BREAKING NEWS!
BLIGHT CONNECTED TO SUDDEN OAK DEATH CONFIRMED IN MISSOURI - Developing news on this threat to Midwestern trees are appearing elsewhere in Illinois, Missouri, Kansas, and Oklahoma. Stay tuned to the real possibility of this concern in your region. See page 7 for details.
A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT:
by Brett O’Brien, MW-ISA President

On pages 6 of this issue of Shade Tree Leaves, our Chapter TCC Liaison, J. David Mattox, provides an excellent recap of the Midwestern ISA Tree Climbing championship recently held in Wichita, Kansas. In his recap you’ll find all the details, but as a brief summary, it was a great success, and it’s clear to me that everyone involved should be proud of this group effort.

This is well worth cheering about, because as an event, The Tree Climbing Championship delivers a significant benefit to our chapter and its members. Quoting from the Introduction on page 7 of the International Tree Climbing Championship Rule Book, it easily illustrates this point—“Competitions promote safe work practices, demonstrate improvements and innovations in equipment and techniques, and provide industry recognition to the public. They are also an opportunity for climbers to gather and exchange ideas with their professional peers.”

I think this all rings incredibly true, and why I would suggest that MWISA members seize the opportunity to enrich their lives and careers by observing, participating in, or volunteering with the MW-ISA Tree Climbing Championship. This opportunity to learn and exchange ideas with your professional peers beyond your local community or state level is huge, and is yet another valuable example of what chapter membership can offer you.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

2019 ISA Annual International Conference & Trade Show
August 11-14, 2019
Knoxville, Tennessee

Saluting Branches
September 18, 2019
60 Locations across the US!

MW-ISA 74th Annual Conference & Trade Show
January 29 – 31, 2020
DoubleTree by Hilton, Overland Park, Kansas
RAINBOW HIRES A NEW ARBOROLOGIST
Grow Your Business with the Help of Alison Herrell

MINNEAPOLIS, MN, May 13 – Rainbow Treecare Scientific Advancements has hired Alison Herrell as the new Arborologist based out of Chicago. Alison’s role as an Arborologist is to help tree care and landscape companies by:

• Providing training and education for Rainbow clients on their integrated pest management and plant health care programs.
• Training production crews on application techniques for improved efficiency.
• Providing technical, product, and equipment support.
• Assisting in research and development of new innovative products and equipment.

Prior to joining Rainbow, Alison spent 6 years with a tree care company in Illinois as a technician and sales arborist. She likes to be involved and make a difference in the green industry. She holds a B.A. in Biology from Valparaiso University along with a Masters in Environmental Science from Indiana University of Public and Environmental Affairs.

When asked about her new position with Rainbow, Alison had this to say, “I’m most excited for the opportunity to expand my knowledge of plant healthcare, be a part of something bigger within the industry that develops solutions to save trees, and to bring a fresh perspective to my clients and team.”

Alison is available via phone (312) 448-4017 or email (aherrell@treecarescience.com).

ABOUT RAINBOW: For the last 22 years, Rainbow has provided science-based, research-backed plant health care products, equipment, training, and technical support to tree care and landscape professionals. Rainbow conducts over 100 research trials a year with their commercial and academic research partners to develop the next generation of plant health care solutions that deliver proven, predictable results.

If you would like more information about this topic, please call Peter Vue at 952-252-0524, or email pvue@treecarescience.com.

Contact: Peter Vue | Phone: 952-252-0524
Email: pvue@treecarescience.com | Website: www.treecarescience.com

Tree Industry News Section Rules and Regulations:
This section of the MW-ISA Newsletter is intended to better serve our MW-ISA members by creating another platform for important industry information and news to be shared. Any request received not pertaining to new job postings, job promotions within the industry, industry announcements or individuals seeking employment, will need to go through the MW-ISA Board for approval before published. Postings for new job opportunities, job promotion announcements, industry announcements or individuals seeking employment are provided as a complimentary service to MW-ISA members only. No investigation on these employers/employees has been made by MW-ISA. The printing of employment ads should not be deemed to constitute a recommendation or endorsement by MW-ISA. Non-members may purchase space starting at $25 per newsletter. Payment and ad copy must be received by due date stated below for next newsletter. Ads will run for one issue unless an extension is requested along with payment. If you wish you place an ad, please email our office at staff@mwisa.org or call (402) 761—2216. Payments can be made via check or credit card. Next Newsletter payment and ad copy due by: September 30, 2019

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SUDDEN OAK DEATH FOUND IN PLANTS SOLD IN TWO MAJOR CHAINS IN INDIANA
By Alyssa Donovan TheIndyChannel.com (IN), 7:46 PM, Jun 03, 2019

INDIANAPOLIS — The Indiana Department of Natural Resources warned Hoosiers almost two weeks ago that anyone who purchased plants at two major retail chains across the state that those plants could contain a tree-killing disease.

Hundreds of rhododendrons sold at Rural King and Walmart stores are being pulled from the shelves, which DNR says they are infected with Sudden Oak Death — a fungus that kills oak trees.

DNR says it doesn’t take much for Sudden Oak Death to spread. Planting one of those infected rhododendrons only about six feet from an oak tree can kill it.

Rhododendrons plants sold at 70 Walmart locations and 18 Rural king stores across the state of Indiana were found to be infected with the fungal disease. Those stores were ordered to stop selling rhododendrons.

“My staff is currently working through all the Walmarts in the state of Indiana to remove those infected plants off the shelves,” Megan Abraham, Director of the Division of Entomology and Plant Pathology with the DNR, said. DNR has destroyed 1,500 infected plants, and another 1,500 were put on hold.

The fungus can spread quickly from host plants to an oak tree. Sudden Oak Death has killed more than one million trees in California and Oregon, but DNR says the impact would be far more dramatic here.

“Here in the Midwest, we've got such a large percentage of oak in our woods,” Abraham said.

Unlike west coast states, oak trees are a primary species in Indiana forests — oak and hickory types make up more than 70 percent of Indiana’s foresting land.

And forest product manufacturing is a $3 billion per year industry for the state. That’s why DNR is asking anyone that purchased rhododendrons from Rural King or Walmart stores destroy the plants or contact DNR at 1-866-NO-EXOTIC.

Infected plants will show symptoms like browning leaves and overall wilt.

NEWLY CERTIFIED MWISA ARBORISTS:

James Fitzgerald
Micheal Ponder
Ezra Morris
Kaleb Locke
Yancy Goggin
Nathaniel Demby
Jeremy Elliott
Ransom Routledge
Mark Burgess
It’s getting hotter, folks. And drier as well. And wetter too. And maybe even snowier. What? That can’t be. Actually it can. Although climate data clearly shows that the earth is gradually warming right before our eyes, it’s not just the heat that will be felt here in the Great Plains. Most experts believe that our future climate will not only be warmer, but will also be more unpredictable and punctuated by extremes of temperature and moisture. We are in the middle of the continent where the climate is less buffeted by oceans and thus naturally more prone to extreme fluctuations. A warming climate means more moisture and energy in the atmosphere, which will likely exacerbate our weather extremes. Droughts could be more severe, rain events could be more sudden and heavy, frozen precipitation (freezing rain, hail and snow) could come in odd ways, strong winds and tornadoes may be on the increase and plant-killing cold snaps in the spring and fall could be more pronounced.

In a part of the world where it’s already tough to be a tree, it looks like it’s going to be even tougher. Fortunately, many of our trees naturally possess good tolerance to climatic extremes. In fact many of these species have existed in the region for thousands of years and have been regularly challenged by heat, drought, floods, storms and even ice ages. They have evolved amazing abilities to tolerate extreme conditions. Species like elm, hackberry, bur oak, walnut, coffeetree, sycamore, ponderosa pine and cedar will likely be able to survive more punches from a changing climate.

Conversely, species we have planted that come from milder climates will probably struggle against heat and drought. Unfortunately, this includes many commonly planted species of birch, red maple, ginkgo, magnolia, aspen and certain fruit trees. And sadly, many of our favorite evergreens will be especially hard hit—most firs, certain spruces, arborvite and several pine species, including white pine which has been lost in great numbers in the current drought. Most evergreens come to us from higher elevations and cooler latitudes so it stands to reason that they would struggle in a warming climate. As such, we should think about deemphasizing them in our future plantings.

We’d be wise, therefore, to keep planting our most hardy and proven tree species while expanding our palette of choices to include types, likely more southern in origin, that can better handle heat and drought. Thankfully a wealth of information about such species already exists in inventories of our community forests, in plant collections of arboretum sites across the state and in the trial and inventory work of our friends to the south in Kansas and Oklahoma. Thanks to such efforts, we can already suggest some underutilized species with proven heat- and drought-tolerance: buckley oak, post oak, sugarberry, little walnut, sweetgum, Osage orange, soapberry, lacebark elm and loblolly pine, to name a few.

Buckley oak (photo), also known as Texas red oak, is a good example of a tree we should be planting. This beautiful tree has an attractive pyramidal form, is a relatively fast grower (up to 60’ ft. high), and has deeply-lobed leaves that turn a spectacular maroon-red in the fall. Buckley oak is native from south-central Texas through northern Oklahoma where it is often found on dry, rocky and alkaline soils. It laughs at drought (you have to listen very carefully!). Many other southern oaks also hold promise for greater planting in our area: post oak, shumard oak, blackjack oak, cherrybark oak, overcup oak, southern red oak, etc.

Trees are enormously important to us, especially the way they help soften the Great Plains climate and make this part of the world more tolerable to all forms of life. As such, tree-oriented organizations and individual tree huggers from across the region will be closely evaluating what’s happening with our trees. We’ll be paying special attention to tree ‘survivors’ and working with green industry partners to make those trees more available for purchase and planting.

We’ll keep you posted.

NEW MWISA MEMBERS:

Timothy Hurst
Delbert Atwood
Rhame Adee
Jason Waugh
Christy Ames-Davis
Joseph Andres
Nathan McCullough
Katherine Nagel
Michaol Ponder
Ezra Morris
Brandon Bogus
Kaleb Locke
Yancy Goggin
Sean Wuelling
Nathaniel Demby
Jeremy Elliott
Ryan Theissen
Calvin Chinn
Bill Wardell
Tori Hanke
On June 8, 2019 the Midwestern ISA Tree Climbing Championship was held in Wichita Kansas at Central Riverside Park. An article like this is easier to write when the event finishes up being so positive.

As I arrived in Wichita the weather forecast was not positive at all. The advance team assembled and started talking about a rain out scenario being one of the event challenges. The next morning though the current weather and the forecast was much better so things started looking up. Other than intermittent showers the weather was kind to us through the rest of the event.

So, Wichita and a new local arrangements chair. I am always a little apprehensive with new local folks. Gary Farris, city forester for Wichita Kansas proved more than equal to the task! Wherever he is when he reads this I want him to stand up and take a bow. Gary had the arrangements covered and gift wrapped for us. He really did do an excellent job so when you see him next give the guy a well-deserved pat on the back. He had arranged for all of the necessary items along with nice things like a UTV for set up and golf carts to move the event around. Not to mention the assistance from his forestry staff.

We have a solid core group of volunteers which drive the event. Without these people it just would not happen. I hesitate to start naming the folks that make the event possible because I am sure to forget one of the many people who give us their valuable time for a t-shirt and sandwich. Suffice it to say that without a good sized bunch of people willing to do this it would not be the event that it is. Thanks to them all! But I do have to mention Tim Crews and Noel Boyer who are both chapter members and critical members of the event team. Those guys are my right and left hands when it comes to operations. I also need to mention our Executive Director Megan Benes and her staff. This was their first TCC and they did everything we needed and more to make things run smooth. They even seemed to have a pretty good time hanging out with everybody.

So the weather the volunteers and of course the competitors all came together to make for a smooth running, safe and overall positive event. By the end of the Masters Challenge on Sunday morning we had two deserving chapter representatives to represent MWISA at the International Tree Climbing Championship. Will Branch ( Missouri) for the men’s competition and Mariah Menzie (Oklahoma) for the women’s.

Good luck to them and I will be glad to do another event in Wichita next year!
BLIGHT CONNECTED TO SUDDEN OAK DEATH CONFIRMED IN MISSOURI
BY LAUREN TRONSTAD - The Missourian, July 11, 2019

A blight that can cause sudden oak death has been detected in rhododendrons across the state, the Missouri Department of Agriculture said Thursday.

Rhododendrons with the ramorum blight were shipped from Park Hills Plants in Oklahoma to Walmart and Rural King stores throughout Missouri. The Springfield Home Depot; Stark Bros. Nursery Garden Center in Louisiana, Missouri; and the Fort Leonard Wood PX have also received the diseased plants.

Over 2,000 plants were shipped to 113 locations throughout the state. Any remaining plants at these stores have already been quarantined or destroyed. The agriculture department urges consumers who have the plants to dispose of them immediately.

Sudden oak death is caused by a fungus-like pathogen known as phytophthora ramorum. It is a soil-born pathogen and tends to remain localized with its host plant.

In Missouri, the most susceptible tree is the northern red oak. Researchers are unsure how the pathogen might affect forests in the state.

Anyone unsure of their plants’ origins should look for wilting or browning leaves, leaf spots and twig dieback, which are signs of the ramorum blight.

Infected plants can be destroyed by burying them deep, burning them or double-bagging the plant with its root ball in heavy duty trash bags and throwing them away. Consumers should not mulch, compost or dispose of the plants in any municipal yard waste, as that would allow the pathogen to spread to other plants.

The agriculture department said it’s also a good idea to dig up and get rid of soil surrounding the plants.

Rhododendrons that have tested positive include: Cat Cunningham Blush, Firestorm, Holden, Nova Zembla, Percy Wiseman, Roseum Elegans, and Wojnars Purple. Common purple and Persian lime lilacs have tested positive for the blight elsewhere but not in Missouri.

For questions concerning the pathogen or possible diseased plants, contact the Missouri Department of Agriculture or the University of Missouri Plant Diagnostic Center.
**ID That Tree Answer:** Maple-leaved Oak - *Quercus acerifolia*

*Quercus acerifolia*, commonly called maple-leaved oak, is an extremely rare species indigenous to a few isolated upland forest areas in the Ouachita Mountains of west-central Arkansas and eastern Oklahoma. Listed as endangered on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species, arborists are likely to only encounter Maple-leaved oak at botanic gardens or arboreta that support and maintain ex situ conservation of this species. The specimen shown in the photograph is located near Saint Louis at the Missouri Botanical Garden's Shaw Nature Reserve in Gray Summit MO. - IUCN website: https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/35039/2858212

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**2019 GREAT AMERICAN TREE**

The 2019 Great American Tree is... Rosa the Ponderosa Pine of the Black Hills of South Dakota! This tree embodies the American spirit with her resilience and stature. She is a testament to the ever-lasting legacy trees can leave on their community. Rosa has overcome many environmental changes and challenges throughout her 738 years. This tree has stood tall after a lightning strike, bug infestations and the consequences of climate change. Her adaptations and resilience have taught scientists many things about landscape changes in her community. “We have a lot to learn from this great American tree that has been there through all of our histories as a Nation and for so much of history of the Black Hills.” Nominated by Rachel Ormseth and Frank Carroll.