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Conference Sponsorships Available for 2007

A great opportunity presents itself each year for the TVMA Annual Conference and this year is no exception. The 2007 Annual Conference is taking shape at the Holiday Inn San Antonio Riverwalk on October 8-10, 2007.

Any individual or company can, through sponsorship, help defray costs of the conference and provide support throughout the year to TMVA programs important to vegetation managers in Texas. Sponsors will be given the recognition they deserve at the Annual Conference, on the TVMA web page, and in the *TVMA Quarterly Clip*. All sponsorship levels, and the answer to the question, "Which level best suits your company?" can be found at www.tvma.net. The specific advantages to each level are listed on the site. Many thanks to those who have been sponsors in the past, those who will continue to be sponsors, and those who will become sponsors. Without you, TVMA would not be able to accomplish all of its goals.

Some additional sponsorship opportunities for you or your company are available. They include:

Type	Description	Minimum Suggested Contribution
Scholarship	Golf Tournament Hole Sponsor	\$100
Luncheon/ Social	Sponsor Co-Sponsor Supporter	\$3,000 \$1500 \$1000
Breakfast/ Break	Sponsor Supporter	\$500 \$250

Presidential Update

Fellow TVMA Members

Here is a huge **thank you** to everyone who attended the 2006 annual conference in Kerrville. I want to challenge everyone who attended the 2006 conference to come to the 2007 conference in San Antonio. Bring another person with you. We want our conference attendance and our TVMA membership to continue to increase. One of our goals for 2007 is to increase TVMA membership and attendance at our annual conference!!!! Rick Bennett, our VP and conference planning chair, is going to have an outstanding conference program in 2007.

Rich Hendler, Rob Brooks and I took part in visiting our state legislators on 2/7/2007. Our mission was to:

- Get the TVMA name out to our state leaders; put a face with our TVMA organization.
- Make sure that our legislators know that the TVMA is/and will always be the association they come to for resources, information, and communication.
- Establish a dialogue and spend quality time with our legislators.

We visited the following State Officials:

1. Representative David Swinford (District 87). He is Chair of State Affairs and is also on Regulated Industries Committee. Loves wind farms
2. Representative Hardcastle. He is Chair of Energy Resources Committee and is on the Border & Internal Affairs Committee. Rep. Hardcastle has been a keynote speaker at our annual TVMA conference.
3. Jody Withers—Communications Manager for Senator Craig Estes (District 37).

The TVMA Board has developed and passed a new 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.”

The TVMA Board is developing a TVMA power point presentation. We have a couple of edits left and will finalize the presentation at our August 1, 2007 board meeting in San Antonio, Texas. Our goal with this presentation is to tell who the TVMA is and who we represent. We will be taking this presentation and visiting Representatives in the State Legislature, TDA and other state organizations and develop/reinforce that we (TVMA) are the experts and the Go-To Organization in vegetation management. We will also use this presentation to recruit new members and develop relationships with other associations.

The TVMA Board has met with and started developing a relationship with Donnie and Kay Dippel and their organization “CHB Consulting Inc.” CHB Consulting will be publishing the *Quarterly Clip* on an interim basis. Thanks!

The TVMA Board has voted to be a Sponsor for the Texas County Agricultural Agents Association at their Professional Improvement Conference in July. We look forward to being a Sponsor.

2007 has started out fast and I look forward to an exciting and productive year. Our next board meeting will be August 1, 2007 in San Antonio, TX.

Please be SAFE.

Thank you,
Jim Cruser

Conference Plans Taking Shape

It is time to mark your calendars and make plans to be at the Holiday Inn San Antonio Riverwalk on October 8-10, 2007. The board, officers, and committee members are organizing the golf tournament, skeet shoot, poster and oral contest, casino night, and an excellent line up of great speakers.

Again experts will present informative programs for those who need Continuing Education Credits to maintain applicator licenses or just need to stay in touch with current topics in the industry. Members can use the opportunities at the convention to network and learn the newest technical information available. Vice President Rick Bennet is working hard to have a slate of timely and interesting topics.

Watch the TVMA web page for more information as plans are finalized. The number for Holiday Inn San Antonio Riverwalk is 210-223-1302.

Tentative Agenda for 2007 TVMA Conference

Monday Oct. 8

10:00 am - 5:00 pm	Training
12:00pm-6:00pm	Exhibitor setup
1:00pm-5:00pm	Golf Tournament
1:00pm-5:00pm	Skeet

Tuesday Oct. 9

7:00 am	Registration Opens
8:00am-5:00 pm	Training
8:00am-8:45am	Opening Remarks
8:45am-9:30am	Exhibitor Presentation
10:00am-12:00pm	General Session 1
12:00pm-1:30pm	Luncheon
2:00pm-3:00pm	General Session 2
3:30pm-5:00pm	General Session 3

Wednesday Oct. 10

6:30am-8:00am	Past President Breakfast
7:00am	Registration Opens
8:00am-12:00pm	TDA Testing
8:00am-9:00pm	Poster Sessions and Speakers
9:00am-12:00pm	General Session 4

12:00pm-2:00pm	Board Meeting
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Casino Night

Come join the fun on Tuesday, October 9, during the Annual Conference in San Antonio at Casino Night. Last year the Texas Hold 'Em Tournament was well received! In addition to the tournament, there will be crap tables, blackjack table, and a roulette table for those who do not play Texas Hold 'Em, or who may not have an extended stay in the tournament. Join us for the excitement!

Papers and Posters Contest

The Texas Vegetation Management Association (www.tvma.net) is soliciting student papers and posters for this year's annual conference, Oct 8-10, 2007 at the Holiday Inn – Riverwalk in San Antonio, Texas. Oral and Poster Presentations of original research on vegetation management are encouraged. Topics may include, but are not limited to: biology or ecology of nuisance native or exotic invasive plant species; control methods (biological, chemical, cultural, mechanical); and/or restoration projects.

The Association encourages students that have conducted original research to present their findings and gain a valuable perspective on vegetation management issues and various management applications throughout Texas and the U.S. The meeting locale in San Antonio provides an excellent opportunity for students to attend and present research on vegetation management.

TVMA believes strongly in helping develop students as future stewards of the environment. The meeting presents an opportunity for students to develop their presentation skills, learn about the field of vegetation management and invasive plant species, and meet with key government, university, industry representatives and peers with similar educational and professional interests.

Encourage the agricultural/weed science students you know to present their research.

For more information, please contact:

Scott Dunham – 979.255.3980 or Rob Brooks – 409-752-7627

Scholarship Winners Announced

TVMA again has an excellent group of qualified recipients for the four \$1000 scholarships given each year. All have excellent academic and extracurricular records and are well deserving of the award. Each will receive \$1000 to be deposited into his or her financial aid account, a one year subscription the *Quarterly Clip*, a complimentary one year student membership, a certificate commemorating the event, and an invitation to attend our fall conference with a complimentary registration. For more information about scholarship conference activities contact Rob Brooks at 409-752-7627. Your continued support of these activities allows TVMA to award scholarships each year.

This year's recipients include:

Alexandra Torres Texas Tech University
Majoring in Environmental Conservation of Natural Resources

Kaela Champlin Texas Tech University
Majoring in Environmental Conservation of Natural Resources

Ricci Loughridge Texas A&M University
Majoring in Wildlife Fisheries Science/Rangeland, Ecology, & Management

Tara Raabe Texas A &M University
Majoring in Wildlife Fisheries Science/Rangeland, Ecology, & Management

South East Utility Meeting

The SEUM (South East Utility Meeting) hosted by Rich Hendler and Rob Brooks, Dow AgroSciences, was held at the Fort Worth Stockyards Hotel in May. Moderators David Wall, Bruce Moore and Jim Crusier led foresters and administrators from Texas, Oklahoma and New Mexico in sessions discussing topic such as FERC, NERC, and PUC regulatory specifications and changes, utility maintenance practices, and Federal regulations related to vegetation management. The meeting brought together utility foresters through common needs and promoted foresters speaking to each other to achieve common goals. Thanks to the TVMA and ISAT members for sharing information to make the meeting a great success.

AEP Vegetation Management Tools

Ya know, it's all too easy to keep doing what you have always done especially if you get decent results, besides, nobody like change, right! Unfortunately, in today's world of computers and high tech toys decent results may not be acceptable, especially if you are a vegetation manager at an electric utility. At AEP Texas, we are continuing to incorporate four specialized tools into our daily operations: Vegetation Inventory, Electronic Work Planning, Tree Growth Regulator Application and Ultra Low Volume Spray Trimming. These tools are not new to the industry but since we have appropriately added them we have seen excellent results in both improve circuit reliability and cost efficiency.

Vegetation inventories are being conducted on selected circuits to determine what work practice best fit the given vegetation conditions. We are also using the inventory to estimate expected cost to complete prescribed circuit work, which allows us to better manage our annual budget for maximum return. Incorporated with the inventory is an Electronic Work Plan that is given to the various vendors to direct their work efforts. The work plan takes information from the inventory to prescribe exactly what trees need to be trimmed and how they need to be trimmed; what trees need to be removed; how much brush needs to be cut or sprayed and where those trees and brush are located. The information also includes safety aspects such as how involved the various trees are in the power lines and where bad dogs are located.

We all know what happens when trees are left too close to power lines. We also know that the chain saw is inevitable tool on many of those trees. However, in the past three years, we have worked to include Tree Growth Regulators and Ultra Low Volume Spray Trimming as valuable tools used instead of chain saws to achieve circuit reliability at a reduce costs per mile, which translates into more miles covered with the same or less money.

In summary, as vegetation managers at AEP Texas we have chosen to embrace change by incorporating four very valuable vegetation management tools to optimize resources while improving circuit reliability.

Always remember, "Change is good if you choose to make it good".

Grant S. Ehlen
AEP Texas
Forestry Operations Supervisor

August Board Meeting

The next TVMA board meeting to finalize the Annual Convention plans will be held at the Holiday Inn Riverwalk hotel at 9 AM on Wednesday August 1. Members are invited to attend and share ideas or concerns.

If you have an item you wish discussed by the TVMA Board, email your suggestion to the TVMA President at jgcruser@aep.com or call at 361-881-5738.

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by

Kay Dippel, Editor
CHB Consulting, Inc.
145 West Travis
La Grange, TX 78945
979-968-5602

FAX 979-968-5624

E-mail: ddippel@cvtv.net

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For a full listing of sponsors and links, visit the TVMA web page at www.tvma.net.

Upcoming Conferences

Remember the TVMA Annual Conference October 8-10, 2007 at the Holiday Inn San Antonio Riverwalk!

The TVMA CEU meeting in Lubbock will be held at the Koko Palace at 5201 Ave. Q on October 15, 2007 from 9AM to 3PM. Call Howard Pierson at 214-435-5152 or email hpierson101@aol.com for more information. Take advantage of this great opportunity to earn CEUs.

Dennis Markwart announces to the TVMA membership that "Keep Texas Moving" will be explored at the Texas Transportation Forum, July 18-20 in Austin, TX. For more information go to www.texastransportationforum.com.

The third Annual West Texas Wind Energy Trade Fair at the state-of-the-art Trent School between Abilene and Sweetwater will be held July 10(Small Wind), July 11(Mega Wind), and July 12(tours of wind parks).

Officers

President
 Jim Crusier
 AEP
 PO Box 2121
 Corpus Christi, TX 78401
 361-881-5738
 jgcruser@aep.com

Vice President
 Rick Bennett
 Helena Chemica Co.
 Clochester Ct.
 College Station, TX 77845
 979-690-8368
 bennettr@helenachemical.com

Secretary
 Paul Northcutt
 Northcutt Communications
 6402 Betty Cook Dr.
 Austin, TX 78723
 512-933-9930
 pnorth@sbcglobal.net

Treasure
 Myron Rabalais
 DuPont
 21839 Blossombrook Lane
 Katy, TX 77450
 281-828-0921
 myron.j.rabalais@usa.dupont.com

Immediate Past President
 Ray Erwin
 BASF
 7307 Vista Ridge Lane
 Sanchse, TX 75048
 972-2414-6284
 erwinc@basf.com

Board of Directors

Rob Brooks
 Dow AgroSciences
 PO Box 968
 China, TX 77613
 509-752-7267
 jrbrooks@dow.com

Scott Dunham
 Becker-Underwood
 604 Clovis Court
 College Station, TX 77845
 979-255-3980
 scott.dunham@beckerunderwood.com

John Mason
 Tx. Dept. of Transportation
 125 E 11th. St.
 Austin, TX 78701
 512-416-3081
 jmason@dot.state.tx.us

Matt Churches
 ACRT
 116 Starlight Ln.
 Royse City, TX 75189
 972-358-5461
 mchurches@acrtinc.com

Don Fields
 AEP
 1519 W. Calton Rd.
 Laredo, TX 78041
 956-721-3178
 dfields@aep.com

Michelle McAfee
 Austin Energy
 301 W. Ave.
 Austin, TX 78701
 512-322-6932
 michelle.mcafee@austinenergy.com

Tee Cotten
 Progressive Solutions LLC
 124 Cayuga Dr.
 Athens, TX 75751
 903-677-6061
 teecotten@aol.com

Robert Lane
 Advanced Applicators, Inc.
 5696 E. Hwy 44
 Alice, TX 78332
 318-347-1794
 robert.lane@advancedapplicatorsinc.com

Howard Pierson
 Chemical Weed Control
 108 Lariat Trail
 Ovilla, TX 75154
 806-637-4967
 hpierson101@aol.com

Standing Committee Chairs

Editorial
 Paul Northcutt

Historical
 Bruce Moore
 TXU Electric

Internal Audit
 Ron Held
 Houston Spraying &
 Supply
 1327 Judiway
 Houston, TX 77067
 713-868-0598

Membership
 Scott Dunham

Nominating
 Jim Crusier

Parliamentarian
 Ron Held

Delivery
 611 E. Tyler
 Athens, TX 75751
 903-677-6213
 bmore@txued.com

Scholarship
 Rob Brooks

Training
 Howard Pierson

Programs
 Rick Bennett

Special Committee Chairs

Advisory
 David Wall
 Xcel Energy
 PO Box 1261
 Amarillo, TX 79170
 davidpw@xcelenergy.com

Awards
 Jim Crusier

Budget
 Myron Rabalais

Legislative
 Rich Hendler
 Dow AgroScience
 4709 Colleyville Blvd #58
 Colleyville, TX 76034
 rjhendler@dow.com

Research
 Howard Pierson



TVMA
145 West Travis
La Grange, TX 78945

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

July 10-12
Third Annual West Texas Wind Energy Trade Fair
Abilene

July 18-20
Texas Transportation Forum
Austin

October 8 - 10
TVMA Annual Conference
San Antonio

October 15
TVMA CEU Meeting
Lubbock