



October TVMA Conference

Everyone really enjoyed the YO in Kerrville surrounded by the scenic hill country, and we hope to have the same impressive level of participation October 15-17, 2012 in San Marcos at the Embassy. Scott Dunham was the board president for this conference with Vice -President Larry Mauldin as program chair. Tuesday began with Pesticide Applicator License Training taught by Kedrick Bryant and golf arranged by Mike Standish and Chris Smith. Most of the record number of sponsors setup booths creating an impressive vendor area where attendees could meet sponsors and network with other attendees.

The addition of evening meals on Monday and Tuesday was a change suggested by Larry Mauldin and approved by the board to make a convenient option for those who did not want to venture from the comforts of the hotel and enjoy Monday night football and Tuesday night games with peers. This year's board shirts were donated by Chris Smith of Winfield Solutions and Scott Dunham of Becker Underwood. The board also chose not to have a professional casino night company but keep the hold'em tournament in place and add a domino tournament. Participation was up some from last year and will perhaps increase even more next year if those activities are repeated.

Thanks to those who completed surveys. Surveys indicated the speakers were well received and shared pertinent information to help participants get those required CEUs. On the surveys members also suggested topics for next year's conference-a great help for the board since plans have already begun. If you have suggestions please do not hesitate to contact any board member or the TVMA office. The board does examine and appreciate member input because the conference is designed to serve the membership while giving sponsors exposure in the industry. Please take note of all the recognition given in this issue of *The Clip*. Again, thanks to all the participants, and if you did not attend the

conference or a regional meeting in Tyler or Lubbock, join TVMA to strengthen the voice of VM by sending in your \$25.00 membership to keep member services available and, as always, promote scholarship.

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Regional Workshops

The Tyler Regional Workshop and Lubbock Regional Workshops are growing each year. The committee that works hard to ensure the success includes Layne Fields, Howard Pierson and Mike Standish. Feel free to give them suggestions of content and additional locations for a third meeting site in the state. This year CEUs are being offered in seven states with a program geared to those in vegetation management and related fields. This year's sponsors included: Alligare LLC, Chemical Weed Control, CPS Timberland Division, Dow Agro Sciences, DuPont Land Management, Edko, LLC, Helena Chemical Co., Monsanto Co., Red River Specialties, SSI Maxim Inc., Winfield Solutions, and Wylie Equipment, Inc. Sponsors help defray costs allowing funds from attendees to become a part of the scholarship program. Get CEUs in your local area while helping the TVMA scholarship program.

Presidential Update

It is my pleasure to serve as your president in the fall of 2011 and during 2012. As we approach the holiday season we have so much to be thankful for and so much to look forward to in the New Year. A lot of the positive future for TVMA comes from all of you and the board. We want to thank all of you who attended the meeting in Kerrville making that meeting a success. The record number of sponsors, whom we also thank, were certainly an integral part making the meeting possible for members. This was one of the best attended meetings we have had even with the challenges that everyone faced this past year. This past year has been a challenge for all of us whether we were impacted by drought, fires or even both. In addition to those challenges, we are trying to figure out how NPDES is going to impact all of us in our spray programs. The TVMA will stay focused on the things that impact our different businesses so that we will be of more help to members and the industry.

The regional meetings in Tyler and Lubbock have been completed and were very successful. Thanks to all who are involved in making these meetings a success. Our annual meeting for 2012 will be at the Embassy in San Marcos, Texas on October 15th -17th. We are busy trying to get the meeting lined up with good speakers and activities that will benefit all. Todd Staples, Texas Ag Commissioner, is the invited guest speaker for the business lunch. If you have any suggestions of speakers or subjects, please give those to one of the board members so they can be forward to the conference chair, Walter Hambrick. Also consider expressing your opinion about the scholarship raffle and items you might like to see raffled next year. Promoting scholarship plays a very important role in the goals of TVMA.

We do not know what 2012 has in store for us, but I keep praying for much needed rain. I have faith that we will receive rains, yet even many more opportunities and challenges will arise in 2012. We look forward to all of these and will address them with a positive attitude.

May all of you be blessed during the upcoming holiday season and also hunting season. Here is wishing you a bigger and better 2012. I do look forward to working with all of you this coming year as the president of the TVMA. TVMA, with your participation, will grow in membership having a stronger voice for our industry, strengthening of our association, and providing expanded services to the membership.

Sincerely,
Larry Mauldin



TVMA Mission Statement

To promote and support the vegetation management industry in Texas through professional development, continuing education and training, sound environmental stewardship, and academic scholarship for its members and the public; to assist and cooperate with legislative and regulatory agencies.

**2012 TVMA Annual
Conference
Embassy Suites
San Marcos
October 15-17, 2012**

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Invasive species and Utility Rights-of-Way – Part One

Authored by Ed Cunningham, ECI, Edited by Sonny Tedder

Invasive plant species continue to be a growing issue for land managers. On electric ROWs in particular, fast-growing invasive plants can reduce accessibility and contribute to interruption risks while increasing maintenance costs. Furthermore, invasive plants can have a wide variety of negative social, environmental and economic impacts. As an example, giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*) just made the news several times in July, 2010. Fast growing, difficult to control and a prolific seed producer, giant hogweed is a plant with highly dangerous sap. With exposure to the sun, sap on the skin can cause severe burns. If it were to get into the eyes, blindness could result. This is just one example of a species which requires active management, has real social implications, and as a result is listed as a U.S. Federal Noxious Weed.

While federal legislation of invasive species began in 1999 with Executive Order 13112, individual states have begun to legislate and manage invasive plant species as well. Most recently, Wisconsin has enacted Chapter NR 40, the new state Invasive Species Identification, Classification and Control rule. As this and similar legislation emerges, electric ROW managers will have to focus more attention and resources on limiting the spread of invasive plant species.

The volume of information available related to invasive plants alone is, to put it mildly, vast. One website alone, the USDA National Invasive Species Information Center (www.invasivespeciesinfo.gov), lists nearly 100 recent scientific journal articles, about 50 reports and general publications, over 50 fact sheets, 29 books, 26 newsletters and three bibliographies all pertaining to general invasive plants publications. Over 100 more are listed pertaining to different aspects of invasive plant control, detection, monitoring, prevention, control research and restoration. All 50 states had, at that time, at least some form of noxious weed law. However, only a handful had more inclusive invasive species regulations. Since that time, the USDA National Invasive Species Information Center has compiled an updated, online searchable listing of federal and state invasive plant laws. The Wisconsin Chapter NR 40 Invasive Species Identification, Classification and Control code is one example of a new state law enacted since 2005. Another example is the amendment in 2008 of New York Environmental Conservation Law Chapter 26, Article 9, Title 17, establishing the New York Invasive Species Council and Invasive Species Advisory Committee.

Literature on managing invasive plants is still abundant and varied. There are, however, management concepts common to the various laws, papers and management guides. These include Prevention, Detection, Control, Monitoring, and Restoration. Underlying all of these concepts, either as a precursor to action or as a management tool itself, are Research and Education.

2012 Vegetation Management Conference

On January 19th and 20th of 2012, the Harris County office of Texas AgriLife Extension Service and the Texas Vegetation Management Association will host the 42nd Annual Vegetation Management Conference. This annual conference allows licensed pesticide applicators the opportunity to obtain their required continuing education units in order to renew their state-issued pesticide licenses while delivering pertinent, up-to-date training in the specific area of vegetation and pest management.

On 1/19/2012 the conference will be held at the Harris County Extension Office in Bear Creek and on 1/20/2012, the conference will be repeated at the Baytown Community Center. Times of the conference are from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm at both locations. Topics for the conference will be:

- Drought's impact in the long term
- Top 10 Tree Health Myths
- TDA & Structural Laws & Regs Update
- Drought's long term effects on Plants
- Weather Patterns and their effect on vegetation

(Topics subject to change pending speaker conflict)

Please contact Diana Todd at 281-855-5614 for more information or to register for this event.

Prizes Awarded

To benefit scholarship funds, the Texas Vegetation Management Association held its annual scholarship golf tournament and the annual Texas hold'em tournament with an addition of a 42 domino tournament and a raffle with five great prizes. Scholarship is a major focus of TVMA and the board appreciates the sponsors and participants who make such worthy activities possible and bring a bit of competition to meeting entertainment. If you didn't win one of the door prizes, maybe you were a tournament or raffle winner.

The hold'em winner was Michael Telesz with Zach Holub in second place and Daniel Neiser taking third.

The first place domino winners included the team of Rob Brooks and Lewis Newberg. Second place was the team of David Pruett and Jeff Siegel.

The winners of the raffle included the lucky Amanda Sexton who won the BBQ grill and IPAD. Rick Rankin won the Garmin, Rob Brooks won the Yeti, and Leslie Clark won the flat screen television. Join us for the scholarship raffle next year and think about sitting by Amanda. Sponsors who made the prizes possible included, ABC Professional Tree Services, Inc., Becker Underwood, Chemical Weed Control, CPS Timberland Division, Dow AgroSciences, DuPont, El Campo Spraying, Inc., Farmers Electric Coop, Monsanto, National Tree Expert Co., Inc. and Sprayco.

Scholarship funds also flowed through the silent auction items on exhibitor tables again promoting some friendly rivalry. Thank you to the sponsors who provided those silent auction items.

Hidden Springs Golf Tournament

It was a beautiful October day for the TVMA Golf tournament and despite the extreme drought and dry course a good time was had at the Hidden Springs Golf Course. Along with the fun, we raised money that went to our scholarship fund which awards four \$2000 scholarships each year. A big "Thank You" to all our sponsors for their help: Bayer CropScience, CHB, Inc, DowAgro Sciences, DuPont Land Management and Helena Chemical Company.

The 1st place team: Andrew Honnert, Rocky Wilson, Aaron Joiner, and Michael Ivy.

The 2nd place team: Bruce Moore, Rich Hendler, Ken Kinsey, and Tee Cotten

Longest drive: Brian Dalland

Closest to the pin: Aaron Joiner

Lifetime Achievement Award

Ed Strnadel, El Campo Spraying, was presented the 2011 Lifetime Achievement Award for 44 years of bringing a new level of customer service to our industry. Specializing in vegetation management in the drainage, rights-of-way and bare ground markets, Ed started El Campo Spraying in 1967 and developed a customer base that is still loyal today. Congratulations and thank you for all your great years of service in vegetation management.

Thank You From Kay

I want to take just a bit a space to thank the board for the unexpected and greatly appreciated gift of an IPAD they personally awarded me before the educational classes began on Tuesday. I am grateful to such an understanding and caring group who tackle the tasks at hand working diligently to make vegetation management, which is so important to the infrastructure of the state, a widely respected and recognized field. I appreciate your thoughtfulness. Be proud of having taken on board member responsibilities and the sense of accomplishment that comes with those responsibilities. Again, thank you.

Food & Beverage Sponsors

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2011 TVMA Sponsors

TVMA wishes to extend our THANK YOU to the following individuals and companies who went ABOVE AND BEYOND in their support of TVMA this year!

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Something to Think About

by Bruce Kreidler

Recently, a friend of mine and I were going to lunch. As we were headed down the street to one of our lunch spots, we were just talking and catching up, which of course was the reason for going to lunch in the first place. As we passed a set of trees that I'm familiar with, I interrupted the conversation to point out these particular trees.

What I showed my friend was the burned spots in the trees that were made obvious by the dead foliage around them. After my friend had spotted what I was talking about, I told him that what he was seeing was a result of those trees contacting the overhead power lines and being burned by that contact.

Of course from there the conversation turned toward whether or not this contact was a rarity or does it happen all the time. Since I deal with trees day in and day out, I'm very familiar with the frequent interaction between trees and overhead power lines. In fact, I've written numerous columns dealing with this subject in one form or another.

By the way, just burying the lines doesn't completely eliminate the problems of power lines and trees, it just changes it. If you don't like the looks of trees after they have been pruned away from an overhead line, you are going to like what happens to a tree after a buried line has had to be dug up even less. There is just no perfect solution to delivering electricity to houses and having trees at the same time.

Anyway, back to the subject. Since I do deal with trees and power lines constantly, one thing that always catches me somewhat by surprise is how little attention the general public gives this subject on a day to day basis. Most of the time, nobody seems to notice, or care about the trees growing through secondary and primary distribution lines unless they are being pruned. The trees that I showed my friend are in front of a large property on a major road in Abilene, and the damage caused by the lines is easily noted. Not only is it easy to see, but since the brown leaves follow the power lines through these trees exactly; it should be simple enough to figure out the cause of the problem.

The fact is, the type of contact that allows electricity to temporarily flow from the electric lines into trees happens all the time. The only reason that the particular trees I showed my friend stand out is because they happen to be out in the open where the effects of their contact with electricity could be observed at forty five miles per hour. The majority of trees that have this kind of problem are in alleys and they are more or less, just out of sight and out of mind.

What catches my attention about trees in contact is the danger. I guess this is why it surprises me so much when people just seem to be oblivious to the tree/line contact. I have studied the effects of trees and electricity on each other fairly extensively (among other things, I'm a certified utility specialist) and the fact of the matter is, if a tree is making enough contact with power lines to be burned, it is, at least occasionally, electrically hot. From my point of view, if I had an object in my yard that might or might not be capable of randomly electrocuting somebody, that would make me a little nervous.

Actually, the reason that trees in contact make me nervous is mainly because I'm aware of the possibilities. I'm sure that I pass by other dangers daily that I'm just ignorant of, and since I don't know they exist, I'm blissfully happy in my ignorance. Say, maybe that's why most of the public is ambivalent about trees in power lines. Maybe if everybody had to study for the utility arborist program..., just kidding.

The real reason that the public doesn't pay a lot of attention to the potential dangers that make me so nervous, is because the utilities have done, and continue to do an excellent job of anticipating and correcting the electrical contact between trees and power lines. While not a lot of private citizens spend their days worrying about the possible hazards of electrical contact with trees, utility companies have people that deal with nothing else all day but that potential contact.

While I may note the damage and the cause of it in the stand of trees I showed my friend, I'm equally confident that the power company involved is also aware of it and before it reaches the level of a true hazard, they will be over there pruning or removing those trees. Of course, at that point, they will probably be fussed at for the damage that they are doing to those same trees.

I find it a little ironic that if the utilities waited until trees were actually causing a dangerous situation before they tended to them, they would get fewer complaints about the tree work that they do. Instead, they take try to take care of them before a real danger arises, and predictably, suffer a lot of criticism for pruning trees that "don't really need it".

When utilities prune trees, it can be a real "catch-22" situation. If they don't prune, sooner or later the contact may be heavy enough to be dangerous. If they do prune, they can be roundly criticized for "butchering" trees. I think this is an instance where we have become so used to safely delivered electricity, that the electric utilities have actually become "victims of their own success".

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VM Industry Calendar of Events

January 19th
2012 VM Conference
Harris County Extension Office
Bear Creek

January 20th
2012 VM Conference
Baytown Community Center
Baytown

February 16th
TVMA Board Meeting
Freeman Ranch, San Marcos

October 15-17th
TVMA Annual Conference
Embassy Suites, San Marcos