



Tree *NOTES*

CROSS TIMBERS URBAN FORESTRY COUNCIL ♦ 4200 SOUTH FREEWAY, SUITE 2200 ♦ FORT WORTH ♦ TEXAS ♦ 76115-1499

MISSION: TO PROMOTE PROGRAMS IN THE REGION TO INCREASE INTEREST IN URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY

Join Cross Timbers On The BIG TREE TOUR November 14 – 16, 2008

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If you're in awe of big trees, make plans now to grab your camera and join the Cross Timbers Urban Forestry Council on a charter bus excursion through the Texas Hill Country to explore some awesome trees up close and personal.

The Big Tree Tour, slated for this November 14 - 16, will feature visits to two fantastic live oaks, the state champion baldcypress, vitex, smoketree, bigtooth maple and escarpment black cherry as well as other noble champions along the way. A few of these trees are located on private property, so this may be your only opportunity to experience them in person.

Friday evening will be spent in Fredericksburg with a stop at Lost Maples State Park on Saturday morning. The itinerary also includes spending Saturday night in cabins at Garner State Park with a return to Fort Worth on Sunday by way of San Antonio.

The cost will be around \$200. We will only do this if a minimum number of people want to go. If interested, please reserve your seat ASAP by contacting Courtney Blevins at cblevins@tfs.tamu.edu or 817-926-8203.



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Standing In the shadow of the massive state champion baldcypress tree. Photo courtesy of Mark Duff.

Chesapeake Energy Provides Refreshing Relief To Thirsty Trees

In a race to save \$100,000 worth of live oak trees along Fort Worth highways, Chesapeake Energy rolled out a tanker truck carrying 165,000 gallons of water in early August to help keep the trees alive.

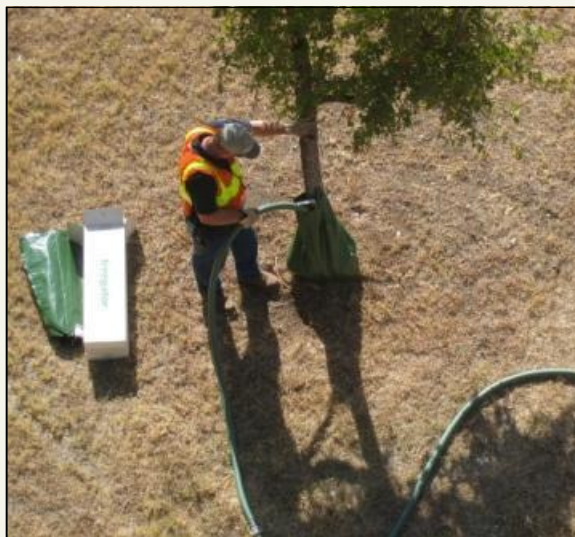
With no good rains in sight, the trees that adorn the interchange of Interstates 30 and 35 would have likely died by the end of the day, if not for Chesapeake's assistance, said Melinda Adams, City Forester for the City of Fort Worth.

"It's going to make a big impact to keep those trees alive," remarked Adams, noting that they are highly visible along the interstate corridors, "We don't have the funds to replace them."

A broken irrigation system and a persistent drought, with no relief expected soon, are endangering between 700 and 800 trees along the interchange, with the live oaks being the most vulnerable at the moment. "They were getting to the point that if we hadn't watered today, we would have lost them all," Adams stated.

The city notified Chesapeake officials of the problem and they responded. "They made an offer to help anyway they could. So we took them up on it," Adams said.

A Chesapeake tanker was stopping at approximately 200 live oak trees, each worth about \$500, and giving each one of them 50 gallons of water. A City of Fort Worth crew was following behind with fresh mulch.



At the same time the city was attempting to fix a desperately needed irrigation system that has not been used for two to three years, Adams said.

In an arrangement with the Texas Department of Transportation, the trees were planted six to eight years ago, with the understanding that the city would provide their upkeep. But the city simply does not have the resources to keep up with the demand in the wake of triple-digit temperatures and extremely dry weather, Adams noted.

So far this year, the area has received 16.35 inches of rain, down more than 5 inches from what is normal. And while some possible rain is forecast in coming

days, it will not be enough to make things greener, said Jesse Moore, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Fort Worth.

"We're probably not going to see much of a relief where the drought is concerned," said Moore. ~ Article by Jack Douglas., Jr. Photos provided courtesy of Chesapeake Energy

Around The Region...

Town of Flower Mound Hosts

Dutch Elm Training

The Town of Flower Mound held a brief presentation and field visit in mid-August to discuss recent occurrences of Dutch elm disease in North Texas. Approximately 20 municipal employees and local arborists attended the presentation.

Dutch elm disease (DED) was first diagnosed in Flower Mound in May of 2005. At that time, the Town disposed of approximately 30 to 40 infected trees in western Flower Mound. No new cases were detected or reported in 2006 or in 2007; however, in June of 2008 several new cases were discovered.

At this time, not much research has been done regarding DED in Texas. Therefore, it is difficult to determine how this disease will behave and what effect it will have on our elm population. Since the disease was found in Flower Mound in 2005, additional cases have been reported in surrounding communities, including North Richland Hills and Double Oak.

DED has not historically been a factor in Texas. As a result, local awareness of the disease is very low. One of the goals of the Town of Flower Mound is to increase the awareness level about this disease. For effective management to be possible, more people need to understand how the disease works and be able to identify it. Early detection and disposal of infected trees is a key component in the management of DED.

Additional information can also be found on the USDA Forest Service website at: http://www.na.fs.fed.us/spfo/pubs/howtos/ht_ded/ht_ded.htm

You may also contact the Town of Flower Mound's Environmental Services Division at 972-874-6352 or visit the Town of Flower Mound's website at: http://www.flower-mound.com/env_resources/env_resources_urbanforest.php.

~ Article and photos submitted by Jared Martin, Environmental Review Analyst, Town of Flower Mound

Flagging is a symptom of Dutch elm disease, which is caused by a fungus (below).



The spread of Dutch elm disease is linked to the life cycle of the elm bark beetle, whose larvae feed in the inner bark, forming tunnels or "galleries" (above).

Great Tree Ring

Congratulations to the winning 3rd-grade authors of the Great Tree Story essay contest for Fort Worth students. The focus of the contest was to identify and celebrate trees that are significant to an individual or community.

The essay contest was sponsored by the Great Tree Ring, an alliance of individuals and organizations who care about trees and are devoted to the development of scientific and environmental literacy in our society.

Visit <http://www.brit.org/education/great-stories-great-trees/> to read all of the award-winning entries.

Julio Argueto, a student at Greenbriar Elementary, received Honorable Mention earlier this year for his entry in the contest. His story is featured below:

A Tree With A Story

My tree is very tall, and it does not have leaves. My tree is also very old. His roots are very big and you can step on them. His bark is very, very hard, and it is not one bit soft. His branches are thick. His color is gray.

My tree gives food (made from apple) to my community. It gives food to a restaurant that is running out of food. Sometimes it gives food to poor people, or people that are starving and don't have money to pay. Sometimes it even gives it to animals. It gives most of it to the grocery store.

My tree was planted in honor of my cousin's and my grandfather that died in the war. My tree is in front of my father's tomb. Sometimes apples fall from the tree, and they land on father's tomb. The next day the apple wasn't there any more. We think the spirit of my grandfather took it and ate it.

My tree is very relaxing. I can read under it. I can adore nature. I can climb it. But most important of all it brings me good memories.

The point is that my tree is important to me, my family, and all the people that know its history. I love it.

~ Provided courtesy of Julio Argueto, Botanical Research Institute of Texas (BRIT) and Michelle Villafranca, Forester, City of Fort Worth

Texas Trees For Texas Cities



Scattered throughout the DFW Metroplex in front and back yards grow bur oaks and cedar elms, perhaps some bald cypress and other tree species that area residents were given free at annual Fort Worth Mayfest

celebrations since the early 1990s. Of course, some probably died after planting or may have never gotten put in the ground, but Fort Worth park officials estimate as many as 15,000 have been given out since 1993 in an effort to add shade and beauty to the landscape.

What many of those residents who planted the trees don't know is the trees they received are the best of the best in Texas, selected initially in the early 1970s in natural settings for their quality, then grown in orchards where again seeds from only the best were harvested.

The trees are the result of a Texas Forest Service (TFS) program at Texas A&M University designed to provide trees which grow best in Texas soil and under Texas skies, for area commercial nurseries and municipalities.

"When nurserymen ordered from a seed catalog, there would be seeds from anywhere," said Larry Schaapveld, retired TFS Forester, who was active in the research program, "But seed from Missouri does not necessarily do good in Texas."

As a result, in the early 1970s, A&M geneticists asked for help from DFW Metroplex cities and area nurserymen to



Joe Hernandez, Research Specialist, with the Texas Forest Service monitors the progress of oak seedlings.

begin the search for the best trees and harvest their seed. Several cities including Fort Worth, Dallas, Burleson, Plano and Farmers Branch responded.

"Seed was collected off the mother trees and put in common gardens," reports Dr. Tom Byram, the A&M Geneticist who heads the Forest Service's Urban Tree Improvement Program in College Station. Data was provided to A&M by cities for a five year period before the best of these trees were added to seed orchards in Lufkin and Alto, Texas.

"The initial seed came from all over, including privately owned property," said Harold Pitchford, Assistant Director for Parks and Community Services in Fort Worth. "They mapped locations of the original trees and kept codes on the trees enabling anyone to search out parentage."

Included in the research were live oak, bur oak, Shumard or red oak, baldcypress, cedar elm, chinquapin oak, sweet gum and magnolia. According to Schaapveld, "They not only looked at survival and growth rate, but at the form, shape and leaf density, all factors that would make a beautiful tree."

"You could see the improvement," he added. "It showed up consistently. They had a 15 percent faster growth rate and a better survival rate. That means money in the pocket for nursery owners."

The urban tree program is only a small part of a much larger, successful project started by A&M

(continued on page 6)



Dr. Tom Byram, Geneticist and head of the Western Gulf Forest Tree Improvement Program (left) and Joe Hernandez, Research Specialist (right).

Texas Trees For Texas Cities (continued from page 4)

in the 1950s to improve pine production, especially for lumber companies and pulp mills. The program grew into the Western Gulf Forest Tree Improvement Cooperative involving five states: Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Mississippi and Louisiana. The project involved years of tree selection, then planting of seed orchards to produce seed for sale to companies.

On a smaller scale, researchers also started a Cooperative Hardwood Tree Improvement Program in 1971. Although funding cuts in the early 1990s slowed both the urban tree research and the hardwood programs, orchards of the superior urban trees still grow at A&M orchards. Cities like Fort Worth continue to buy the trees started from seeds of those trees for projects such as Mayfest and to plant on city property.

“We are just now getting enough seed to begin to think about the next step,” said Larry Miller, Assistant Geneticist for the Forest Service’s Tree Improvement Program. Some of the orchards have reached the point of maturity to produce enough seeds to begin to distribute.”

While some of the orchards could have enough seed ready to sell in a year or two, final decisions on how they will be distributed have not been made yet. But, concludes Miller, “In the future it will be important to make sure that this seed gets to where it is intended to be: the urban environment.”

~ Article and photos submitted by Anita Baker

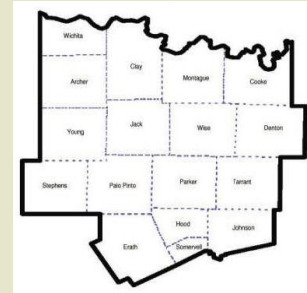


A Special Thanks To Our Newsletter Contributors...

Julio Argueto, Anita Baker, Courtney Blevins, Botanical Research Institute of Texas (BRIT), Chesapeake Energy, Jack Douglas, Jr., Mark Duff, Jared Martin, Melanie Migura, and Michelle Villafranca

This Issue Of TreeNOTES Isn't Possible Without Them!

What's going on in your neck of the woods?



TREENOTES wants to hear from you!

e-mail your comments, suggestions and newsletter articles to: melanie.migura@fortworthgov.org

The Cross Timbers: A Natural Wonder



The Cross Timbers: A Natural Wonder traveling exhibit is available at no cost to municipalities, schools, libraries, town halls and other venues to educate citizens about the importance of the Cross Timbers ecosystem.

For more information or to schedule the exhibit for your area, contact Emily Galpin at: galpineh@charter.net

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For more information, call: Melinda Adams, 817-871-5705





Faces Going Places

Earlier this year, Denton city officials announced the hiring of **E.J. Cochrum** as the city's first urban forester. Cochrum, a

New Mexico native, served as a sergeant in the New Mexico Army National Guard and the U.S. Army from 1998 to 2004. A graduate of New Mexico State University, he holds a bachelor's degree in agricultural biology.

E.J. is also a certified arborist and a member of the International Society of Arboriculture – Texas chapter and was formerly a forester for the Texas-New Mexico Power Co.



E.J. Cochrum

This spring marked the end of an era when **Connie Fox** retired as a teacher and head of the Horticulture Center at Tarleton State University (TSU) in Stephenville after holding the job 31 years.

When Fox left her family farm near Junction in 1971 to attend TSU, she thought she left agricultural life behind. "I wanted to get away from ranch work and major in marine biology," said the former horticulture manager and instructor. But when she discovered she was not fond of some of the classes marine study demanded, she felt the draw back to her roots.

The scales tipped when a friend who was an Agriculture Extension agent told her she was not made to be an oceanographer. "He said, 'You piddle. All horticulturalists are piddlers,'" Fox recalled. She changed her major and never looked

back, earning a bachelor of science degree from Texas A&M and a masters from Tarleton.

When she started working at TSU in 1977, the grounds looked like an arboretum with honey locust, Austrian and slash pines and loquats, most water loving but not practical in the Texas heat. But in 1983, everything froze in an especially cold winter.

"I came back and planted home," Fox said. She planted muhley grass, desert willow,

rape myrtle, Texas sage, cactus, mountain laurels and a



Connie Fox

host of flowers that needed minimum watering. Some of the plants she had to dig up from home and transplant because at that time few native plant nurseries existed. Now, the grounds bloom with cone flowers, trumpet vines, roses, rosemary and a specially created, purple and white Tarleton State iris.

A sixth generation Texan, **Laura Miller** found herself happy to be back in the Lone Star State after a six and a half year sojourn in Florida. In her new role as the Tarrant County



Laura Miller

Extension Agent for commercial horticulture, Miller enjoys providing informal educational programs and problem solving services to all aspects of the commercial horticulture industry, from green industry professionals to fruit, vegetable, and ornamental plant growers.

Laura is a graduate of Texas A&M University, earning bachelor and masters degrees. You could say it's an all-Aggie household for Miller. Her husband, the agronomy major now works for Dow AgroSciences, her older daughter is a May '08 Aggie grad and her younger daughter is currently completing her second year in College Station. Even the family's pet dog is appropriately named Reveille.

Congratulations also go out to **Heather Dowell**, recently promoted to Urban Forestry and Land Manager for the City of Arlington. Among the myriad of responsibilities this position brings are management of the trees on city-owned property, maintenance of median landscapes and irrigation, beautification of the downtown and municipal properties, and supervision of the L.E.A.F. tree planting program and tree farm.

Prior to this, Heather worked at Arlington's River Legacy Park and handled the mowing contracts for the City's medians and right of ways. She owned a lawn and landscape company for six years before joining Arlington's parks department.

When she's not at work or home raising her six-month old daughter, Dowell stays active with her love of camping, the outdoors and sports. In her own words, "My favorite sport for the last 5 years has been triathlons. I have competed in anything from a sprint distance to a Half Ironman."

Our best wishes to all four of you!





Kaleidoscope of Connections

An earlier "excursion" to the week-long Municipal Forester Institute held in New Braunfels, a recent trip home and a short jaunt down memory lane has this author reflecting on a diversion of a different kind...the ties that bind.

A little hand tugging on my shirt and a child's voice pleading, "Aunt Mel. Aunt Mel! Will you come climb the tree with me? Please...I only need a boost."

I couldn't resist an offer like that. Not when the tree was a pecan planted by my grandpa "Papa Victor" when I was in the second grade, and the child was my 5-year old nephew Clay. So off we went...

A half hour of time at my Mom's this Labor Day weekend, sandwiched between the roller skates and all the rides and games at the picnic. Today, he's back in school and the tree a distant memory, *IF* he even remembers.

I think he might. Remember that is. I do: the first tree I ever climbed at the pink house when we lived in town, the time my brother fell out of the tree and lost his breath, visiting with Grandpa Joe and "Gigi" while they shelled pecans at the card table in the den, watching him peel an apple for her in one long strip during the evening news on TV, rubbing the red Texas mountain laurel seeds on the sidewalk until they were hot so my brothers and cousins and I could "burn" each other by touching them on our arms, peach juice running down my chin that was picked from a tree with my first love, burying Tiger the orange Tabby who followed us home (years earlier and with some coaxing) under the tree in the backyard, riding in the car as a child from Bastrop to Hallettsville with the windows rolled down to inhale the scent of the Lost Pines...

If you just close your eyes, I bet you'll remember, too. Not only those first experiences with trees, but also the important relationships connected to them. I've been thinking about these connections off and on since February when challenged at the Municipal Forester Institute to lead laterally from within my organization, create a pocket of greatness and evaluate the paradigms and partnerships that govern how we manage the relationship between people and trees.

In looking back, trees have long been part of the daily fabric of my life experiences. Almost every one of these memories, though, involved a shared experience with another person, someone dearly close to me. Thus, I am reminded, while trees may form the backdrop, people are the golden threads that bind, weave and knit this dynamic linkage together.

Sadly, sometimes the kaleidoscope shifts, and we lose focus and forget this. The ongoing, delicate dance between street trees and construction projects, planting specs not followed, excessive summer heat combined with drought, faulty irrigation systems, and budget cuts take their toll. All too soon, it's easy to feel we're fighting an uphill, losing battle – Alone.



In those moments, I encourage you to remember you are not alone and turn to your neighbors for help: your tree planting partner, your concerned citizen supporter, your tree board advocate, your dedicated volunteer, your colleague in another town. They will be there to see you through.

And, in those saner moments when life gets back to "normal" (sooner or later it does), stop and ask yourself, "How can I invest in the life of another person to build our relationship today?"

Regardless if your vantage point is colored by the lens of private business, public safety, education, budgetary and policy making concerns, or environmental benefits and quality of life issues, we all influence how our urban forestry resources will be managed. Only when our collective voices work together will the most effective outcomes be achieved.

Could you have a cup of coffee with the city inspector instead of sending him an antagonistic e-mail? Have you asked the city engineer to meet you on site to see firsthand why trees are an important part of infrastructure? Is there a legislator that champions trees who would be interested in your program? Have you thanked the two corporate leaders for their recent donation to your program? Have you introduced yourself to that community stakeholder and invited her to the upcoming public meeting? Did you accept the invitation to speak to the Scout group, even though it's an evening meeting, in order to inspire future tree advocates? Are you mentoring your new employee?

Have you taken time and connected with someone else in a meaningful way, TODAY? ~ Melanie Migura

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