



This Kapok tree, thought to be the largest in the U.S., was recognized by the National Arborist Association at its recent meeting in Tampa, Fla. But Richard Baumgardner recognized it as an outstanding specimen long before. He built a befitting eating place at its base. The Kapok Tree Inn has fed as many as 7,500 people in one evening. Three plaques, instead of one, have been ordered to appropriately recognize this specimen, whose trunk is an estimated 10 feet in diameter. Below, John Duling, right, who handled arrangements for the NAA presentation, talks with Mr. and Mrs. Baumgardner.

NAA Offering Non-Members

HOME STUDY COURSE ON ARBORICULTURE

A MAN WHO BUILT a fortune around a single tree and a multi-million-dollar garden, both of which attract tens of thousands of visitors every year, provided further dramatic evidence to members of the National Arborist Association that theirs is a profession held in high esteem and one that attracts a great deal of money.

As though in response to these expressions of high regard for trees and tree care, NAA members, meeting in February in Tampa, took actions indicating they're interested in taking the lead to improve the professionalism of arborists.

NAA, at its business meeting, de-



cided to offer its home study program to non-members and to continue development of a tree fertilizer especially for members.

An extensive home study course in general arboriculture is available, and advanced courses are still being written. Details may be obtained by writing NAA headquarters, 2011 Eye St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006.

Subjects for a typical year's course include: customer relations, professionalism, the importance of quality work, tree moving, tree feeding, objectives of pruning, pruning standards, tree anatomy, spraying trees, dusting, and safety for tree workers.

Some 150 persons heard reports on business management, research, and brainstorming of practical problems. Entertainment highlights included visits to Busch Gardens and the Kapok Tree Inn.

Al Meserve, a Connecticut arborist, provided an interesting background note for this year's NAA tree plaque presentation. It is the practice of NAA to recognize, by means of a plaque, trees that are considered outstanding specimens and to encourage preservation of these trees.

On a trip to Florida more than a decade ago, Meserve recalled seeing a man driving a stake into the ground at the base of a big tree near Clearwater. His name was Richard Baumgardner. When told the man was staking out a restaurant, Meserve questioned the wisdom of locating "way out here in the country." Meserve declined to buy stock, though Baumgardner assured him his restaurant would be one of those "better mousetraps" to which people would flock to buy.

Today the Kapok Tree Inn is nationally famous and is practically indescribable in words. Though the Inn can seat 1,700 diners at a time, guests stand in line for hours. On a recent evening, the Inn fed 7,500 persons.

A special tour of NAA members visited the Inn to present a plaque to Mr. and Mrs. Baumgardner. The tree, estimated to have been planted in 1888, is thought to be the largest Kapok tree in the U. S.

Dr. Charles Lincoln of USDA's Delaware, Ohio, tree research laboratory, talked about the better mousetrap search for ways to control Dutch Elm Disease.

Work emphasis at present is on ways to attract the elm bark beetle away from elm trees and to seek

parasites that would reduce beetle numbers.

Dutch Elm Disease already has killed 40% of the nation's elms, Dr. Lincoln said, and it continues to threaten an additional 400,000 trees each year.

Federal entomologists have found two chemical compounds uniquely present in the elm tree bark that serve as attractants. Additional research must explore several directions—developing the strains without the "scent"; masking the scent

chemically; or developing an artificial scent to lure the beetles elsewhere.

Dr. Spencer H. Davis, Jr., of Rutgers University expressed high praise and offered graphic illustration for the effectiveness of the new fungicide, Benlate. He reported the results of usage on gray mold fungus, laurel leaf spot, hawthorne leafspot, and botrytis leafspot. Tersan 1991, he said, had shown excellent control of dollarspot.

NAA members split into groups to

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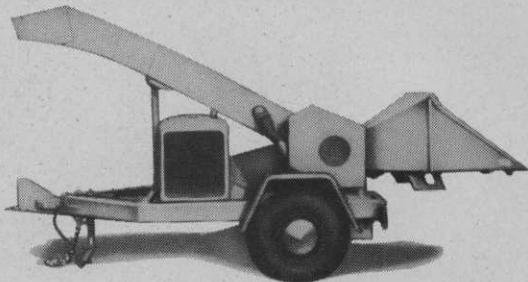
Members themselves provided the subject matter for one morning's program. The audience divided into discussion groups. Leaders then reported the results of brainstorming four topics.



Here is the formal changing of the gavel to usher in next year's leadership. From the left, are: Treasurer — Robert Felix, Harder Services, Inc., Hempstead, N.Y.; new director — Boyd Haney, B. Haney & Sons, Franklin Park, Ill.; second vice-president — John A. Shullenbarger, Gustin Gardens, Gaithersburg, Md.; incoming president — William P. Lanphear, Forest City Tree Protection Co., Cleveland; outgoing

president — William A. Rae, Frost and Higgins Co., Burlington, Mass.; secretary — W. Roland Shannon, Shannon Tree Co., Milford, Pa.; first vice-president — Glenn Burns, Karl Kuemmerling Associates, Inc., Canton, Ohio; and director — Thomas A. Morrison, arborist, Wilmetta, Ill. Director Paul Ramsey, N. G. Gilbert Corp., was absent.

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brainstorm four subjects; customer contract provisions, recruiting and holding good employees, conglomerate affiliation, and specifications for an all-purpose commercial arborist truck body.

Here is a summary of comments.

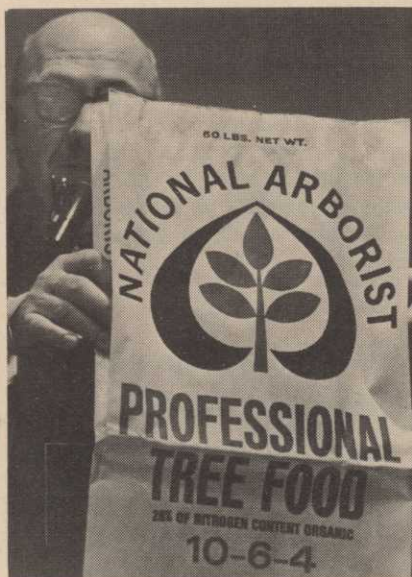
Customer contracts—"Get it in writing." Clearly describe your charges. Include provision for extra work. Have a policy on travel time, weather days, late payment, late work completion. "A well-written contract is a protection for both company and customer." Hold a field conference with customer. Make notes. Draw up a formal contract before work begins. Keep a day-to-day diary, sending a duplicate with billing. Be sure "guaranteed clauses" are understood. Charge for diagnostic work and drawings. Get full insurance coverage. Be sure client understands what you are talking about. Take before, during and after photographs. Make on-the-job inspections with the customer. Make specifications clear cut.

Recruiting and hold good employees—Talk with high school counselors to orient them on the opportunities in tree care work and seek their assistance in recruiting 18-year-olds. Offer retirement programs, hospitalization programs, guaranteed 40-hour week. Use bad weather days for training. Encourage use of the NAA home study program.

Conglomerate affiliation—An advantage is that the parent company is usually well-financed and can secure good equipment. A disadvantage is that your business could be sold out from under you. The group felt that while some companies might be looking for a tax loss, most would buy a tree company with good potential for long-term profit. The consensus was that there was no immediate danger of conglomerates taking over.

Specifications for an all-purpose arborist truck—This project appears to be a hopeless case at present. Laws are said to vary too much from state to state. Most companies design a truck to their particular specialty. For example, some do only spraying, some only trimming, some trimming and disposal, and so on. The group proposed that another equipment survey be taken. One arborist reported purchasing an equipment van. The vehicle afforded better storage and accessibility for tools, and in cold weather it was an ideal warm place for workers to eat when they're working in the field.

Safety awards were presented to three companies: Karl Kuemmerling Associates, Inc., Canton, Ohio, more than 100 employees; Chas. F. Irish Co., Inc., Warren, Mich., 25-100 employees; and Landscape Foresters, Ltd., Bronxville, N.Y., 25 employees or less.



Two kinds of tree food here. Dan Brogan, manager of professional sales for Agrico Chemical Co., holds up the bag for NAA professional tree food. While the program is going to be continued and expanded, economics limits the availability of the product to the eastern half of the U.S. But Mrs. H. C. Wilson's "tree food" is always available with just a little effort. Look closely for the tree design in this pound cake. Mix up two-third of the batter and pour into the cake pan, she said. Tint the remaining batter and pour it on top. Then pass a knife through the batter to form the trunk. It's very simple, said Mrs. Wilson, but she wouldn't guarantee what variety of tree you will get. That's the surprising part, she added.



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