

THE 2008 AMERIDENDRO AWARDS

Henri D. Grissino-Mayer

At the First AmeriDendro Conference held at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver on 22–27 June 2008, awards were presented to eminent dendrochronologists of the Americas who have helped shaped the field of tree-ring science. The Organizing Committee of the conference chose Dr. Henri Grissino-Mayer (University of Tennessee, USA) to chair an Awards Committee that would create the first awards in the field named for prominent dendrochronologists. Dr. Grissino-Mayer assembled a committee of esteemed dendrochronologists from all parts of the Americas, representing various fields in the tree-ring sciences: Dr. Jacques Tardif, University of Winnipeg, CANADA; Dr. James H. Speer, Indiana State University, USA; Dr. José Villanueva-Díaz, INIFAP, MEXICO; Dr. Stephen E. Nash, Denver Museum of Nature and Science, USA; and Dr. Ricardo Villalba, CRICYT, ARGENTINA. The committee spent several months deciding on the number of awards to be presented and for whom the awards were to be named. Nominees for the three awards were solicited from the dendrochronological community via the ITRDB listserv several months prior to the conference. The Awards Committee took the nomination material and discussed at considerable length the merits of nominees to determine the final recipients. This was a very difficult task because of the qualifications of several of the nominees. These recurring awards will be given at each future AmeriDendro conference held every few years.

The José A. Boninsegna Frontiers in Dendrochronology Award

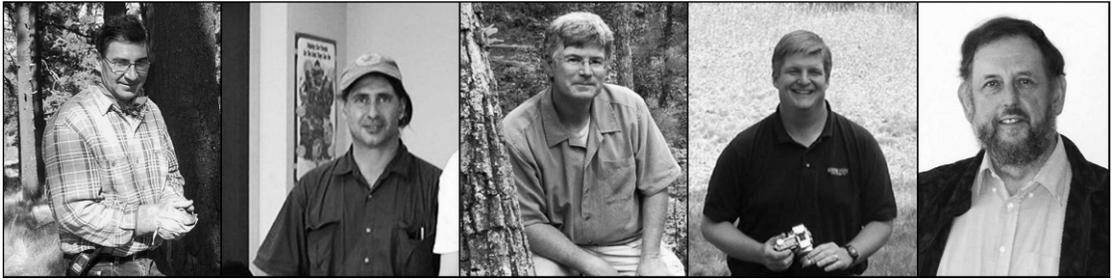
The José A. Boninsegna Frontiers in Dendrochronology Award is given to a person who has contributed significantly to cutting-edge science in dendrochronology, including the bridging of geographic, research, or methodological frontiers. The influence of José “Pepe” Boninsegna in the field of dendrochronology is pervasive, not just in South America, but throughout the world. Opening the trees and forests of the southern hemisphere to tree-ring scientists has made possible the reconstruction of climate on scales that would have seemed impossible to A.E. Douglass and Edmund Schulman.

The first recipient of this award is Dr. José Villanueva-Díaz of the Instituto Nacional de Investigaciones Forestale, Agrícolas y Pecuarias (National Institute of Forest, Agricultural, and Livestock Investigations). Dr. Villanueva-Díaz has a long history in dendrochronology, having published an enormous amount of literature in the tree-ring sciences, and often conducting research where few would have thought tree-ring research was even possible. In addition to his impressive research and publication record, Dr. Villanueva-Díaz is a facilitator of research, bringing together scientists from the northern and southern hemisphere, so that our knowledge of past climate can be expanded to hemispheric spatial scales. Today, nearly every publication that involves expansive networks of tree-ring sites to reconstruct climate in the Americas has the name of José Villanueva-Díaz in the list of authors. He is deserving of the inaugural José A. Boninsegna Frontiers in Dendrochronology Award.

The Richard L. Holmes Award for Outstanding Service to Dendrochronology

The Richard L. Holmes Award for Outstanding Service to Dendrochronology is given to a person who has provided outstanding service to dendrochronology in any of several forms, including educational service, teaching service, committee membership, positions served, software and hardware development, database development, and e-communications. The contributions of Richard Holmes are incomparable, as Richard would learn the Fortran programming language, write computer programs that today are mainstays of the field, and in the 1980s, visit emerging tree-ring laboratories at Columbia University, Hamburg, Germany, and of course Mendoza, Argentina, to ensure they had the latest technology to conduct tree-ring research.

Befitting Richard’s legacy, the Awards Committee decided to honor three individuals who have worked tirelessly in service to the tree-ring community. These individuals have organized and participated in the North American Dendroecological Fieldweeks (NADEF) for 18 years. The fieldweek itself has helped educate over 1000 students interested in learning dendrochronology, and has been a driving force that



Dr. José Villanueva-Díaz

Mr. Paul J. Krusic

Dr. Peter M. Brown

Dr. James H. Speer

Dr. Brian H. Luckman

has ensured the success and visibility of dendrochronology. The amount of energy and time needed to devote to the organizing of this fieldweek is enormous, yet these three individuals did so on their own time, and have never been compensated or formally recognized by their peers for their efforts.

Paul Krusic planted the seed of the NADEF in 1989 when he himself, a lab assistant at the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory Tree-Ring Lab at Columbia University, attended the second international fieldweek organized by Fritz Schweingruber in Europe. In 1990, through his efforts, the first NADEF was held at Pinkham Notch, New Hampshire. In addition, Paul is well-known for his contributions to the development of software in dendrochronology and his efforts to help create a measurement system that was economical yet precise.

The efforts of Peter Brown formally created and expanded the venue of the fieldweek that we see and experience today, including the use of research stations throughout the U.S. and Canada in which to hold these events. Peter helped lay the foundation for encouraging not just students and professors interested in dendrochronology to attend, but through his contacts, many professional foresters and research scientists would soon know the value of attending the fieldweek. We also know Peter through his over 30 years of experience in dendrochronology, where many have benefited from his knowledge both in the field and in the laboratory.

Under the direction of Jim Speer, the North American Dendroecological Fieldweek has matured into the well organized, highly efficient educational venue it is today, complete with its own comprehensive web site. Since the late 1990s, Jim has driven from his location in Indiana to every fieldweek location, hauling numerous vanloads of students and equipment that are vital to the success of the fieldweek. Making national and international arrangements for the fieldweek is a daunting task, yet Jim has managed to provide a simply incomparable learning experience to all participants.

The Harold C. Fritts Award for Lifetime Achievement in Dendrochronology

The Harold C. Fritts Award for Lifetime Achievement in Dendrochronology is given to a person who has significantly influenced the field of dendrochronology, emphasizing innovative research that has advanced the tree-ring sciences and made it more recognizable among our peer sciences. Hal was perhaps the earliest tree-ring scientist whose research transcended numerous scientific fields of inquiry, such as biology, ecology, climatology, archaeology, and geosciences. In 1976 Hal published the classic book *Tree Rings and Climate* that today remains a timeless mainstay in our field. Over these many decades, Hal has supervised students who today constitute some of the best minds in the field, here in the Americas and abroad.

The first-ever recipient of the inaugural Harold C. Fritts Award is Brian Luckman of the Department of Geography at the University of Western Ontario. Dr. Luckman pioneered glacial applications of dendrogeomorphology and environmental change over the past 1000 years (especially the Little Ice Age period) studying primarily in the Canadian Rocky Mountains. He and his students have advanced our understanding of climate change during the last millennium, including major studies on drought, climate change, and glacial dynamics over large networks of tree-ring sites. This vast network of sites incorporates multiple species and has immensely helped our understanding of climate change in the Northern Hemisphere. Writing in support of his nomination for the Fritts Award, colleagues of Dr. Luckman noted the broad scope of his research interests and his enormous contribution to tree-ring science in Canada and abroad. Many recognized his work with the Inter-American Institute for Global Change spearheading a major collaborative research program on the hydrology of the American Cordillera. They also made special mention of the effort made by Dr. Luckman and his family to help international students adjust to life in Canada. [With contribution from Scott St. George]