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TVMA QUARTERLY CLIP

December 2007

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TVMA Conference

Located on the beautiful, unique Riverwalk in San Antonio, Texas, the Holiday Inn hosted over 200 individuals involved with vegetation management and related fields who came together on October 8-10 through the Texas Vegetation Management Association to hear expert speakers, attain CEUs, attend commercial pesticide applicator license training, take license exams, and network with others. The convention was a great success!

Attendees had the privilege of hearing experts in a variety of sessions on a broad spectrum of pertinent topics for those in vegetation management while enjoying a bit of relaxation. Surveys collected at the convention rated the sessions on average great or good with the biggest concern of the conference being parking. The 2008 convention on October 6-8 will be held at the same San Antonio location with all suggestions made on the surveys for the 2009 site being considered.

The TVMA board is already discussing new and improved ideas for the 2008 convention made by members and board members such as having product demonstrations in an outside location, providing transportation to golf and skeet events, and considering speakers on topics suggested by attendees. TVMA is always willing to listen to member suggestions for improvement and is glad to hear all the positive comments.

If you have not attended a TVMA Conference or have not joined TVMA, please join the members of this organization who work hard to serve those in vegetation management and related fields.

Rick Bennett, 2008 TVMA President, presents Jim Crusier, the 2007 TVMA President a plaque for all his hard work this past year.
Photo courtesy of Michelle McAfee



Presidential Update

TVMA Members

First of all, I would like to thank the membership for another exciting and productive year. Our 2007 annual conference in San Antonio was a great success due to the attendees, exhibitors, food sponsors, and special contributors. The past few years, our conference has generated more contributions than ever before. Why is this important?

These contributions go to helping our industry in many ways such as partnering with local associations and providing invaluable scholarships. The TVMA is today stronger than ever thanks to you, our membership.

Other special thanks go out to our board of directors. We would like to welcome our two newest members to the board, James Smith with Asplundh Tree Expert and Ken Draper with Wright Tree Service. We look forward to working with them to make sure the needs of our membership are met. Let us not forget our Past President, Jim Cruser, who had an extremely busy year overseeing the association, fine tuning our mission statement, finalizing our TVMA presentation, and meeting with state officials regarding issues within our association. Thanks Jim.

It did not take long for the new board of directors to make changes within the association, and we are excited to announce them. In the past, the TVMA awarded four \$1000.00 scholarships to qualified recipients. We have made the changes to now provide three \$2000.00 scholarships and a special recognition designated as the Craig Johnson and Family/TVMA Leadership Award. This award consists of another \$2000.00 scholarship presented to a TVMA student /member or the child of an active TVMA member regardless of their academic major. If you have a child in college, this is for you. Be sure to inquire about this prestigious award.

Throughout this year, I encourage the membership to become active. This association is here for the vegetation management industry. Let's all work together to make it a great one.

Happy Holidays,



Rick Bennett
2007-2008 President

Line Clearance Tree Workers in Short Supply

This past year has been more difficult than ever before for hiring workers to clear around power lines. This never ending process for clearing vegetation from around utility rights of way demands a constant flow of people learning and using the skills for handling trees that are close to energized lines. The construction industry (roads, housing , commercial) has been competing with the line clearance labor market in a big way. It is taking innovative ideas, better compensation and benefits to attract workers to our market. Contractors and customers are paying more and waiting longer as a result.

The utility companies that have been using varieties of techniques to control vegetation are able to weather this trend better than those that just cut and go. The concept of reducing the population of trees in the right of way really pays off in tough times.

Steve White
Davey Tree Surgery Company

Pest Management for Roadsides and Right of Ways

Howard Pierson announces that two dates and locations for pest management for roadsides and rights of ways continuing education have been set. The first is Wednesday, January 16, 2008 at the Baytown Community Center, and the second is on Thursday, January 17, 2008 at the Bear Creek Extension Auditorium in Houston. Registration will be required for these two programs. To register on line:

Go to: harris-tx.tamu.edu
Click on: program areas
Click on: Ag & Natural Resources
Click on: 2007/2008 Season Calendar
Click on: JAN
Click on: NEW! Online Registration

This is a new registration program so expect some delays as soft ware programs are updated. Wayne Thompson at 281-855-5600 can supply more details.

Scholarship Changes

I have heard it said that the only thing constant is change, and as the scholarship director, I am reminded of that fact when I see how much younger the applicants are each year. In actuality, they are the same age, I am the one that's changing, and as I get older the applicants just seem younger. However, in many cases, change can be good.

For instance the scholarship program has undergone many changes since I became the chair at the end of 2002. For the 2003/2004 year, we gave \$500 to upperclassmen and \$250 to underclassmen and we gave out \$3000 in scholarships. The following year we raised the scholarship amounts to \$1000 for upperclassmen and \$500 for underclassmen and raised the total amount of scholarships to \$4000. For the 05/06 school year we decided to award \$1000 to both upperclassmen and underclassmen. Most recently in 2006 I did some extensive research with some of the universities and we decided to change the timeframe for applications from an October deadline to an April deadline to fall more into line when students are looking for scholarships.

Why all the change you ask? The general rule of thumb is if it isn't broke don't fix it. I readily admit that we have had a very successful scholarship program, with some outstanding students receiving scholarships from our organization. However, as an organization we are constantly striving to make things better, and thus each year we look for new ways to improve the scholarship program. We want to be recognized as a leader in our industry and "the source" to turn to for information on vegetation management.

One way to do this is to insure the future of our industry by building awareness at our state colleges and universities and recruiting the top candidates to fill vacancies in our industry created as people retire. While the things we do keep our society moving, people rarely stop to think or recognize us for the things we do. In many cases this lack of recognition can be a good thing, but in building our awareness among potential new industry professionals we need all the help we can get. I say all this to announce the most recent overhaul of the scholarship program.

For the 2007/2008 calendar year the board has approved the recommendation to raise the total amount of scholarships to \$6000, additionally it was decided to raise the scholarship amount to \$2000. The standards for most scholarships are \$1000, so the board felt that by raising our scholarships to \$2000, it would distinguish our organization from the rest and help us to gain some recognition from the students. This decision was based on the fact that our scholarship fundraisers like the silent auctions, casino nights, golf and sporting clay tournaments which have been supported by our members have been so successful in the past couple of years. A big part of this success can be attributed to the generosity of one member, who has a particular passion for helping others. So as a small token of our appreciation for all he has done for the TVMA, the board decided to take one of the three \$2000 scholarships and named it the Craig Johnson and Family TVMA Leadership Award and made it available exclusively to the members and immediate descendants of current TVMA members. So take a look at the website for details if you have kids in college or about to go to college and have them submit an application. We have some great members in our organization and therefore I know that we should also have a great bunch of students out there as well.

This has been an exciting year for the scholarship program, and as I watch my own two boys grow I am reminded that change can be great!

Courtesy of Rob Brooks.

Lubbock Training Program

Texas Vegetation Management had 45 applicators attend the annual fall program in Lubbock in October 2007. These applicators received CEU's for Texas, New Mexico, and Louisiana in this one day workshop. Let TVMA know if you would like to have a CEU program in your area. Contact Howard Pierson at hpierson101@aol.com to discuss arranging a training.

TVMA Pesticide Applicator Test Training

Each year at the annual TVMA meeting there is a two day training course to review and prepare new applicators to take the Laws & Regulations test, the General test, and the Right of Way test. The tests are given by The Texas Department of Agriculture on the third of the annual meeting. This program continues to be successful in helping to prepare new applicators to become licensed applicators. Watch newsletters this year for more information about this program brought to you by TVMA

Dow AgroSciences Introduces Milestone VM Plus

Dow AgroSciences announces the registration of MILESTONE VM Plus specialty herbicide, a new weed control product developed to serve as a foundation herbicide for rights-of-way. Milestone VM Plus is a non-ester, essentially nonvolatile formulation that features a "Caution" signal word. Because it's a premix, the risk of worker exposure and spills during tank mixing are reduced. It can be sprayed up to the water's edge and does not require a special license for purchase or application.

It is labeled for use on rights-of-way, including roadsides, electric utility and communications transmission lines, pipeline, railroads and nonirrigation ditch banks; industrial sites; natural areas; and grazed areas in and around these areas. It is available in returnable, refillable containers that eliminate disposal issues and save applicators time.

This newest addition to the Milestone family of herbicides gives vegetation managers an effective tool to help restore the ecological balance along roadsides, utility rights-of-way and other areas that are now dominated by invasive plants," says Robert Stewart, Jr., marketing specialist at Dow AgroSciences.

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TVMA Thanks All 2007 Sponsors, Supporters, and Exhibitors

The sponsors, supporters, and exhibitors who participated in the 2007 TVMA Annual Conference helped TVMA provide the programs and trainings that made the conference such a success. Enough cannot be said in the way of thanks to those who helped defray costs allowing TVMA to offer something for everyone in attendance. Exhibitors also made the conference positive by making product information and service information available to attendees. For a complete list of all who contributed to make the conference a great success, go to www.tvma.net/conference.htm, and when you come in contact with contributors, tell them thank you for supporting our industry. Remember the conference next year is October 6-8 at the Holiday Inn San Antonio Riverwalk.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January 8, 2008
TVMA Board Meeting
TXDOT Building
Austin

January 16, 2008
Pest Management for Roadside and Right of Ways
Baytown Community Center
Baytown

January 17, 2008
Pest Management for Roadside and Right of Ways
Bear Creek Extension Auditorium
Houston

October 6-8, 2008
TVMA Annual Conference
San Antonio