

# In the Shade

**NEWSLETTER OF THE ISA TEXAS CHAPTER**  
**JUNE 2020**







## President's Letter

Out with the pollen and in with the start of summer. These past few months have definitely been different, both professionally and personally. Trying to balance an everyday routine on a "normal" pre-COVID day was always a challenge (at least for me anyway). Now we get to balance work, our kid's school, and try to figure out how to keep everyone entertained – that my friends has really been a challenge. Although we are all dealing with this new "norm" I think it helped us reflect on our daily professional/personal work balance, and how our society truly thinks outside the box.

As I mentioned in the previous newsletter, ISA Texas has continued to stay in close contact with other chapters and have kept our members updated regarding workshops and events. Since our last newsletter, your ISA Texas Chapter has done an excellent job in bringing you alternative workshops that you can attend online. You can now attend a webinar or workshop through ISA Texas and receive CEUs for attending! Although this may seem like an easy task it took time getting the topics, speakers, online classes set up, and CEUs made available. I am proud at how our ISA Texas staff has handled the evolving COVID situation and rolled up their sleeves to continue moving our Chapter forward.

Our next board meeting would historically take place in Waco during the month of June. We usually hold this meeting in Waco so we can visit the Waco Convention Center, hotels, etc., in anticipation of our yearly conference in September. Unfortunately, we may not be able to host this board meeting in person and will need to teleconference instead. Even though we may not meet in person, our Tree Conference Chair and Executive Director will still tour the facilities and make sure we have everything ready for our fall conference. At this point, we are still planning to host the Texas Tree Conference in person. As a precaution, we have been discussing potential alternatives in the case we are unable to host an in-person conference.

If you have any questions pertaining to the conference, please reach out to A.J. or John G. It's never too early to get involved with the chapter or an event. If you don't have time to donate maybe you have a cool gift or treasure that you'd like to donate to our silent auction. The auction has always been a great part of the conference. In addition, the more gifts we get to auction the more we can beat our previous record for scholarship fundraising.

Sincerely,  
Jason Alfaro

## In the Shade

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## ON THE COVER

This time of year, people in Texas really focus on their oak trees and oak wilt. Bur oaks are a perennial favorite, their large leaves cast glorious shade during our hot summers.

# TREES

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## Editor's Note

I don't know about y'all, but keeping track of the days, weeks and months during lockdown has been tough. In many ways, it's marked by the canceled events - such as

the Texas Tree Climbing Championship, which is normally held in May. I'd wanted to make this issue all about tree climbing but, as a member-driven newsletter, I can only print what gets sent in. Somehow this month turned into an oak wilt month. Which makes sense, it's one of the most pressing issues for a majority of our members, particularly the ones in central Texas, and we tend to be most aware of it in May. However, I'm not giving up on the idea of an issue devoted to tree climbing, so send your pictures, your stories of lessons learned, your tips and tricks, and your product reviews and we'll print it in the August issue.

The ISA Texas board is focusing on the future. We've opened nominations for future board seats (see page 19 for more details) and it's a great time to get active with your chapter. After 5 years as your editor, I'm stepping down to see what new challenges I can tackle. I often joked that I was editor for life, but the truth is, I've made the improvements and changes I can make and now it's time for someone else to step in and take the newsletter to that next level. I will, of course, continue to be very active with the Chapter, and in fact, I'm hoping this will free up some time for me to really focus in on some things I'd like to see improved. If you're interested in filling this position, nominate yourself and let me know. I'd be happy to have help with the August issue to start that transition.

Sincerely,  
Rebecca Johnson

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Trevor Schoen ..... Fort Worth  
Amy Flynn ..... Seguin  
Josh Richards ..... Taylor



## Certification Exams

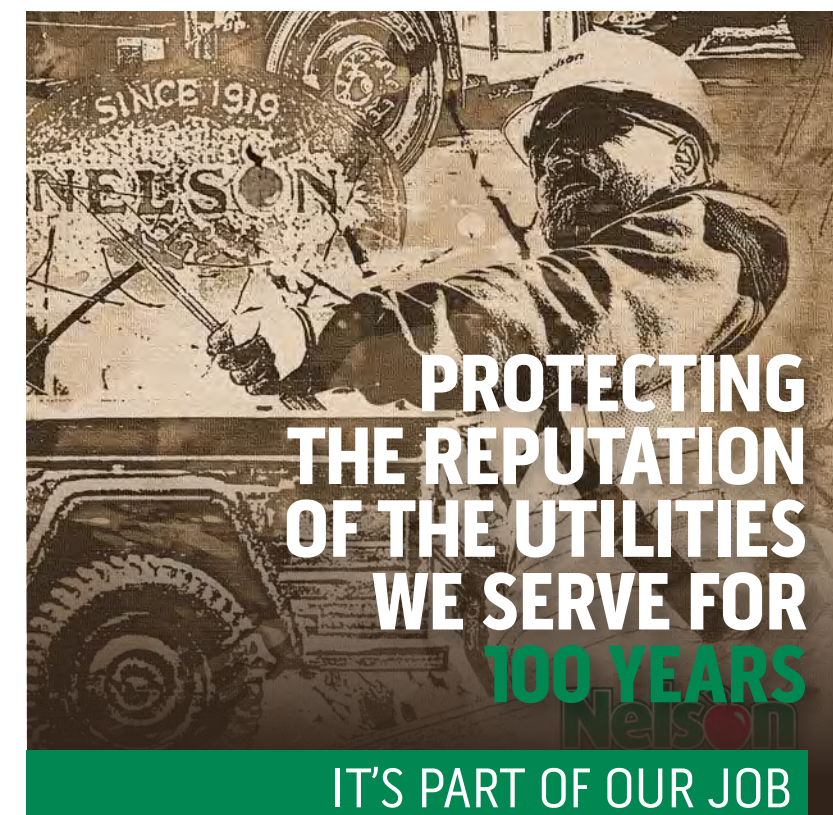
### New Certification Exam Guidelines

Texas Chapter ISA offers in person exams across the state of Texas, but with new exam guidelines. For more detailed information about these guidelines, visit <https://isatexas.com/members/certification-and-traq/> or see below for an abbreviated version.

If you are interested in attending a computer based test, the candidate must schedule the exam. First, submit your application for the exam with ISA, once your application is approved, schedule your exam at a Pearson Vue testing facility of your choice. Visit [www.pearsonvue.com/isa/locate](http://www.pearsonvue.com/isa/locate) for more information.

What candidates need to know:

- You must wear a medical or non-medical face mask and one will not be provided to you.
- Wash your hands in the restroom upon arrival at the test center.
- Use hand sanitizer upon guidance from the test center staff before admissions process and before entering the testing room.
- Review and follow World Health Organization signage posted at this examination facility.
- Always wear your face mask.
- The test assistant will ask the candidate a series of questions at the check in.



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## Upcoming Certification Exams

The following list is for paper-based exams. You can also find the most current, up-to-date list on our website at [www.isatexas.com/events/](http://www.isatexas.com/events/)

**June 19** Certified Arborist, Municipal, Utility Exam - Dallas, TX

**September 18** Certified Arborist, Municipal, Utility Exam - Dallas, TX

**October 15** Certified Arborist, Municipal, Utility Exam - Selma, TX



# Oak Wilt Prevention 101

by Kevin Belter President/Consulting Arborist,  
ArborCare and Consulting

Return to the basics is often an approach that garners new insights and activity improving one's efforts at whatever activity one applies it to. Whether it be COVID-19 or oak wilt – the primacy of preventing the source of the pathogen from introduction amongst the healthy is absolutely critical. This leads me to ask some fundamental questions: Why do we paint all year long? Fungal mats. Why do we avoid certain months that nitidulid family beetles are most active? Fungal mats.

Regardless if one is a commercial, utility, or municipal arborist - The number one concern with the Bretziella fagacearum pathogen is not the extremely laborious task of trying to eliminate every possibility of contagion events (i.e. painting of all oak wounds) – it is the attempt to minimize as much as possible the much less frequent occurring sources of inoculum (i.e. the infected spore producing oaks).

I am aware that there may be those of you who may have expected the very first management activity discussed to be wound painting. To date, the Texas A&M Forest Service has specifically chosen the painting message as the number one focus, and has made great and laudable state-wide educational strides with this message. Of course, we need to continue to convey this message and follow it diligently during all tree work activities, but I believe it is time to refocus and even more enthusiastically elevate the removal of infected spore producers prior to fungal mat formation above the paint message. Analogous to COVID-19, this would correlate to the separation of infected individuals from healthy people as the primary activity vs. the secondary activities of handing out masks and gloves to the healthy. Both are of course beneficial in regards to COVID-19 as is painting oak cuts but testing and isolation is the number one most fundamental activity for both oak wilt and COVID-19. One of the numerous oversights of the paint-centric message is the certain fact that almost all natural wounds (deer rubs, wind-broke branches, bark-chewing vermin, etc.) will go unpainted during the critical infection time-window.

On an ancillary level, we paint oak wounds all year long because we want to minimize the chance of infection to our beloved oaks by man-made wounds to them. But the why of the paint brings us to the foundational level. We paint because the wound of an oak causes sap flow which the smell of that sap attracts a sap-feeding beetle of the Nitidulid family. That beetle is also attracted to the smell of fungal mats which form on infected red oak species, black oak species and Bur

oaks (c.f. “The Transmission of Oak Wilt”. Gibbs, French, 1980). This beetle, when climbing over the fungus mat, will become contaminated with many oak wilt fungal spores and inevitably find one (or many oaks!) with natural or man-made wounds and infect them causing (a) new oak wilt center(s). What is critical for us to realize is that the most effective actions we can take is to regularly scout for infected spore producers “flagging” (primarily in existing oak wilt centers where the vast majority occur as a result of inter-species root-grafting). After we find a probable occurrence of infected spore-producers, we should acquire samples to send off for laboratory confirmation. Upon reception of confirmation of oak wilt, it is imperative that we deal with the infected spore producer quickly and effectively prior to the formation of fungal mats.

### How does one deal effectively with a spore producer?

1. If the spore producer is found and diagnosed promptly (while in the process of dying – often called “flagging”) and it is either April – August, then it will very likely be possible for the most simple and cost-effective method of eliminating the threat to be selected. That is the use of either a chainsaw cupping or as I prefer, a downward porting of a number of basins into the trunk with a ship auger bit (number of porting holes is dependent on trunk DBH) and subsequently spray the highest amount of Garlon 4 into those cups/basins as specified as appropriate by the label of Garlon 4 for that unwanted tree's species and size.
2. If there is concern that the herbicide approach will not work quickly enough to dry the wood sufficiently before the formation of fungal mats, then resort to use of a forestry mulcher machine of tree to ground level or removal at ground level with a chainsaw or bulldozing tree and burning or chipping of wood promptly.
3. If the spore producer is a bur oak and the tree is within acceptable therapeutic injection parameters then the best approach is a fungicide injection saving the tree and suppressing fungal mat formation of which there are significant studies of the effectiveness of therapeutic bur oak injections in the northern states.

In conclusion, we must continue to paint oak wounds all year long but it is critical that we expand even more our efforts to sanitize our client's properties of those infected spore producers prior to mat formation. We must be vigilant of these trees “flagging” from infection and respond quickly and appropriately.

*The views and opinions presented in articles do not always represent the view of the editorial staff, however, we welcome articles with a wide variety of dissenting opinions, which are printed with minimal editing.*

# Texas Tree Showdown

By Jeremy Priest, City Forester, Arlington, TX & Showdown Commissioner

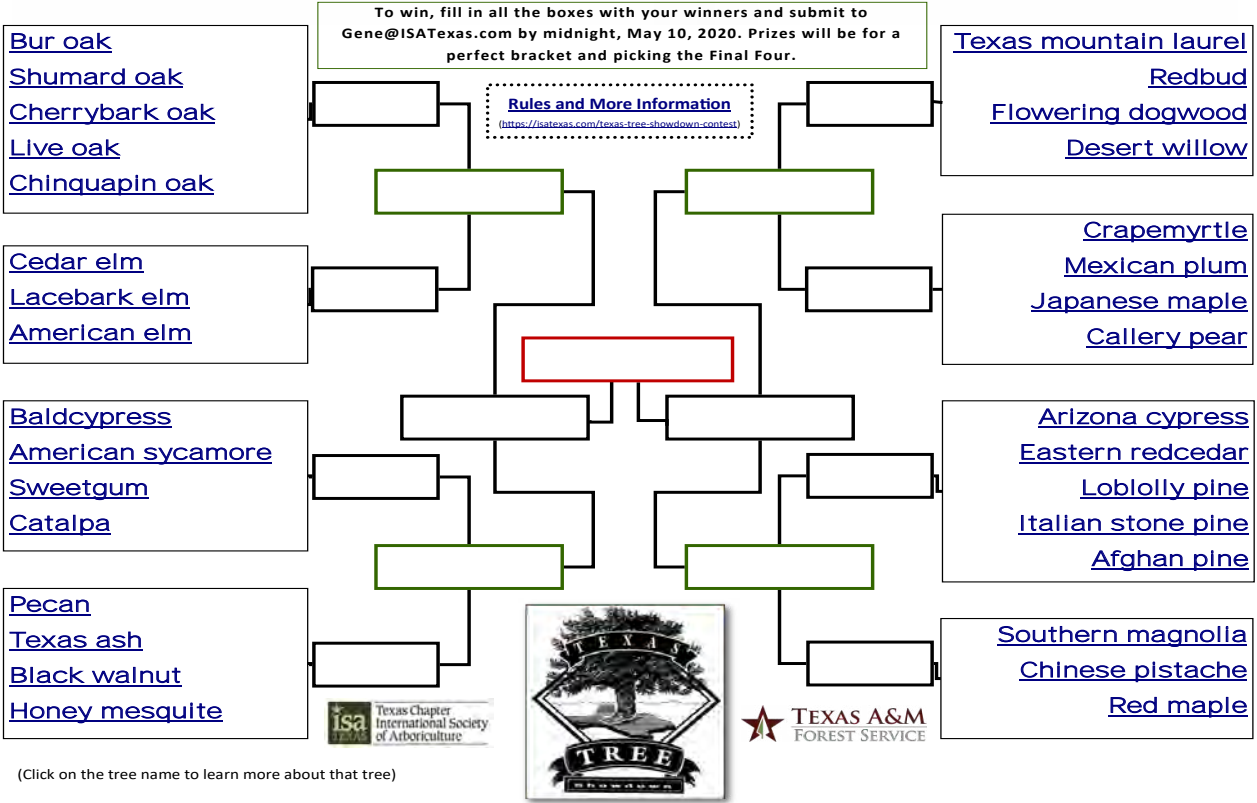
The Texas Tree Showdown is a fun outreach activity by ISA Texas to promote awareness of urban trees suitable for planting in Texas. The showdown began on Cinco de Mayo leading up to the final round on Memorial Day. This event is a great opportunity to allow ISA members and followers to discuss their favorite trees for Texas. The Showdown began with 32 trees available for planting in Texas (sorry post oak, you're a great tree but I know you don't like being moved around!). It was very difficult to narrow down all of the great Texas trees but the Showdown Committee worked hard to come up with a diverse list of trees for all regions of Texas.

We decided that trees needed to be placed in “divisions” to break up the normal bracket challenge. Much like Major League Baseball a decade ago, some divisions were a little larger than others, but that just adds to the fun!

Given the 30+ species of oaks that grow in Texas we really had to make some cuts to get down to five oaks for the competition. We thought there might have been a 1978 Yankees/Red Sox style battle brewing between bur oak and live oak until live oak pulled away at the end of the first round. As well as oaks, Texas is known for a number of evergreen conifers from towering loblolly pine to the tough eastern redcedar, so we had five trees in that division with the loblolly eventually out-growing the second place eastern redcedar. Arizona cypress deserves mention as a close third place for such a crowded division. There were also separate divisions for elms (won by cedar elm), flowering trees (Texas mountain laurel), and small ornamentals (Mexican plum). It's worth noting that Callery pear was justly rewarded (in my opinion) for its poor branch structure, invasive tendencies, and short lifespan by only receiving 1.3% of the ornamental

division vote. Some of the Showdown participants may have learned a little tree biology from two of our divisions: the excurrents and the decurrents! For those that are a little rusty, excurrent trees have a central leader and tend to grow upwards regardless of surrounding trees while decurrent trees will often spread their canopies as wide as possible given their surroundings. Both of these divisions had clear winners from the start of the regular season, with baldcypress being the favorite upright tree and pecan dominating the decurrent trees. The runners up in those divisions were American sycamore and black walnut. We also included a “wild-card” division to allow some unique players into the competition. The wild card race was dominated by an all-time favorite of the southeast: southern magnolia. After the first round the division winners went into a traditional

## Texas Tree Showdown Contest—Pick your favorite tree





single-elimination playoff bracket pitting like trees against each other. Live oak faced cedar elm while baldcypress faced off with pecan. On the other side of the bracket, Texas mountain laurel faced Mexican plum and loblolly pine faced southern magnolia. The third round features the final four trees and the final round is between the top two trees in Texas. The bracket challenge added a little challenge for ISA Texas members who were tasked with submitting a bracket of trees they thought would win each round all the way to the ultimate winner of the Showdown. Members that correctly guessed the final four received \$45 off conference registration this year (fingers crossed that we are able to have the conference!). On top of that, a completely correct bracket would receive free registration to the conference! If you didn't guess your bracket correctly, you are not alone, even the commissioner of the showdown only guessed 3 of the 8 division winners correctly!

One reason the competition is centered around Memorial Day is to bring attention to tax-free tree purchases May 23-25, 2020! The State of Texas has introduced tax-free purchases for trees and other water conserving purchases made Memorial Day weekend. While the final winner isn't determined until after Memorial Day, the two favorite trees for Texas had been decided so homeowners unsure about what tree to purchase could look to the Texas Tree Showdown for the greatest trees Texas has to offer. If that wasn't enough, the Texas Tree Selector (<https://texastreeplanting.tamu.edu/>) is there to help. The Texas Tree Selector narrows down a list of over 100 trees to those best suited for a particular situation.

Stay tuned for the completed bracket to be published in the August newsletter. And if you enjoyed this activity, feel free to let us know and suggest future tree showdowns.



## Texas Chapter ISA Event Update

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, several scheduled workshops have been canceled or postponed. In an effort to continue providing outstanding educational opportunities, the Texas Chapter ISA has hosted two webinars. The "History of Oak Wilt Research in Texas" and "Ask the Expert – Diagnosing Tree Maladies with Dr. David Appel." Both recordings are available on the Texas Chapter ISA website at <https://isatexas.com/events/online-learning-series/> with CEUs available. Currently the education committee of the board is in the planning stage for future webinars. Topics will include tree risk assessment, pruning and many others. Look for the announcements in your email and on social media as they become available.

The Oak Wilt Qualification workshops scheduled in May and June are currently on hold. These will be resume when the speakers can travel and gatherings of 30 or more are allowed. There will be a short time frame (2-4 weeks) between when registration opens, and the event occurs. The announcement will go out to Texas Chapter ISA members first so if you are not a member, please join today.

The Wildfire Risk Reduction Qualification committee has decided to postpone the workshop at this time. This will be rescheduled when possible, pending space availability and other logistics. There will be more information provided as it becomes available. TAMU Forest Service and the Texas Chapter ISA have developed this qualification to introduce how wildfire moves through a landscape and what mitigation options you can provide for your clients. The course includes classroom training as well as field exercises.

The Texas Women's Tree Climbing Workshop has been postponed and the committee has decided tentatively, to reschedule in November. There will be more information provided as it becomes available.

The annual Texas Tree Conference is scheduled for September 23rd-25th. The Waco convention center plans to begin opening on June 1st and expects to be fully operational by September. Texas Chapter ISA is planning to hold the conference at this time and is additionally creating virtual contingency plans in the event an in-person conference cannot occur. The Texas Tree Conference committee has put together another great lineup of speakers. Wednesday the event will kick off with the "What's up Doc" academy, a TRAQ renewal and an "Overview of the Utility Specialist Certification Study Guide". Our annual Wednesday evening social may be back at the swinging bridge (depending on construction).

Thursday's keynote speakers are Skip Kincaid, Dr. Rich Hauer, and Dr John Ball. The commercial track features professionals from around the country each speaking on a part of the ANSI A300 Standards. The municipal track has experts from as far away as Australia. For the utility track, a person will have the opportunity to learn about conflict resolution or how to determine if you are a "Boss" or a "Leader". Mark your calendars now for another Tree-mendous conference!

Please visit [www.isatexas.com](http://www.isatexas.com) for the latest COVID-19 updates and changes to our event calendar and educational opportunities from the Texas Chapter as things develop.

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# Living virtually. Learning virtually. Growing. Really!

By  
Mark Bird, ISA Texas Vice-President,  
City Arborist, City of San Antonio



## What to Do with Your COVID Time ?

Being in quarantine can have its challenges but also some rewards. See some of the creative uses of "COVID Time" from our arborist community ...

"I look for tree related videos and found this one that I enjoy with my daughter <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tgMsmynj6k>"

—Kelly Eby, Urban Forester, San Marcos

"The main thing I've just been doing while locked down is running. Getting out everyday and just going for a nice long run. Only thing keeping me sane."

—Neil Manich, ISA Texas Boardmember

Remember when learning to tie a knot was a hands on lesson? When a tree workshop included gathering at a nice pavilion, extension office, park service center, or college campus? There may have been indoor and outdoor topics and the opportunity to get together with old friends and meet new tree people?

Well if you have joined the two recent ISA Texas webinars you have had the opportunity to see familiar faces and listen to presenters talk about tree topics which stimulated great questions and interactions via virtual chat that gave us the community feeling we have been missing.

The ISA Texas Education Committee will be bringing new webinars in different formats to include more 'Ask the Expert' sessions, presentations on various BMP/Standards (so many topics to cover where do we start....), prep series' that can be lead-ups to the different qualifications, and Master series topics.

Each webinar is an opportunity to earn ISA CEUs. As an ISA Texas member you were able to attend the webinars free.

We are looking for your feedback to learn what topics and speakers you would like to see for future webinar presentations. We are also looking for feedback on the best days of the week and time of the day to present ISA Texas webinars.

The webinars are affordable, registration is easy, and there will be a variety of presenters and interesting topics many with a truly Texas twang!

Remember as an ISA Texas member you could have attended the last two webinars and earned 2 ISA CEUs Free!

**Become an ISA Texas member today.**

You can email your wish list of tree topics and tree superstar presenters for future ISA Texas webinars to [gene@isatexas.com](mailto:gene@isatexas.com).



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— Beth, Arborist, CA

"The entire process was easy and surprisingly fast. The entire team was great to work with!"

— Timmy, Arborist, VA

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— Carl, Arborist, AR



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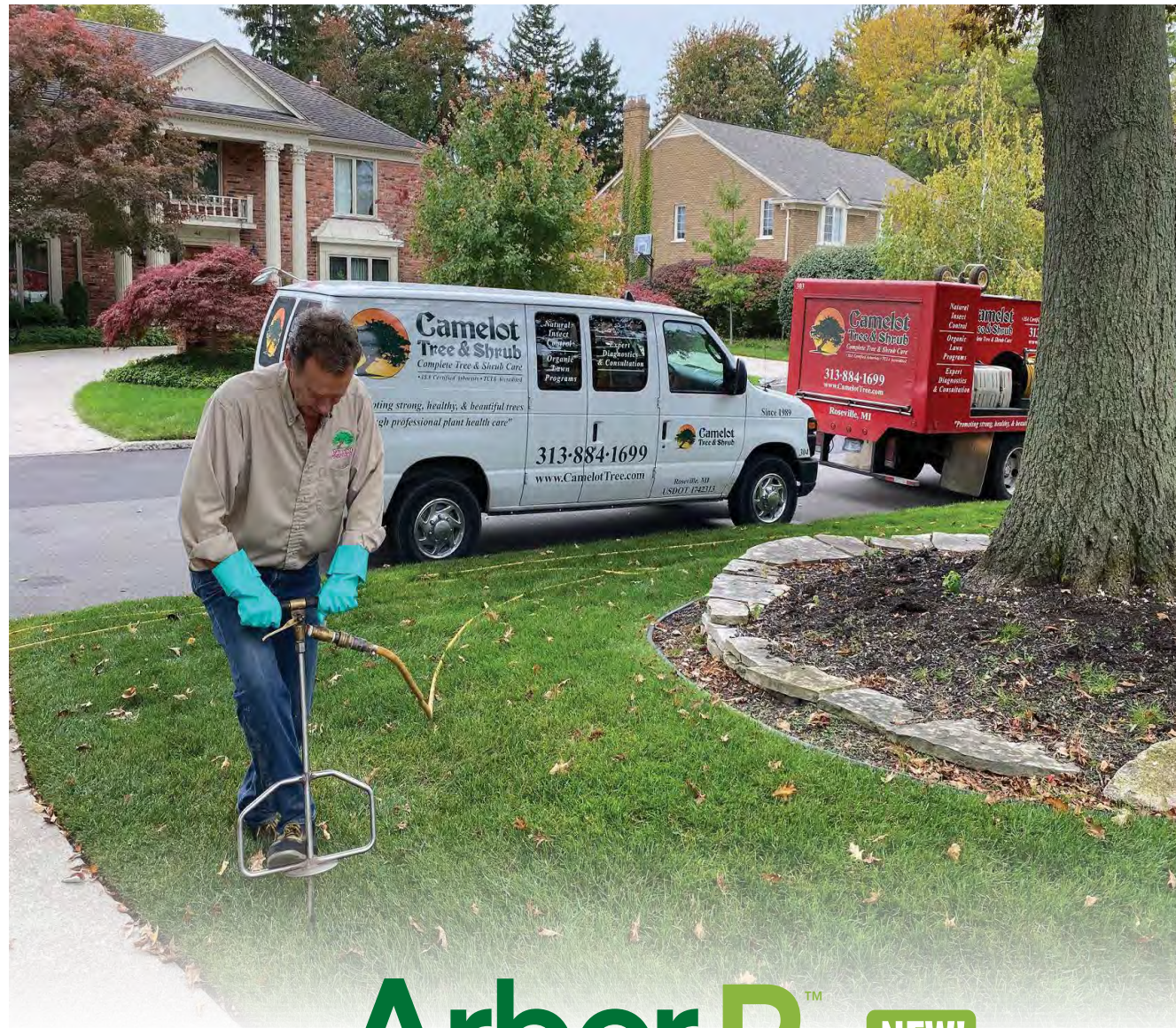


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## Oak Wilt Open House Introduces New Strategies to Manage Oak Wilt in Austin

by

Keith Babberney, Forester, Community Tree  
Preservation Division, City of Austin  
Development Services Department

Austin-area ISA Certified Arborists met at an Oak Wilt Open House to discuss public-private partnership strategies for managing oak wilt in Austin. The February 10 event was a joint effort by City of Austin Foresters, the Texas Chapter of the ISA, Texas A&M University, and the Texas Forest Service. April Rose, the City of Austin's Urban Forest Health Coordinator initiated the meeting to introduce new strategies for managing oak wilt, an often-fatal disease affecting all species of oak tree caused by the fungus *Bretziella fagacearum*.

The City of Austin identified the disease as a significant threat to its tree canopy decades ago and created a position to help the public identify and manage the disease. Austin's Urban Forester Emily King identified the limitations of this approach and looked for a better way. "While I realized the significance of oak wilt in our community, I couldn't justify devoting such a large percent of our limited resources to one disease," King said, "but I could justify devoting it to overall urban forest health." She decided to retool the position and include oak wilt suppression as a component of an Urban Forest Health position to maximize staff resources and address other threats to forest health.

As Austin's first Urban Forest Health Coordinator, Rose is responsible for managing threats to Austin's trees, such as climate change and emerald ash borer, in addition to oak wilt. Faced with these tasks, Rose knew that the house-call level of service for oak wilt was not sustainable. She also recognized opportunities to leverage existing data, and the expanding base of knowledgeable arborists to help manage Austin's urban forest.

Karl Flocke, Texas A&M Forest Service Woodland Ecologist, acknowledged the challenge. "Neither the city nor the state has the manpower to fully survey and understand the extent of oak wilt in Austin," Flocke said. He added that, "Arborists practicing in the field are where the rubber hits the road in the fight against oak wilt."

With this in mind, Rose developed strategies to supplement the City's internal data with input from the private sector.

"In the last 20 years, the ISA Arborist Certification program has grown tremendously," Rose said. "There were zero Certified Arborists in Texas when the City of Austin launched its oak wilt suppression program. Today there are more than 1,000 Certified Arborists in Texas, and many new specializations have been developed by the ISA."



Above: April Rose welcoming Arborists at the Oak Wilt Open House.

For example, the Texas Chapter's Oak Wilt Qualification has expanded the private sector's ability to identify and manage the impact of oak wilt in the field. When her predecessors were on the job, "that resource just didn't exist," she added.

Rose hopes ISA Certified Arborists will get involved in two ways:

- By reporting oak wilt symptoms and public trees that are candidates for treatment, and
- By contracting with neighborhoods to assess oak wilt infection areas, and provide recommendations for treatment to limit the impact of the disease.

Gene Gehring, Education Program Manager for the Texas Chapter of the ISA, said the approach is an excellent idea. "I love the concept of arborists coming into urban forestry," he said. "The more neighborhoods and homeowners develop strategies with informed arborists, the more private business and the urban forest benefits."

Flocke agreed, noting that no single solution will be enough to manage oak wilt. "Hopefully, we will see this program replicated in other cities, or similar local initiatives pop up around the state," he said.

### Online Reporting Tool

Rose created an online reporting tool that Austin-area Arborists can use to report symptomatic trees. This will help draw a more complete picture of where and when oak wilt symptoms were observed in the community. It includes an option to recommend trees in the public right-of-way that might be good candidates for preventative fungicide injections. "We will vet all the data at first, and once we find an arborist's reports to be reliable, we will spot-check for accuracy," Rose said.

While the Oak Wilt Survey reporting tool can help the City monitor disease hotspots and keep the public-facing oak





Please use this form when you have confirmed a new occurrence of oak wilt. Submit one form per address. Multiple trees can be added for a single survey response. Data will be added to a public map. All entries are subject to verification/editing and entries will become public record. Please note, text responses have a 255 character limit.

[For more information, please visit texasoakwilt.org](http://texasoakwilt.org)

Date of observation\*

Your name\*

Address\*

...where oak wilt was observed. Please include a ZIP code. Example: 123 E Main St 78701

wilt map (found at [austintexas.gov/oakwilt](http://austintexas.gov/oakwilt)) up to date, it will only have a small impact on controlling the disease.

“While we can save both public and private trees through treatment, we won’t get effective control unless we encourage more dialogue and local ownership of the issue,” Rose said. With this in mind, she developed resources to help neighborhoods get a clear picture of the extent of oak wilt in their neighborhood, and manage their trees together.

### Neighborhood Assessments

“I can’t tell you how often people have told me they would have treated their trees if only they had known there was a problem, which demonstrates the importance of open dialogue among neighbors” Rose said. “When people contact me with questions about oak wilt I ask them to work with an Oak Wilt Qualified Arborist to determine if their trees are at risk, and to develop a plan to save tree canopy. I also encourage them to scale up their perspective and collaborate with neighbors to get a more complete picture of oak wilt in the area.” To assist with this, Rose has provided a template Request for Proposals that includes a scope of work.

“Some neighborhoods only want to know about oak wilt. In those cases, we can provide guidance on the scope of the assessment, such as whether the arborist will have permission to enter private property or if they will be limited to what can be seen from the street or sidewalk.” Rose went on to describe the “Cadillac” version of assessments. “If a neighborhood has the resources and interest, they might include other data in their scope such as species and age diversity, other diseases, or common trends like improper mulching.”

Once the report is complete, the arborist shares it

Excerpt of the Oak Wilt Survey reporting tool which uses the ESRI Survey 123 platform.

electronically with the neighborhood and the City. The neighborhood shares the information at local meetings and through online channels like NextDoor. Once neighbors are informed about potential problems, Rose and other members of the Urban Forest Program are available to help the community develop a management plan.

### Grant Funding

As a final push to help launch the strategy, Rose is offering to help groups apply for grant funds if they don’t have the resources to contract an arborist. The City created the Urban Forest Grant Program to distribute fees and fines collected by the City Arborist’s office during their enforcement of the City’s tree protection ordinance, with the goal of improving Austin’s urban forest.

“Funding these forest health assessments provides a clear benefit to our urban forest,” Rose said. “by helping neighborhoods pay for them, we hope to see informed management of trees City-wide while supporting our local arborists and the Texas Chapter of the ISA in developing the Oak Wilt Qualification program.”

In addition to learning about Rose’s policy shift, attendees of the February 10 event received updates on the latest science relating to oak wilt and had their questions answered by Dr. David Appel, professor in the Department of Plant Pathology and Microbiology at Texas A&M University. Naomi Rotramel, Austin’s City Arborist, reported on the procedures her office uses to report oak wilt as they monitor tree impacts from development. Finally, Gehring addressed the status of the Texas Oak Wilt Qualification program.

Based on feedback from participants, Austin arborists found this to be an informative, helpful event. Several comments expressed interest and excitement about the new strategy.

“Excellent leadership effort by all City of Austin staff. I plan to affirm and support this initiative. Please continue the excellent work,” said one anonymous commenter.

If other municipal foresters or arborists would like information about these strategies and resources, Rose encourages them to contact her at [april.rose@austintexas.gov](mailto:april.rose@austintexas.gov).

Note: Based on feedback, we broke out the stats below, if you’d like to include them

- 48 Certified Arborists
- 47% from public sector
- 3% from private sector
- 73% were Oak Wilt Qualified
- 46% had 10+ years in oak wilt management
- 39% had less than 5 years of experience in oak wilt management

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## Member Spotlight



Keith Babberney joined the Texas Chapter of ISA in 1994, which is also when he got certified for the first time. He became a Certified Tree Worker sixteen years ago, a Municipal Certified Arborist twelve years ago, he is Oak Wilt Qualified and Tree Risk

Assessment Qualified. Keith also competed in the Texas Tree Climbing Championships from about 1995 through 2010. He won the work climb 3 years in a row and made it to several masters' challenge events. Keith has volunteered as a judge for many years at the Texas Tree Climbing Championship and has written many articles for In the Shade.

### ■ Why did you decide to join the Texas Chapter ISA?


To be perfectly honest, I joined the chapter to get the test discount and the main reason I kept it was CEU and book discounts, but I have gained a lot of appreciation for what it does in 20 some-odd years. I value the basics like In the Shade, climbing contests, and conference/seminar updates, but ISA Texas is much more than that. I am proud to be part of an organization that has gone beyond the minimum to create the oak wilt qualification and the wildfire risk reduction qualification. I am also happy to help support TFS research that helps us all manage Texas-specific issues. In many ways, I feel I get more from ISA Texas than from the international organization.

### ■ What is something you love most about our industry and/or feel is very valuable?

I took my first job in the industry because I was tired of restaurant work and I liked climbing trees. Since then, I have learned that I truly enjoy knowing how to take care of them properly and helping people do it. In recent years, the amount of data we have showing the importance of trees and the benefits they provide is overwhelming. I continue my job because I think preserving and expanding our forests (urban and otherwise) is one of the most important things I can do to improve our prospects as a species while living on an increasingly crowded planet.

### ■ Share a favorite hobby or a fun fact many people may not know about you.

I do some woodturning on a lathe, though so far I just learn lessons the hard way and blow up pieces of wood. Someday, I hope to be half as good as Kevin Bassett. I moved to a rural area near Smithville a few years ago and I spend a lot of time walking in the woods with my dogs and submitting what I see to iNaturalist for identification; early in the lockdown, I gathered as many moss samples as I could find, photographed and cataloged them (I think I found 11 moss species and one liverwort). Last year, I bought my first real motorcycle after years of bikes and scooters, and I was enjoying the commutes to work in Austin, but of course I haven't been driving anything much lately. Knowing yaupon holly is the only native source of caffeine in the US, my next project may be to collect and dry some leaves to experiment with dosage and flavor (tons of yaupon where I live).



**NEW DATE!**  
**15-17 DECEMBER**

## What to Do with Your COVID Time...



*Being in quarantine can have its challenges but also some rewards. See some of the creative uses of "COVID Time" from our arborist community ...*

"I've been climbing trees, it's a great way to social distance."

—Star Quintero, ISA Texas Board member

## Website Has Latest COVID-19 Information

Go to the ISA Texas Chapter website to get the latest update on how the COVID-19 pandemic is affecting tree care in Texas.

Workshop info, certification updates, online learning links, business tips and more! <https://isatexas.com/covid-19-updates/>





Funds for these grants are donated by individuals, tree care companies and equipment and service providers from around the country.

ASTI donors are making an investment in the future of safety throughout the tree care industry.



## APPLY FOR A GRANT TO HOST A WORKSHOP!



The Arborist Safety Training Institute (ASTI), as part of the Tree Care Industry Foundation, provides grants to help fund half- or full-day tree care safety training workshops that can be presented locally and at a reasonable cost to participants.

By applying for a grant to host a workshop, you can bring quality training to working arborists who will take their safety seriously, help minimize deaths and injuries and promote overall workforce safety that is critical for the tree care industry.

**Submit your grant applications by:**  
**August 15, 2020**  
*for*

workshops held Feb. 1, 2021 - July 31, 2021  
Learn more and apply online at [tcia.org/asti](http://tcia.org/asti)

**Questions?**  
**(603) 314-5380 | [asti@tcia.org](mailto:asti@tcia.org)**

## REthinking Business-As-Usual: “All About Trees” goes virtually statewide

By John R. Warner, Certified Arborist  
Texas A&M Forest Service

Texas A&M Forest Service’s ALL ABOUT TREES has moved several all-live presentations to a virtual class WebEx platform. This is in response to the important stay-at-home ordinances related to the outbreak of COVID-19.

Facilitator and Urban District Forester John Warner assembled a cadre of Society of American Foresters SAF professional foresters and International Society of Arboriculture ISA Certified Arborists to collaboratively work in bringing their skill and job knowledge to this series.

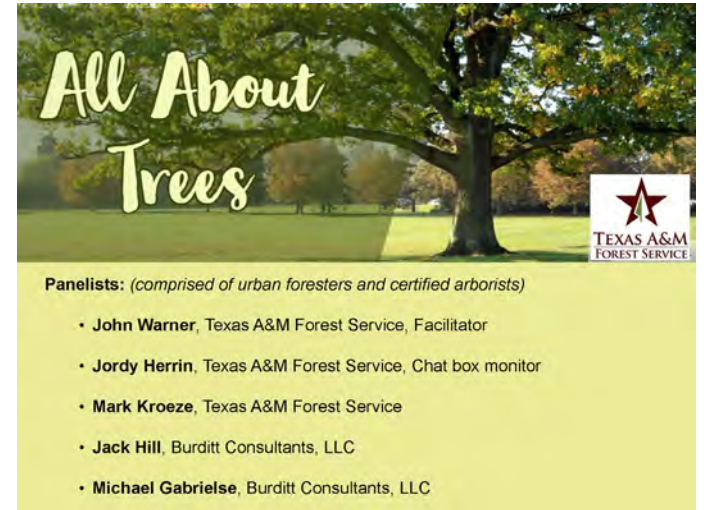
This series’ goal is to enable Texans and citizen scientists to receive relevant and timely training and answers to their tree questions within a real-time and dynamic format CHAT ROOM feature. Thereby, elevating the knowledge base when it comes to community outreach and education regarding individual tree care, maintenance, and the benefits of trees on humans and influences to communities.

The target audiences were Texas Master Naturalist and Texas Master Gardener chapter members. They have an inherent interest in lifelong learning, community volunteerism, and conservation outreach. Furthermore, interactive vibrant instruction provides them with Advance Training credit opportunities.

Also, joining in the virtual class were several members of Missouri Master Naturalist and Master Gardener chapters.

Warner worked with TMN and TMG coordinators at the state and local county levels to register over 275 people within the short turnaround period of a week.

Certified Arborist Jordy Herrin, one of the panelists and CHAT room monitor, stated, “The COVID-19 virus has



challenged us all to rethink our ‘business-as-usual’ way of thinking. Where else can we attract over 275 people and offer a diversity of expert panelists from across Texas in this type of energetic learning environment?”

Preliminary survey results show a majority of attendees overwhelmingly responded that they AGREE to STRONGLY AGREE that the panel setting was helpful, the interactive CHAT ROOM was effective and the course met their expectations and goals.

Thanks again to the cadre’ and panel members Jordy Herrin and Mark Kroeze from Texas A&M Forest Service and Jack Hill and Michael Gribrielse with BURDITT Consultants, LLC.

Based on participant comments, future programs over subsequent weeks and months will feature tree planting and selection, forest therapy, social dimensions on health benefits of trees to human populations, urban community tree designs and planning, tree biology, urban and forest soils, tree disease and insects, tree protection around construction to name just a few while highlighting experts in the fields of urban forestry, social science, arboriculture, riparian restoration, and hydrology.

## 2020 Texas Chapter ISA Elections

by Emily King, Past President and Election Committee Chair

- How can you share your knowledge and experience with others?
- How can you give something back and leave a legacy to your profession?
- How can you develop yourself as a leader?
- Serve!

**Deadline for nominations is July 24, 2020**

Nominations are being sought from the ISA Texas membership to fill several positions on the ISA Texas Board of Directors. You may nominate yourself or another qualified ISA Texas member interested in serving on the ISA Texas Board. The Election Committee will fill the slate from the nominations. Visit <https://isatexas.com/about/elections/2020-election-nominations/> to find the nomination form.

Elections will be held in August and the Board members will be installed at the annual membership meeting at the Texas Tree Conference in Waco this September.

ISA Texas will be holding the election by e-ballot, so if you need a paper copy mailed to you, contact John Giedraitis at (979) 324-1929.



THE NEWSLETTER OF  
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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: if you like Pina colada you will like this tree.

### LAST MONTH'S TREE ID



Last issue's winner was an almost dead heat between **Juan Guerra**, Senior Horticulturist, City of San Antonio and **Pete Smith**, Urban Forestry Program Manager at Arbor Day Foundation who correctly identified Tepejuahe/Great leadtree, *Leucaena pulverulenta*, with Juan coming in ahead by a split second. Juan provided this issue's challenge.