

Hispanic Committee Gives Mexico a Marathon of Arboriculture

By Henrique Mayer and Iris Magaly Zayas

Early last year, ISA's Hispanic Committee decided to honor the international composition of its membership by bridging the border between the United States and Mexico and by reaching out to arborists and the general public in Mexico.

To assist with that goal, the Mexican Association of Arboriculture (AMA, its acronym in Spanish) organized an international course—the Marathon of Arboriculture. It was held in Cuernavaca, Morelos, February 6-8, 2007.

To call it a marathon is appropriate because, in just three days, the program covered most of the material in ISA's certification study guide. Topics included benefits of urban and community trees, traditional and modern arboriculture, tree biology and species identification, water and soil relationships, water management, problem diagnosis and management, tree selection, installation and establishment, and trees and utility lines.

The last day was devoted to outside activities such as tree climbing, pruning, and safety training.

Speakers came from the University of Puerto Rico—Mayaguez Campus; University of Florida Extension Service; Texas A&M; Instituto Nacional de Investigaciones Forestales, Agrícolas y Pecuarias (Mexico); Texas Forest Service; Asesorías Forestales (Colombia); Tree Arboricultura (Argentina); Asociación Argentina de Arbolado; Davey Tree Expert Company; SherrillTree; USDA Forest Service—Southern Region; and ISA. All of the speakers are members of the Hispanic Committee.

A faculty member of Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana simultaneously translated one of the presentations.

Approximately 80 people participated in the event, coming from diverse sectors such as municipalities, private industries, legislatures, and parks and recreation.

On the last day, the arborist certification exam was given.

The program was the first course in arboriculture offered in Mexico in many years, and it created excitement among the attendees. Participants had an opportunity to learn the concepts in their native language and to interact with experts in many areas. They also had the opportunity to buy books and equipment.

The event was a big milestone for ISA's Hispanic Committee. Many thanks go to AMA for organizing it and to all the people who helped make it a success, including Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana—Chapingo for providing local transportation. Thanks go as well to all our hosts in Mexico for the hospitality and camaraderie.

The Hispanic Committee also recognizes and commends ISA for its support in reaching this milestone. The committee hopes to find sponsors and support to conduct similar programs in the countries represented by its members, other Hispanic countries, and some areas of the United States. Details will be posted on www.ISAhispana.com. 



Tree climbing, pruning, and safety topics were among the highlights of the Marathon of Arboriculture.