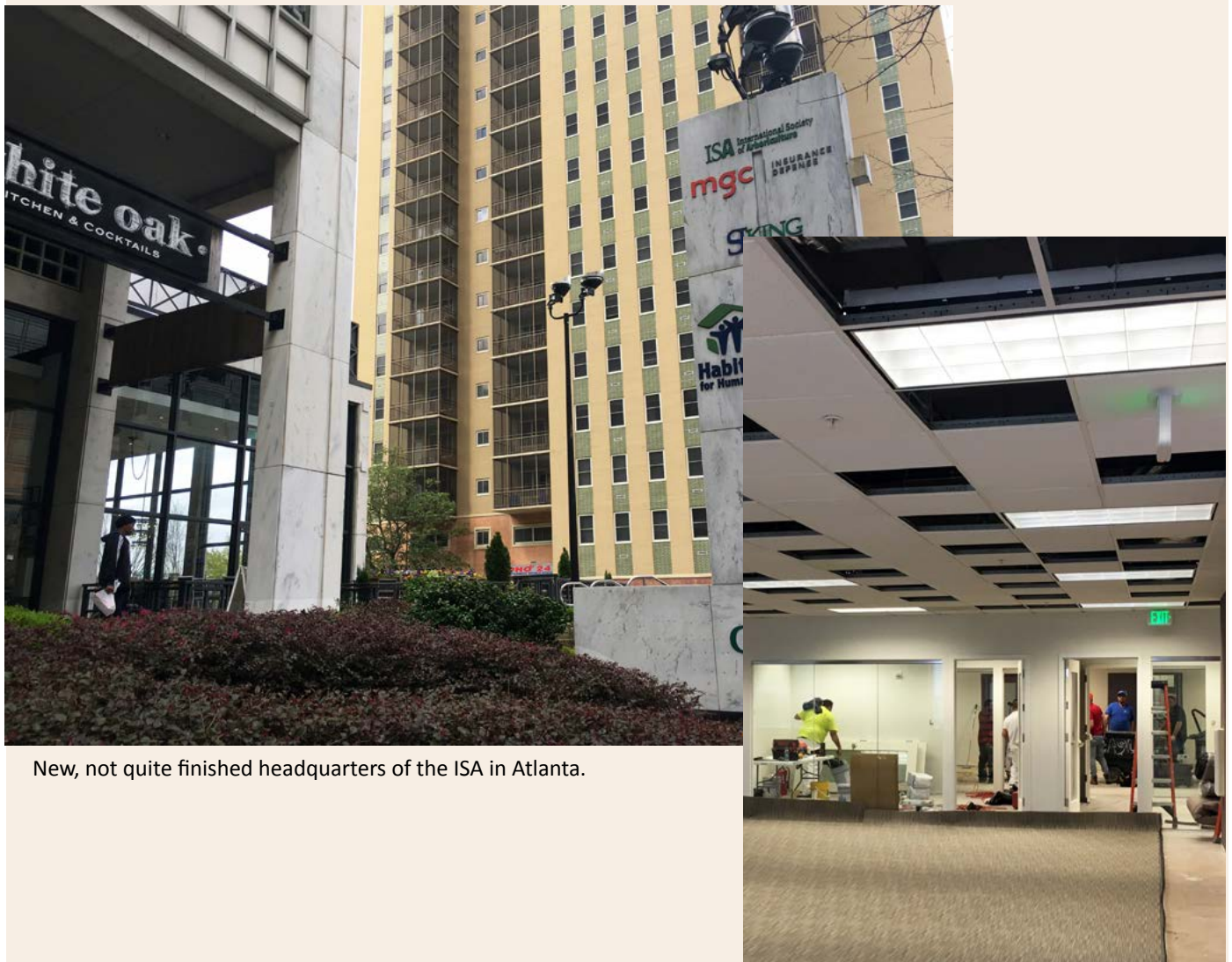
Editor's Note

Rebecca Johnson



This past month I got the chance to visit Atlanta and see the building where ISA headquarters has moved, mostly. I didn't tour the offices, because they're still being finished (see pictures below), but I met some of the new employees. I will miss many of the employees I'd gotten to know over the past few years, but I'm optimistic about the move and the new employees. The move to Atlanta has been a hard transition, but it will be a good move for the organization. Headquarters is right downtown and a short MARTA ride from the airport, making it much easier to visit.

ISA members will have received an email asking them to vote for the ISA Board of Directors. The nominating and elections committee had a hard job and put together a slate of great candidates, so be sure to vote. It's also a good reminder to think about your local chapter and potentially running for our board. We'll be sending out the call for nominations this summer, why don't you consider answering that call? Our organization is only as good as the volunteers running it.



New, not quite finished headquarters of the ISA in Atlanta.

EVENTS

April 2, 2019, 10:00am–11:00am

Dead Ash Dangers and Considerations for Risk and Removal Webinar: This presentation will walk through how to identify and mitigate some of the hazards relating to working near or on ash trees.

<http://bit.ly/2BYHBh1>

April 2, 2019, 1:00pm–2:00pm

Marion Murray, Identifying and Managing Canker Diseases of Landscape Trees

Webinar: Utah State Extension Lunch and Learn

<https://forestry.usu.edu/webinars/index>

April 5, 2019, 7:30am–4:15pm

10th Bilingual Tree Care & Safety Workshop

Schertz, TX—Learn from tree care leaders Mark Chisolm and Eduardo Medina to take your knowledge and career to new heights.

<https://conta.cc/2HeP2no>

April 6, 2019, 8:00am–4:00pm

Cranes and Trees—A Workshop With Mark Chisholm

San Marcos, TX—A workshop focusing on practical and advanced rigging, estimation of weight, and proper cuts associated with crane use. It will include class time and an outdoor demonstration. Mark Chisholm, working arborist, instructor and ISA world champion climber will lead the workshop.

<https://conta.cc/2Xx2cld>

April 10, 2019, 12:00noon–1:15pm

Green Readiness, Response, and Recovery: Stewardship of natural resources in the context of disturbance

Webinar: Appropriate, large-scale coordinated emergency response and recovery efforts

<https://www.fs.fed.us/research/urban-webinars/>

April 16, 2019, 10:00am–11:00am

Emerald Ash Borer in the Northeast: Background, Updates and Future Direction

Webinar: EAB discussion, including a review of selected management activities, updates on recent changes, and future direction of management and regulatory work in light of reduced funding and potential federal deregulation.

<http://bit.ly/2TSOhrP>

April 24, 2019, 9:30 am–3:30 pm

5th Annual Growing Texas Workshop: EAB & Biodiversity

San Marcos, TX—This workshop focusing on the threat of EAB, what to expect based upon experts from the Midwest, and how biodiversity is the answer. Growing Texas focuses on identifying common challenges and highlighting successful solutions, targeting decision makers in municipalities as an audience. Lunch will be provided and CEUs are available.

<https://saarborist.org/event-3293087>

April 25 & 26, 2019, 8:00am–5:00pm

ANSI® Z133 Safety Standards & Procedures Bi-Lingual Workshop Series

Dallas, TX—Students will learn about the incidents that cause arborists the most injuries and fatalities, and become familiar with the Z133 standards that, if followed, could mitigate life-threatening issues.

<https://www.sca-trees.org/sca-and-the-z>

May 1 & 2, 2019, 8:00am–5:00pm

Wildfire Risk Reduction and Qualification

Lubbock, TX—The Texas A&M Forest Service and Texas Chapter ISA have developed this qualification to introduce you to terms and principles to incorporate into your arboriculture practice. You will explore how wildfire moves through a landscape and mitigation options you could perform or bring to the attention of your client. This course will be limited to 25 ISA Certified Arborists and we will conduct field exercise on homes near the training center. A written exam and field test will need to be successfully passed to gain the credential. Total course time will be 16 hours, with four hours dedicated to the examination.

<https://conta.cc/2ufCZ1s>

May 8, 2019, 12:00noon–1:15pm

More Than Good Looks: How trees influence urban stormwater management in green infrastructure practices

Webinar: <https://www.fs.fed.us/research/urban-webinars/>

May 16-19, 2019, 8:00am–5:00pm

2019 Texas Tree Climbing Championship

Georgetown, TX—This year the competition will be held in San Gabriel Park, 445 E Morrow St., Georgetown, Texas 78626. The competition aims to simulate working conditions of arborists in the field. Male and female competitors perform five different events during preliminary rounds. Each event tests a competitor's ability to professionally and safely maneuver in a tree while performing work-related tree-care tasks in a timely manner. Tree climbing competitions under ISA rules are held in countries around the world.

<https://isatexas.com/events/tree-climbing-competition/>

May 23 & 24, 2019, 8:00–3:00

Oak Wilt Qualification Course and Assessment

Weatherford, TX—Join the Texas A&M Forest Service and the Texas Chapter ISA for the Oak Wilt Identification and Management Qualification Course and Assessment. This two-day workshop is for ISA Certified Arborists and will show you how to identify and manage oak wilt in Texas.

<https://conta.cc/2UStD7S>

June 20-21, 2019, 8:00–3:00

Oak Wilt Qualification Course and Assessment

Currently full, watch for opportunities to sign up.

www.isatexas.com/events

XII Annual Tree Planting Competition

by Monica Singhania, Regional Urban Forester, Texas A&M Forest Service

February 9 was the coldest day of the year. But that did not stop the 150 volunteers that had signed up for the 12th Annual Tree Planting Competition (TPC). For 12 years, Houston Area Urban Forestry Council (HAUFC) has been organizing its annual tree planting contest which brings together arborists and local citizens to enrich communities with trees in a competitive and enjoyable way. Through this event, HAUFC in collaboration with corporate sponsors and other stakeholders, planted a total of 11,500 trees, which will be maintained and watered for at least two growing seasons.

This year the competition was held at the Buffalo Run Park in Missouri City. In 2017, over 2000 trees were planted on one side of the park's lake. This year the goal was to complete the other side. With the forecast predicting a bitter cold day (by Houston standards) with a maximum of 45 degrees, we were doubtful if enough people would show up to achieve it. But guess what? The goal was met! Despite the cold, 12 teams showed up and planted 1500 trees in less than 2 hours. Native trees such as pines, oaks, red maples, and elms between 3 to 5 gallons were planted.

For some of the contestants this event is already a tradition. The team from Yellowstone Landscape has been participating since the very first competition. Since we started in 2007, they have won first place in the professional category every single

year. This year they not only won, but also broke their record time of 13 minutes and 35 seconds by planting 100 trees in only 12 minutes and 17 seconds.

First place for each of the other two categories, amateur and student, went to Houston Knanaya Catholic Society (HKCS) and Girl Scout troop 19056, respectively. Both teams participated in the event for the first time. Their excitement was evident from the huge smiles and words such as these from HKCS, "Our team was really excited to help out...we want Missouri City to look green and pretty. Our entire community got excited when they heard that we received the first place. We all felt that we did something worthwhile."

Thank you to all the volunteers (team members, judges, cooks, and servers) and to our sponsors—Yolanda Ford, mayor, Missouri City; Daryl Smith, Fort Bend County Constable, Missouri City; Texas A&M Forest Service; HAUFC; Living Earth; CenterPoint Energy; and Trees for Houston—for braving the cold and showing up to contribute towards a valuable long-term benefit to our local park and community.

Many more photos from this event can be seen at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/163467749@N02/sets/72157678581943268/> ►

Volunteers in action.





The Girl Scout Troop 19056 team with their judge William Hajdik. Came in first in the student category.

The winning team for the amateur category (Houston Knanaya Catholic Society– HKCS) in action.



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Fire Blight Photo: William Jacobi, Colorado State University, Bugwood.org
Bacterial Leaf Scorch Photo: William M. Ciesla, Forest Health Management International, Bugwood.org

Mauget

Open-source GIS



by Wade Powell, Land Management Specialist, Travis County Parks

How about . . . free?! That's the cost of, and the concept behind, open-source software. Programs that are licensed as open-source are free to the public to download and use, and the source code is available to anyone with the know-how to modify, improve, and share as they see fit in an open, free manner.

On January 28th, Paul Howard of Burditt Land |Place, presented in Houston about how to obtain and use open source GIS programs for a variety of urban forestry applications, in a course billed as "The Swiss Army Knife of Mapping Tools for the Arborist and Urban Forester." Users familiar with other GIS platforms feel right at home in the intuitive work environments of the applications demonstrated during the course.

Noticeably absent? The hassle of expensive software licenses. Through guided exercises, students sampled QGIS, a robust GIS platform for viewing, editing, and analyzing geospatial data. Howard demonstrated how to access plugins for the platform, and build symbologies and maps using street-tree survey data in Houston. Base maps both new and familiar to

users of the leading GIS platforms are available. Students then performed analysis on the data such as using buffering tools to determine plantable areas along right-of-ways. Whether for aiding in planning and management decisions, or creating eye-catching presentations, open-source GIS promises to be a versatile tool for urban forestry professionals.

The class also practiced with raster analysis software that was originally developed to detect anomalies in medical images of the human body. Students trained the processor to detect different kinds of land cover from aerial and satellite imagery—both visible light and infrared. For instance, raster analysis can be used to determine the extent, health, and vigor of canopy cover in the urban forest.

GIS is already an integral part of the management of most urban forests. The tools highlighted here offer tree mapping functionality in a free package to public and nonprofit programs with tight budgets and businesspeople looking to save costs. ■



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COMING THIS SPRING...

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Tree Fund Announces Grant Awards to Benefit Urban Forest

TREE Fund has awarded \$95,000 for urban tree research in its fall 2018 grant-making season. With these new awards, the 501(c)3 charity has provided nearly \$4.0 million in grants and scholarships since its inception in 2002.

“TREE Fund’s highly competitive Fall 2018 grants provide a snapshot into the ways that research can provide crucial answers and tools for the global community of skilled tree care professionals, with investigations into invasive species resistance, drought tolerance, canopy mapping and tree failure mechanisms adjacent to overhead power lines,” explains TREE Fund President and CEO J. Eric Smith. “By providing robust scientific examinations in such key fields of inquiry, TREE Fund is fostering safer work environments for tree care professionals, alongside better planning for and management of our urban and community forests. We’re grateful to the researchers for their insight and skill, and to the thousands of donors who make our work possible.”

The current grant cycle is funding research regarding: Ash that have survived EAB; using LIDAR data to characterize individual trees & features; evaluating the importance of mycorrhizae;



and development of a regional research approach to model tree failure risk. You can read more about the grants at <https://treefund.org/archives/16704>. To learn more about applying for a research grant from TREE Fund, check out the page at <https://treefund.org/research-grants>.

Want to support the TREE Fund? ISA Texas member Neville Mann will be leading the Texas Team in the Tour des Trees this year. You can donate to support him and the TREE Fund at bit.ly/TXTdT2019.



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

www.texasurbantrees.org



Texas Oak Wilt Gets a Facelift

TexasOakWilt.org has recently been updated and relaunched with tons of great new information. Note there is a section for vendors that will point landowners to the ISA Texas website for Certified Arborists and Oak Wilt Qualified Arborists. If you provide oak wilt vendor services, make sure you get on the list. We are very excited about the refresh and hope it is a great resource for everyone.



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City of Austin Adopts New Oak Wilt Management Strategy

by April Rose, Urban Forest Health Coordinator

Austin's Urban Forest Health Program increases urban forest resilience through a community centered approach to tree health. One threat to tree health is oak wilt, an often-fatal fungal disease that infects oak species throughout Texas. The City of Austin's oak wilt program has shifted to leverage new opportunities including:

Growth in private sector capacity: Certified Arborists and Registered Consulting Arborists have increased in number and expertise in response to the market for diagnosis and management of tree diseases.

Public information and access: Public information has become prolific and people are increasingly accustomed to accessing online content such as flood risk, wildfire potential, and crime statistics.

Neighborhood communication: Neighborhoods are well connected through newsletters, email, and social media. Leveraging these communication channels emphasizes the Urban Forest Health Program's underlying message that a community approach to forest health can increase neighborhood tree resilience.

In Austin we have shifted the focus away from the lot level to the neighborhood and community scale, leaving diagnosis and management to private sector arborists. We are piloting Survey-123 for ArcGIS, an ESRI tool that allows Certified Arborists to submit the location of oak wilt symptomatic trees, and recommend public trees for preventive treatment.

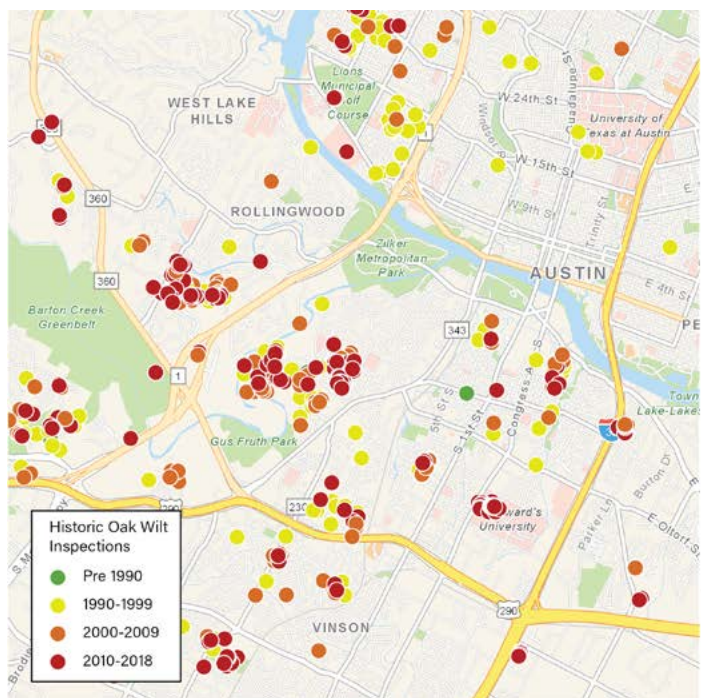
These data, coupled with City of Austin oak wilt observations contribute to an online map that increases public awareness about the potential for oak wilt throughout Austin, and increases the City's capacity to proactively treat significant public trees. The Forest Health Program provides neighborhood presentations and community-wide messages that focus on oak wilt and other forest health topics including the importance of working with Certified Arborists.

By exploring new technologies, increasing public-private partnerships, and offering diverse education to the public we are proactively managing the forest, not the trees.

To interact with the oak wilt map visit:

<http://www.austintexas.gov/page/oak-wilt-suppression> ■

On the left is oak wilt inspection data that was not publicly available; on the right is the inspection data as a public, interactive map. GIS analysis and photos: Alan Halter, GISP.



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What's the Big IDea?

Can you identify this Texas tree?



If you know this tree, look for the photo on our Facebook page and correctly identify it in the comment section under the photo, using the full scientific name and one or more common names. If you don't know it, check the page for an answer in a few days. The winner gets bragging rights and the chance to submit a tree to stump fellow arborists in the next issue. *Hint: As the common name and specific epithet suggest, this small tree grows in wet areas.*

Last issue's tree ID



Last issue's winner was David Richardson, landscape foreman for UT Southwestern Medical Center. He correctly identified western soapberry, *Sapindus saponaria* var. *drummondii*. He also provided this issue's challenge.