



TREE TOPICS

A Newsletter From Your Friends At Arborological Services, Inc.

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COMPANY NEWS

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Steve Houser

At Arborological Services, we take client comments seriously. They have the potential to influence our company policies and our philosophies. With each comment, we learn how our actions affect our clients and their individual needs. In some cases, the client comments noted below provide us with an opportunity to explain the reasoning behind how we choose to provide service. Frequently, our policies are also expressed to our clients by our actions. However, this newsletter forum provides a great opportunity to provide you with an explanation of our operating policies and philosophies.

For example:

Q: "We only have a few small trees. As a small fish, are we as important a client to your company as the big fish?"

A: The intent of this question is for the client to determine if their "small fish" tree care needs are as important to us as the clients with greater tree care needs. Briefly stated, we do not recognize the size of the fish. Our philosophy is to show the same level of respect and to provide quality services for all "fish". We value all of our clients equally, regardless of the size of the fish (unless we are fishing together).

Q: "You must love wind storms and ice storms because you rake in a ton of money...right?"

A: This is simply not the case. When we receive emergency calls following a storm, existing clients are placed on a priority-based list, and any new client calls are placed on a waiting list. We express our loyalty by serving existing clients first, and our current hourly rate for emergency calls increases a modest 16%. We do not gouge our clients by charging excessive rates. In fact, our emergency rate does not begin to offset the time, effort, and overtime required to meet the needs of our clients. In many cases we are devastated to learn of significant damage or loss of trees we may have maintained for over 25 years. The trees are as much

our friends as our clients; and, the loss of a tree amounts to the loss of a friend. As a result, we do not "love" storms. We may rake a ton of leaves...but not cash. However, when the damage is cleaned up, we are always proud that we served our clients and our trees well.

Q: "Why does it take so long to get an arborist or a crew out?"

A: Elements of the tree care business are seasonal. In February, March and sometimes April, our arborist and production crew backlog can be fewer than 1-2 weeks. As summer approaches, our backlog can grow to 1-2 months or more. To maintain consistency in the quality of care we provide, we do not layoff employees during slow periods and hire untrained employees during busier times. We do add new arborists and production personnel each year, but new staff requires extensive training before becoming actively involved in providing tree care. This policy serves to ensure quality work for our

clients. There may be a delay in providing you with a service, but we are comfortable that the level of service we do provide is not compromised because of demand.

Q: "The client is always right ...right?"

A: This is a toughie. Our philosophy on this subject is based on sound, ethical, and industry standards that do not always lead to the conclusion that the client is always right. Should a client request services contrary to industry standards, illegal according to federal, state, or local regulation, not in the best interest of a tree's health or our company's reputation, we work diligently to inform the client about the reasoning behind our policy. If the client (or potential client) is insistent, we will decline to offer a proposal. We do not provide estimates for tree care unless we will be proud of the results. We do agree that the client is always right ... when the requests are reasonable and responsible in nature.

TREE CLIMBING CHAMPIONSHIP REPORT

by Kevin Bassett & Chris Brewer

The Texas Tree Climbing Championship (TTCC) was held last year on April 20th and 21st in Plano's Bob Woodruff Park. The day included five preliminary events: 1) **Work Climb:** Contestants climb to five stations in a tree, performing a different task at each station. 2) **Aerial Rescue:** Contestants reach and safely lower an injured climber (actually a life-sized mannequin). 3) **Throwline:** Tests the contestant's agility to accurately place climbing lines approximately 50 feet up in a tree. 4) **Belayed Speed Climb:** Contestants ascend a predetermined route from the ground to approximately 50 feet in the tree. 5) **Secured Footlock:** Measures the climber's ability to perform a vertical ascent of 50 feet into the tree using a double climbing line.

Contestants were judged on accuracy, technique, and speed in each event. The top four finishers then moved to the final competition called the Masters' Challenge.

The winner of the Masters' Challenge was then ushered in as the new Champion for 2007 and competed in the International Tree Climbing Championship (ITCC) in Honolulu, Hawaii.

The event was open to all professional tree climbers across the state of Texas. The Masters' Challenge was held across two immense Bur Oaks on the south end of the park. The climbers were severely challenged to complete the event in only 25 minutes. Vicente Navarro, a current employee of Arborological Services, took home the title of 2007 TTCC Champion with an outstanding showing in the final climb, being the only competitor of the four finalists to complete the grueling Masters' Challenge within the time allowed.

The five preliminary events were all won by Miguel Pastenes, also a current employee of Arborological Services, Inc.

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DEADWOOD:

HOW CAN YOU TELL IF IT'S DEAD WHEN IT HAS NO LEAVES?

by Russell Peters

We are often asked by clients how our crews can tell which limbs are dead and which are alive when the tree has lost its leaves for the winter. It is a good question and as Arborists that observe trees throughout the year, we often take it for granted. There are four primary ways our crews identify deadwood during the dormant season: 1) Often the oldest deadwood, those limbs that may have been dead all season, begins to lose bark and can curl down a bit. 2) Depending on the species of tree, the deadwood begins to discolor, becoming lighter or darker when compared to live limbs. 3) The most reliable means to tell which limbs are alive, is to look

for newly formed buds on the ends of the twigs. Buds for the flowers and leaves that will be coming out this spring are formed in the previous fall. Live limbs will take on an appearance of having small bumps along the smallest of twigs while dead limbs do not. 4) Live limbs move differently than dead limbs. When the wind blows, living limbs move with an almost supple movement back and forth while dead limbs have a more rigid movement.

All of these ways of determining what is dead become much easier the closer a tree climber gets to dead and live limbs, as is the case once they are stationed in the tree.

TREE CLIMBING CHAMPIONSHIP REPORT *continued from page 1*

(ASI), Miguel was the defending 2006 Champion and his performance in the preliminaries was one for the record books, as no one in the history of the event has had the honor of sweeping the preliminaries.

As the TTCC Champion, Vicente earned a berth in the ITCC held the first week of August in Honolulu, Hawaii. Thirty-eight men and 16 women from around the world competed in the tropical paradise. The Manoa Campus of the University of Hawaii was the site for the preliminaries. The finals were held on the grounds of the Royal Hawaiian Hotel on Waikiki Beach. The trees were difficult tests for the competitors. In the end, reigning Champion, Berend Strasser, of Germany added his seventh World Championship. The women's final was dominated by an outstanding performance from Chrissy Spence of New Zealand. It was her second World Championship. Vicente represented Texas very well, even though he sustained a minor injury to his thumb in his first event and was unable to compete in further events. Vicente did gain valuable experience during the competition and will be a tough competitor in the TTCC for years to come. Kevin Bassett, arborist with ASI, once again helped with the event as Head Judge in the Footlock and the Head-to-Head Footlock events.

The 2008 TTCC will be held April 4th and 5th in Fort Worth's Trinity Park. Visit www.isatexas.com for future information. We at Arborological Services will continue to assist with these events and our climbers always look forward to the competition. Through the years, the investment of time and money has been rewarded with our climbers learning and adopting new techniques making them better, safer and more efficient at their jobs.

City of Dallas' Arbor Day Celebration & Mayors' Tree Climbing Challenge

April 19, 2007 – Reverchon Park

This year's Arbor Day celebration was in full swing with more events, participants, and challenges than ever before. Events included the Texas Mayors' Tree Climbing Challenge, a tree planting race, and a tree-themed piñata-breaking contest. Several Mayors and elected officials from around the state participated in the events, demonstrating their devotion and concern for our urban forests. All of the participants did an outstanding job. Mayor Laura Miller of Dallas won the challenge and took home the trophy for a second time.

Additional events included the planting of one hundred 2"-4" caliper trees along the Katy Trail by volunteers from the Frito-Lay Corp. and the presentation of the Tree City USA Award to the City of Dallas by the Arbor Day Foundation.

The goal for the day was for citizens and local officials to improve the livability and sustainability of our communities through tree maintenance, planting, conservation, and implementation of sound urban forest management policies. By caring for our current urban forest and realizing the abundance of benefits we all gain, the future of our cities is brighter and healthier.

The sponsors of the events were the Dallas Urban Forest Advisory Committee, the City of Dallas Park and Recreation Dept., Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for Children, The Arbor Day Foundation, International Society of Arboriculture Texas Chapter and the Frito-Lay Corporation. To view articles and streaming video of the event go to www.dallastrees.org or www.arborological.com/community/community.htm.

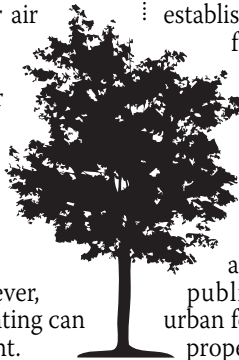
AIR QUALITY RE-LEAF

Trees have a direct and profound effect on our air quality, and our quality of life. They clean our air, water, and soil; they improve our health and sense of well-being; and they enhance our economic future.

The scientific community and regional decision-makers are just beginning to understand that trees offer many solutions to environmental problems. Trees are powerful, full-time, efficient air filters. Smart decision-makers know that cleaner air and greener cities attract business and people, which encourages prosperity. They are also aware that large areas of brick, glass and concrete create a "heat island effect", causing a rise in temperatures of up to 12 degrees. Even a simple one degree rise in urban temperature will have a direct and negative effect on our air quality.

Current research provides important data regarding the positive and negative effects of trees on our air quality. A brief list includes:

- ✓ Trees that shade buildings reduce energy use and power plant emissions.
- ✓ Trees that shade streets and hardscapes reduce ozone formation.
- ✓ Trees can reduce wind speeds, which can increase ozone concentrations. However, proper tree pruning and planting can help to increase air movement.



- ✓ Trees absorb carbon dioxide from our air (biogenic sequestration).
- ✓ Trees remove other gaseous air pollutants through their leaves.
- ✓ Trees also remove pollution by intercepting airborne particles on their plant surfaces (dry deposition).
- ✓ Trees do produce varying amounts of volatile organic chemicals (VOC's) such as isoprene and benzene, which are precursors to ozone formation. But the overall benefits outweigh this fact.

New research is being produced on a regular basis; and, it is clear that the many benefits of trees far outweigh any negative effect on our air quality. However, in order to maximize these benefits, plans must be established to strengthen regional and local forestry programs. These efforts should include a regional survey and analysis of our tree canopy cover as well as establishing management guidelines that lead to sound urban forestry practices in the future.

In order to effectively address air quality concerns using trees, the public must assume ownership of our urban forest and make a commitment to the proper management of this vital asset. In



the future, as the public and private sectors are exposed to current research, we must become stronger stewards of our green infrastructure. We all breathe the same air. By working together, we multiply our efforts, knowledge, and public support. The results have a positive impact on our environment in many ways.

According to National Forest Service research, larger trees are 60-70 times more beneficial than recently planted trees. As a result, tree conservation helps air quality today and tree planting will help in the future. These efforts will not resolve all of our air quality concerns but they are a critical part of the solution.

We have an obligation to leave our ecosystems in better condition than we found them. A great economic future is of little value without clean air. You do not have to be an environmentalist to be an "Airhugger". Assuming ownership of our urban forest will provide a precious gift for our children that cannot be measured in dollars and cents.

To learn more about how trees improve our air quality:

Air pollution removal by urban trees and shrubs in the United States, by David J. Nowak, Daniel E. Crane, Jack C. Stevens, USDA Forest Service, http://www.fs.fed.us/ne/newtown_square/publications/other_publishers/OCR/ne_2006_nowak001.pdf

CAMBISTAT & VERDUR PRODUCE POSITIVE RESULTS IN YOUR TREES

By Russell Peters

As most of our long-term clients are aware, we are very cautious about trusting all the literature and rhetoric we read and hear from manufacturers/vendors when contemplating new products for your trees. We always try these products for a year or two in our soils, trees, and environmental conditions of north central Texas. We must feel confident these products will do what we are telling you they will do and provide the value to your trees that we promote.

Some of you may have had conversations with your Arborist about growth regulators, or iron treatments, or possibly both. Now that we have been offering these treatments for a few years and have had the opportunity to observe the results, we wanted to provide an update of these products.

The first product we made available, Cambistat, is one that limits a tree's

growth rate. The final results relating to your trees have all been consistent with the expectations we promoted.

A growth regulator's behavior of slowing or stopping a tree's annual increase in canopy size has been useful when applied after the pruning of trees for utility line clearance. The small delay in effectiveness after application allows a tree to re-grow a soft appearance in the portion of the canopy that has been pruned for electrical line clearance. These products then begin to dramatically slow or stop the rapid re-growth that can occur, thus reducing or eliminating the future need for utility line clearance by the electric company.

NOTE: It is important to keep the re-treatment schedule current at 2-4 year intervals.

Cambistat has also proven useful to reduce or slow down the re-growth after pruning trees away from pools, struc-

tures, or desired open areas. These are only two of the many benefits a tree growth regulator can provide for your trees, and we encourage you to contact your Arborist with any questions you may have.

The other new product we offer is an iron treatment called Verdur. A full year has passed since we began offering this product, and we are very pleased with the results observed in your trees. Because this product is applied in the fall and winter, positive results are enjoyed in the spring.

The iron treatment is useful when encountering yellowing or chlorotic trees. Many of these ailing trees are marginally to poorly adapted to alkaline (high pH) soils found in most of our service area. Some trees immediately show chlorosis after planting while others take years to be affected. For those of you who have these mature

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CAMBISTAT & VERDUR *continued from page 3*

trees and can not bear to part with them, this is an effective treatment to keep the tree looking greener through its maturity. Many of you may want to try this treatment on younger trees before giving up on a tree that you have already invested a few years in establishing. In both cases, Verdur has reduced or masked the iron deficiency symptoms. There have also been positive results on well established trees that become yellow after some significant disturbance in their root environment. **Note:** *It is important to keep the re-treatment schedule current at 2-4 year intervals or as soon as the positive greening effects begin to slowly fade.*

We need to mention that if a tree is yellow because it is poorly adapted to our soils or sustains significant root disturbance, the iron treatment should not be used alone but with a deep root fertilization program to improve the entire root environment of the tree. The iron treatment does not change the condition of a poorly adapted tree species, but it does improve the color. There should almost always be a discussion about tree replacement when considering the treatment of very young trees. There are other situations where the iron treatment may be beneficial to your trees. Contact your arborist to discuss these and many of the other services we provide.

BRUSH AND DEBRIS; WHERE DOES IT ALL GO?

We are often asked: *“What do you do with the debris from all the trimming and the tree removals? Do you dump it in the landfills?”* The answer is: “No, we do not dump debris into landfills. We recycle 100% of the wood debris generated from our care of trees.” If you want mulch, all you have to do is ask. We have mulch at our shop in Wylie that you can come get anytime (call our office for details). We can also deliver to areas near our shop for a very reasonable price. The goal is for the debris to be put to good use. That has been Mr. Houser’s position on the issue since the beginning (1981), and we have no plans to change. Many companies that do tree work leave debris piled in parkways along

the street for the city to pick up. This can be very dangerous for children in the area that see it as an opportunity to play, and also fills up our landfills with precious mulch and logs that can easily be used to enhance our environment. We asked Mr. Houser recently about this question, and he said, *“We have a responsibility to improve our clients’ neighborhoods rather than create a huge mess for taxpayers to clean up. They are counting on us to do the right thing, and that is exactly what we do.”* As a result, we haul away the debris from all of our job sites.

Note: *We do leave the shavings from stump grindings on site, primarily to fill the holes and to avoid trip hazards.*

DID YOU KNOW . . .

- ◆ Hoptree, *Ptelea trifoliata*, a member of the citrus family, is also known as the skunk bush by some because of the distinctive odor emitted when the leaves are crushed.
- ◆ Since 1966, the National Christmas Tree Association has given a Christmas tree to the President and First Family.
- ◆ A large front yard tree can clean 330 lbs. of CO₂ (90 lbs. carbon) from the atmosphere through direct sequestration in the tree’s wood, and reduced power plant emissions due to cooling energy savings. This one tree reduces the same amount of atmospheric CO₂ as released by a typical car driven 388 miles.
- ◆ Hundreds of nurseries in the United States grow over 1.5 billion trees annually, which reforests nearly 3 million acres. This number represents over six trees planted for every U.S. citizen.
- ◆ One ton of paper from recycled pulp saves 17 trees, 3 cubic yards of landfill space, 7,999 gallons of water, 4,200 kilowatt hours (enough to heat your home for half a year), 390 gallons of oil, and prevents 60 pounds of air pollutants.
- ◆ The Texas Tree Trails has a list of big trees, regional, state, and national champion trees that are in the DFW Metroplex, which you can view on the website or maybe even visit. Their website is www.texastreetrails.org
- ◆ Black Willow, *Salix nigra*, is the largest and most widespread Texas willow species. This willow is a fast grower, averaging 4 feet per year. The extensive, dense network of shallow roots make it ideal for stream bank erosion control.

**Did you know we provide FREE MULCH?
Contact our office for details.**