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2001 Commitments

Happy New Year to the tree care industry. At last the argument is over—we are in the 21st century no matter how you count! Traditionally, you will read many editorials and inspirational messages around this time of year that encourage us to make New Year’s resolutions. About March or so, there is another round of editorials that berates all of us for having no stamina with our resolutions.

I’d like to offer a slightly different spin on things. Resolutions, and their subsequent breaking, usually come from unrealistic expectations of who we want to be, what we would like to look like, or new stuff we would like to acquire. It seems that unless there is a crisis in our lives that involves health, the loss of a loved one, or a religious experience, we don’t really take the time to ask ourselves what we want out of life … and then do something about it.

One of the most interesting philosophies I have run into in the last five years is one that espouses less “doing” and more “being” to become a more fulfilled individual and one who contributes more to others. When I evaluated how I was going about life, it certainly involved a lot of “doing.” In the “doing,” I certainly did my best to live up to the values and principles I held dear and to be a role model in how things got done. However, as the amount of “doing” continued to grow, I realized that there was dissatisfaction developing in my life. I worked so hard at what I did and worked at making sure that all of the staff, leaders, friends, and family in my life were attended to, that the very joy in those interactions was being lost somewhere along the way.

So I took stock. I love people, and I love helping people to be more than they ever dreamed they could be. I also love focusing organizations so that the common goals of a lot of people are met. However, in the midst of all the “doing,” the very people that you care about can become some-thing else that is ticked off a list. I decided that I only have one shot at this life, and I was not going to “do” it away. My conscious decision was to stop when someone walked in my office and actu-
ally had a real interaction with them as a human being—not just take care of whatever the issue was of the moment. I decided that I was not going to let Christmas just become another long list of things to do that got checked off a list. I decided I was going to take the time to do the things that enriched me as a person. My focus became working on the community of people, wherever I was, and the full development of friendships. Ultimately, these changes led to my arrival at NAA. I became determined to make a valued contribution that did not consume my soul as well.

I ask that you take a hard look at yourself. Look at the people around you and consider what they mean to you. Are your crews and office staff people in your eyes—or a set of legs and hands that get the next job done? Have you taken the time to really stop and talk to them about what matters to them, or do you rush so much that you miss the real message of life you could have shared as people? Do you think of those with whom you work as valued and part of your team worth “being” with, as opposed to just “doing” a job with?

New Year’s resolutions are about commitments to ourselves. Instead of picking something passing, like losing the next 10 pounds, why not commit yourself to the people around you in a very real way? If you already are conscious of what “being” instead of “doing” can bring into your life, share it with your colleagues. The satisfaction in life will increase tremendously and helps put the perspective on all the things that “doing” consumes. The bottom line is this: If we leave this world today, the stuff that needs “doing” is still going to be there. Is anybody going to care that you’re not there to “be” with?

You have a chance to reach a lot of people—customers, employees, families and friends. “Be-

ing” authentic with them can change your life and theirs. You’ll never know if the real job was a message you were to bring to a customer about something other than the status of their trees, until you stop and take the time to really “be” and listen. Happy “Being!”
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Ready to test your winter weather wisdom? Which of the following is true?

A) Snow is a foe of woody plants, causing all kinds of damage and sometimes even killing the plant.
B) Snow is a friend of woody plants, insulating the ground in ways that help protect the plant.
C) Snow is both friend and foe.

"Snow can be a mixed blessing for woody plants," notes Dr. Abbas Shirazi, research horticulturist at The Morton Arboretum in Lisle, Ill. "It causes its share of damage, as we all know, but in many cases it also protects plants and their roots against extreme fluctuations in temperature that could damage or even kill the plants."

"Snow is a good thing for roots. It moderates temperature and provides moisture for spring," says Mike Zins, a horticulturist with the University of Minnesota extension service at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum. "When it comes to the flip side—whether snow can be damaging—it makes a big difference what kind of snow and when it comes," he adds.

People prone to categorizing such things say snow causes four kinds of damage: bending; breaking; splitting; and falling or uprooting. Whether woody plants will be damaged in one of these ways depends upon several factors.

First, there’s the type of tree. Coniferous evergreens, for instance, can bear more snow weight (50 kilograms per meter) than broadleaf evergreens (25 kilograms per meter), according to Shirazi. A tree’s form can also be a factor in how well it will withstand heavy snow. Pines, spruces and firs with spread branches are more likely to be damaged by heavy snowfall than trees with steeper angled branches.

Pyramidal arborvitae is a good example of a plant that doesn’t handle heavy snow well. "They’re multi-stemmed—usually branching low to the ground," according to Zins. "They tend to get tall and lanky. If they get loaded down with snow, they’ll split right open. I’m sure you’ve seen it many times. I wouldn’t recommend planting that species in an area that gets ‘globby,’ wet snow. I especially wouldn’t plant it near buildings where snow can come roaring off the roof and cause a lot of damage. A single-stemmed, deciduous tree would be a better choice for a location like that."

In places that habitually receive heavy snowfall, woody plants have actually adapted their form over the ages to better accommodate snow, according to Shirazi. Conifers such as Cephalotaxus harringtonia, subsp. nana, Taxus caspidata, var. nana and Juniperus communis, var. nipponica developed their dwarf forms as adaptations to heavy snowfall in their native Japan. Shirazi adds that adaptation to winter conditions also has been observed in genus Camellia.

A tree’s structure is also a factor in whether it will be damaged by ice storms or heavy, wet snow. "A tree with good, right-angle branches will have less trouble than one with narrow crotches that get loaded with snow, which can then cause splitting," Zins explains. "You could hang cannon balls off a sturdy tree, like a Kentucky coffee tree (Gymnocladus dioicus), and it wouldn’t break. A light-structured tree like a birch can become loaded with snow and split."

Wind conditions also affect a tree’s ability to tolerate snow.
The Impact of Snow on Woody Plants

By Patrice Peltier

Although wind can be very damaging, particularly to ice-coated branches, it can also be helpful while snow is falling. “Wind clears limbs and branches of heavy snow, which benefits the tree,” Shirazi explains.

The type of snow falling is an important factor in potential damage to trees. Obviously, wetter snow is more damaging because it is heavier. There are three types of snow:

- light, new snow crystals
- dense, compact snow, which is made of icebound grains connected in a fine network of ice
- wet snow, which has lost its icebound network.

Finally, when the snow falls can be a factor. “If you have wet snow in March when there are no leaves on the branches, the tree may be able to withstand it pretty well,” predicts Zins. “But if you get that same snow in the fall when the tree is still in leaf, the snow will stick to the leaves as well as the branches. That could add unbearable weight.”

Now for the good news about snow: it helps insulate the
Ice has temporarily given these river birches a weeping habit. "Keep your hands off!" is the best way of preventing further damage at this point, according to University of Minnesota Extension Horticulturist, Michael E. Zins. Just six days later, the ice has melted and the trees have returned to their normal habit. Photos by Michael E. Zins.

ground, which is beneficial for two reasons. First, snow is a poor heat conductor, so the temperature changes very slowly from the top layer of the snow to the bottom. This keeps the ground from heating and cooling as air temperatures fluctuate. Heating and cooling often cause the ground to heave, which can be damaging to roots. Keeping the ground temperature more constant is a better environment for healthy roots.

Oddly enough, a covering of snow can help keep the ground warmer. "There is a negative correlation between the snow depth and ground frost," explains Shirazi. When there's no snow on the ground, the temperature in the top two inches of soil

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follows the fluctuation of the air temperature.

Pile on eight inches of snow, however, and the soil temperature seldom falls below 23 degrees. “In Minnesota,” agrees Zins, “if we get an early snow that stays, we don’t get any frost in the ground. You can go out in January and dig a hole.”

The insulating value of snow has its limits, though. Shirazi points out that in areas of extreme cold extended over prolonged periods, even under a blanket of snow, arctic soil temperatures may reach -4 to -22 degrees. What’s more, “snow is insulating as long as it is fluffy and light,” says Zins. “In places where you drive over it or otherwise compact it, it loses its insulating value.”

When talking about cold-weather plant problems, it’s important to make a distinction between ice and snow. “There’s a big difference between ice storms and snow storms,” Zins notes. “The farther north you go, the more light, powdery snow you get—and the less you hear about damage from snow. It’s when you start moving south that you get ice and the damaging, wet snow.”

Finally, on the plus side, Zins claims a little breakage isn’t always bad. “Nature prunes trees in many ways,” he says. “A wet snow may break off small twigs and dead branches. It does a good job of pruning that way.”

Patrice Peltier is a freelance horticulture writer based in Milwaukee, Wis. She can be reached at Patpeltier@aol.com.
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E-mail: Garvin@natlarb.com
Pesticide Drift

Have I missed something important in your magazine? The subject of herbicide spray drift is very much in evidence in Iowa, and I don’t recall reading anything about it in TCI.

I am a consulting arborist and am often asked about herbicide drift, particularly where spray floats from farm fields to adjoining properties, but also where lawns are sprayed. I have suggested to insurance firms who pay claims and to chemical firms who hear plenty about the problem that there surely is a win-win way to work together. It is keyed to the common language of all—money.

Say we start with a wholesale nursery whose large stock of excellent plant material was heavily damaged by drift from nearby fields. Is this a total loss if someone could take the trees, put them in a carefully designed research plot and discover new ways to rehabilitate damaged trees? Rehabilitation techniques and materials could then be sold to individuals whose trees suffered on private property or to municipalities or arboretums where appropriate.

If the idea were to catch on in our trade organizations, I could envision many interested tree care people making money. It would take the kind of diplomacy you have and the cutting-edge theory/potential that tree care professionals with impeccable ethics could furnish.

The Cedar Valley Arboretum and Botanic Gardens (Web site: www.cedarnet.org/garden) is a case in point. Our arboretum suffers every year from herbicide drift, particularly our redbud (Cercis canadensis), ash, hackberry and many oaks. We have land on which a test plot could be set up, in addition to our affected trees. We have selected an area away from the obvious source, separated in distance and topography, where a test plot could be established. We don’t have funds to buy trees, but volunteers could plant them, and qualified personnel can supervise the various tests.

Cooperation from people with injured trees, insurance people and the people with the most savvy about chemicals could make possible what, up to now, seems the impossible dream. I visualize persons like you and your staff working with the rest of us to publicize the idea of win-win collaborating and achievement. Back to the issue of money: I see a market for new chemicals to rehabilitate trees, with willing tree care professionals eager to use them. Insurance people could benefit too in minimizing losses.

Editor Cheryl Long of Organic Gardening has a side bar in the July/August 2000 issue asking, “Have You Been Hit With Pesticide Drift?” She is ready for the replies that she expects to come. That’s encouraging to me. Industry-wide cooperation is a must these days. I’m interested in your view.

Arnold H. Webster
Websters Nursery
Cedar Falls, Iowa

Still Excited About Tree Work?

Your Outlook article, “When Was the Last Time...?” took me back to when I was a 19-year-old tree climber. Mr. Long, my foreman (in those days you called your foreman Mister) was in his late ’60s and gave us a five-minute talk. I didn’t understand at the time what he was trying to tell us, but 40 years later I think I know what his messages were.

He told that not only were we improving trees, but we were also making people’s lives better. On hot summer days people who may have troubled lives could enjoy the shade of the trees. Perhaps this would give them just enough refreshment to overcome their troubles. He went on to tell us about families who would laugh and play under the trees.

This subject should be addressed at industry meetings. Tree people need to hear what you had to say.

Chuck Gilstrap
Superintendent - Community Forestry
City of Modesto, Calif.

Send your letters and comments to:
Tree Care Industry,
3 Perimeter Road, Unit 1,
Manchester, NH 03103
Fax: 603-314-5386;
E-mail: Garvin@natlarb.com

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TREE CARE INDUSTRY - JANUARY 2001
Rope Care

By: Jeffrey Lee, Branch Management, Riverside, CA (909) 276-8060

Sponsored by The Bishop Company for the advancement of our industry.

With the holiday season over, Big Al's crew was slowly returning to the daily grind and this looked liked the beginning of a very long day.

The cold morning air chilled Max Bunyan as he made his way up the Widow Carter's dormant sycamore, while Big Al Fontaine filled in for the vacationing groundsman. With every exhalation, puffs of steam escaped from their puckered lips.

Max reached the summit of the towering sycamore, organized his hardware and then started a flurry of cuts with his handsaw. Twiggy limbs clung to one another before dropping to the ground, where Big Al was struggling to recapture years of lost experience. The severed limbs grew into a mountain, as Big Al finished setting up cones and warming up the chipper.

Needing to “catch up”, Big Al began frantically feeding brush into the hungry chipper. Each limb seemed to grab another, snaking their way into the waiting jaws of the chipper. In his haste, Big Al failed to notice Max's climbing line lying beneath the tree, tangled in the massive pile of brush. Years of use had changed the bright orange rope to a dull orange-brown. When Al stuffed another wad into the feeding roller of the chipper, the rope unexpectedly jumped to life and inched toward the jaw of the chipper.

By some mysterious quirk, Max's rope escaped the blades of the chipper and wound itself around the feeder wheels instead. With poor Max suspended helplessly between the top of the tree and the chipper, the chipper exerted its deadly grip like a giant winch, pulling on the mighty sycamore. The tree creaked and groaned, and the rope strained and squealed like a violin string. Suddenly, the rope snapped and hurled Max across the sky. Just as abruptly, the rope snapped back and Max was repeatedly spanked and padded (full body) by the tree.

Max and Al could have avoided this human paddle-ball routine by following a few simple preventive measures.

Wash Rope- Although there are many types of rope on the market, they all share one thing in common: They all get dirty some, quicker than others. It's okay to wash your rope, but be careful. Use a mild detergent, avoid bleach and harsh chemicals. Place the rope into a pillowcase, tie a knot on the open end (so your rope won't escape) and with warm (not hot) water wash that baby. Because the dryer is too hot and will melt those fibers that your life depends on, hang the rope up to air dry. This will add life to your lifeline in addition to maintaining color brightness.

Train Ground Personnel to be Rope Aware- This is simply a small investment of time. Work as a team, and train groundspeople to untangle rope from brush and be sure there is always a Figure 8 knot tied in the end of the rope. Keep some distance between the tree(s) being worked and the truck/chipper. Make new ground personnel aware that rope(s) lying beneath the trees are connected to the person working above.

Store Rope- With rope bags becoming increasingly popular, it makes a lot of sense to make the investment. The bag keeps your rope organized and helps prevent that “kinking” that accompanies the traditional “coiling” of climbing line. Keeping the rope in the bag, as opposed to being scattered throughout the job site, is an added bonus. Remember, this in turn will also help to keep it cleaner longer.

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Communication is the life-blood of any relationship. Given this fact, is it any wonder that in companies with turmoil and turnover, there appears to be little relationship or quality communication between employees and management? In high-performing, stable organizations, vital information moves up and down levels of the organization freely, candidly and honestly. Employees are trusted with information, even sensitive financial information, and are included in the decision-making process. Well-informed employees are productive employees—they are involved, committed, and stay with the organization.

Studies have shown over the years that employees place a high value on being kept informed about their job performance and how the company is doing. An organization’s inability to retain top employees can, in large part, be traced directly to the lack of positive, open communication that provides them with the information they need. This deficiency is not always intentional—you may not even be aware your employees are in the dark. They do not send bulletins or carry signs that they are dissatisfied and are considering leaving. It is up to you to perceive subtle hints, identify problems and, more importantly, create an atmosphere of open and candid communication. This will promote the solution of problems before they reach the critical level that causes an employee to leave.

Some business owners are so caught up in their entrepreneurial venture that they don’t consider or value the insights of their employees. Some have an “I know what’s best” attitude because they knew enough to start the company. These actions and attitudes can leave employees isolated and unaware of what is really occurring in the organization. Many principals are not aware that the growth of the company rests not just on the commitment, but with communication from the entire organization.

Companies with 10, 25 or even 100 employees may have more difficulty communicating than larger businesses. Many times, in smaller organizations employees are relatives or friends of top management and, as a result, there is a resistance from others to share information because they fear offending someone. A company’s small size is not a guarantee that top management is in tune with employees and aware of what they know.

Long-term success rests on candid and open communication because top management must know how employees and customers are feeling. Employees must know what is being done and the reasons so they can develop a trust level with upper management. Open and candid communication clears up misconceptions or inaccurate perceptions. It is very important to understand that customer and employee perceptions—even those based on inaccurate information—determine their actions. It is not reality that determines an employee’s attitudes and actions; it is their perception of reality. Be sure this perception is accurate.

Some top managers feel they should avoid sensitive topics with employees because mentioning them would mean they have to address the problems. When information about a situation is kept secret or avoided, it is still a problem. In the absence of facts, assumptions will be made, or rumors fill the void. In almost all cases, the assumptions and rumors are more damaging than the facts.

To create open and candid communication with employees, use the following communication tips.

- Address a topic as soon as you feel employees might be worried and begin
Talking to others.
• Be sure you realize and understand cultural differences and how they affect communication.
• Don't use jargon and phrases with vague meanings. Be clear in what you say.
• Share the company's bad times as well as the good times with employees.
• Be open about the financial performance of the organization. They can sense it.
• Don't "shoot the messenger" who brings bad news unless you don't want any more messages.
• Ask employees frequently if they are getting the information they need and want.
• Make sure when you communicate with employees that you listen as well as talk.
• Listen to what is being said and, more importantly, what is not being said.
• Be open to new mediums of communication such as newsletters or regular e-mail updates.

Ensure you have informal and formal communication avenues for employees.
• Hang charts and posters to keep people informed (even handwritten notices are good).
• Write letters of praise to employees about specific contributions. Occasionally mail one to their home.
• Acknowledge special occasions in the employee's life such as their birthday or a child's graduation.
• Seek out and talk with employees you wouldn't normally interact with. You will learn from them. They will get to know you and be willing to approach you to communicate.
• Spend more time with employees during stressful times, such as during major projects and budget reductions or periods of low sales.
• Ask yourself each day, "Have I taken the time to listen and understand employees' needs or concerns?"

Conduct periodic and frequent Executive Interviews with employees and managers that don't report to you.
Regardless of your company's size, you must stay in touch with the employees and communicate with them candidly and frequently. It sounds easy to do but, unfortunately, it does not occur often enough. Make communicating with employees a top priority. The time spent communicating with employees will not only ensure your are in touch with the business, but will improve its productivity.

Increased commitment and motivation of employees is critical in today's business environment and current labor shortage. Make them feel included ... so they will be included on the next employee list.

Tanaka introduces a number of new products for the 2001 season. The TBC-2501 is Tanaka’s newest solid-steel, straight-shaft grass trimmer/brushcutter. It has a 24cc, 1.2-hp engine with two piston rings and a stress-relieved, chrome-plated cylinder for longer life. It comes with a low-profile cutting guard, has a heavy-duty anti-vibration system, and comes standard with a 5-inch semi-automatic cutting head. It only weighs 11.4 pounds. This new family of Tanaka engines will also come on a pole saw, pole hedge trimmer, and a stick edger.

A powerful new Tele-Saw is a chain saw attachment to Sheyenne Tooling & Manufacturing’s popular Tele-Boom, a lift-arm accessory for skid steer loaders. The Tele-Saw accessory enables city forestry departments, landscapers, tree care companies, utilities and orchards to do clearing, log cutting and overhead pruning. The machine’s hydraulics hook up quickly and provide substantial power for quick and efficient trimming at a height of up to 33 feet. Its control box lets the operator adjust saw position, cutting angle, blade feed and more from the safety of the cab. The saw’s .404 chain rotates 350 degrees horizontally to cut at virtually any angle. For specifications and pricing, contact from Sheyenne Tooling & Manufacturing, PO Box 647, Cooperstown, N.D. 58425; Phone: 800-797-1883.

Bobcat Company introduces its next generation of compact excavators, the D-Series, featuring a swing-open tailgate for engine access and servicing. For routine maintenance, the fuel fill, control valve and associated plumbing are quickly accessible through a convenient cover located on the right side of the excavator. The new D-Series also features centralized grease zerks for the swing pinion and bearing and offset cylinder. The zerks are located on the excavators’ left-front corner to further simplify servicing. New piston-pump hydraulic systems improve engine horsepower management and control of the work group—house swing, boom, dipper and bucket functions. New instrumentation on these models includes sweep gauges for engine temperature and fuel level as well as lighted icons to indicate machine functions and warnings. A new digital readout shows engine hours, RPM and resettable job clock. If the engine coolant temperature, oil pressure or hydraulic oil temperature reach critical levels, the monitoring system will shut down the excavator to decrease chances of machine damage. And two-piece, folding pedals control travel and boom offset functions. For more information, contact your local Bobcat dealer. Use the dealer locator at www.bobcat.com to find the location nearest you.

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Shaver Manufacturing introduces the PTO-powered StumpBuster tree stump cutter that makes fast work of tough stumps. Designed for tree service, landscape, land-clearing and forestry contractors, the StumpBuster is an inexpensive—yet high-performance—alternative to towed units with self-contained power sources. The machine mounts to the 3-point hitch of any 35-100 horsepower tractor. The unit’s heavy-duty gearbox delivers 895 rpm tip speed and 450 foot pounds of hub torque to the cutting wheel. The StumpBuster opens the door for anybody with a tractor to remove stumps without making a significant capital investment in equipment by putting idle tractors to productive use. Depending on the size of tractor, stumps up to 24 inches tall can be cut all the way down to 12 inches below the ground. For a free brochure or information about dealer/distributor opportunities, contact Shaver Manufacturing Company, PO Box 358, Graettinger, IA 51342; Phone: 712-859-3293; Fax: 712-859-3294; Web: www.shavermfg.com.

Running irrigation or electrical lines under existing walks and drives is a breeze with the new Holey Moley HydroBore from Snake River Tool Company in Lewiston, Idaho. Operators simply attach a water source, like a hose, turn the valve, and start boring. The water does the work. The key to its operation is a vented mandrel at the boring end that allows the water flow to move horizontally. The Model HB 4000 comes standard with a 1-inch OD steel handle piece, a mandrel boring piece, and six 18-inch sections, each constructed of low-carbon steel tubing. To bore, operators need only dig a three-foot long ditch to access the underside of a sidewalk, driveway or other structure and connect a garden hose or other portable water source. The HydroBore is ideal for running sprinkler and electrical lines under existing walks and drives, or extending trenches under hard-to-reach areas. For more information, contact Snake River Tool Company, PO Box 732, Lewiston, Idaho 83501; Phone: 877-372-7782; Web: www.holeymoleyhydrotools.com.

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Syngenta to Quit Diazinon Business

Syngenta Crop Protection recently announced a four-year phase out from its diazinon insecticide business. The company made the business decision to end its diazinon sales after a full analysis of the product’s financial performance.

Syngenta coordinated its planned withdrawal with the EPA to allow for a smooth transition from the market. By working with the EPA, the company has ensured that the compound meets or exceeds the margins of safety as required by the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA) during the phase-out period.

Earlier this year, Syngenta submitted a comprehensive response to EPA’s Preliminary Risk Assessment of diazinon and has presented additional studies that show wide margins of safety. “The EPA’s agreement to a four-year market transition for lawn and garden use confirms the value and safety of this product, and reflects the agency’s conclusion that no unreasonable risk to people or the environment exists. We appreciate the EPA’s recognition that a gradual removal of the product is necessary to allow adequate transition time for our customers and for consumers,” said Eileen Watson of Syngenta business planning and development.

Diazinon has been marketed worldwide for more than 40 years. While other manufacturers will continue to sell diazinon for agricultural uses after 2004, Syngenta will phase the product out completely.

The four-year strategy was chosen by the company to allow for a smooth shift from diazinon to newer chemistries. U.S. supplies for the home and garden market are expected to be depleted by the end of 2004. People who purchased diazinon supplies for the home and garden market confirm the value and product’s financial performance.

Efco Replaces Olympyk Brand

For 20 years, Tilton Equipment Company has marketed power equipment products manufactured by Emak under both the Olympyk and Efco brands. Recently, the U.S. Olympic committee voiced objection to “Olympyk” and advised Tilton that their use of the mark must cease.

Thus, Tilton has announced a transition and consolidation from Olympyk to the Efco brand. Availability of replacement parts for Olympyk-branded power equipment will not be affected. Efco products, which include trimmers, brushcutters, chain saws, cut-off saws, hedge trimmers and augers, are manufactured by Emak s.p.a. of Reggio Emilia, Italy.

OmniQuip Names New President, CEO

Neil Feola was appointed President and Chief Executive Officer of OmniQuip Textron, announced Sam Licavoli, President and CEO of Textron Industrial Products of Port Washington, Wis. Feola will be responsible for overseeing all aspects within OmniQuip’s four brands, Lull, Scat Trak, Sky Trak and Snorkel, as well as Alliance Sales Parts Worldwide and all OmniQuip corporate functions. “Since joining OmniQuip in April, Neil has been instrumental in accelerating the integration of OmniQuip’s operating units and refo-cusing the business to drive operational excellence and future growth,” said Sam Licavoli.

Feola has served in a variety of executive management positions, most recently COO of OmniQuip and prior to that he retired as President and CEO of Gulf and Western Manufacturing Company. He replaces P. Enoch Stiff, who left OmniQuip to pursue other business interests. Stiff founded OmniQuip in 1987 and grew it to a $500 million company before it was acquired by Textron in September 1999. Textron Inc. is a global, multi-industry company with market-leading business in Aircraft, Automotive, Industrial and Finance markets.
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There is no historic cherry tree at Mount Vernon. The story that George Washington chopped down a cherry tree in his youth is the invention of one Parson Weems, an 18th century political spin artist intent on emphasizing Washington’s truthful nature. But trees with a Washington connection do indeed exist.

On the main grounds of the Mount Vernon Estate, near the mansion, 13 trees known to have been planted by George Washington still shade visitors and beautify the grounds. The 13 include two white ash, two tulip poplars on the serpentine, one white mulberry near the crossroads, one hemlock by the upper garden gate and seven holly trees, most near the gate to the main entrance of the mansion.

It is also true is that Washington had a great love for trees and often commented on them in his diaries. He gloried in their beauty at the change of seasons and was known to remark on the wonders of various trees. Though he spent a lot of time traveling as general and president, always close to his heart, mind and pen were the five farms that comprised his estate at Mount Vernon, Va. The use of trees in his master plan for the home on the Mansion Farm is a living testament to that love. He used them to frame the formal serpentine path and bowling green that mark the entrance to the west side. These trees and others added seasonal color and shade for the family and visitors.

Washington valued trees for their utility as well. He planted fruit trees in his upper and lower garden, often in decorative patterns. Visitors to Mount Vernon could enjoy apples, pears, plums and peaches from the estate’s gardens. When trees were cleared for farming and building, Washington did not neglect replanting. The forested parts of his estate were also home to game that enriched his table and that of his slaves.

Much of what we know today about the estate comes from the meticulous records kept by our first president. Washington managed the farms from afar during his time in the army and presidency. He required regular reports from farm managers and sent regular instructions. Washington’s careful records include various experiments with plants and trees, ranging from attempts to start a vineyard to raising silkworms.

Washington the experimental farmer brought white mulberry trees to the estate in the 1790s to try to grow silk. Unfortunately, the mulberry was destined to become just a decoration at the estate, since the silkworm activity did not prove profitable.
After he died in 1799, many large tracts from the 8,000-acre estate were sold off. When the Mount Vernon Ladies Association of the Union purchased the estate from Washington’s descendants in 1858, they bought about 300 acres of original property. Over time, the group was able to purchase additional original acreage. Today, the estate is 500 acres large and includes Washington’s magnificent home, gardens, a re-creation of some of his farming, and a forested area.

Most of the Washington-era trees that have survived are native to the area. The exception is the hemlock, but that is also a tree that does well in the heat—and heat is a big part of the late spring through early fall at Mount Vernon.

The care and preservation of the historic trees and all of the estate’s plant life falls within the purview of Mount Vernon’s chief horticulturist, J. Dean Norton. An Alexandria, Va., native, Norton began working at the estate at age 16 as a part-time high school helper. “I fell in love with Mount Vernon during that job,” he says. “After completing my BS in plant science from Clemson University, I took a full-time job at Mount Vernon. In all, I’ve been at the estate for 31 years.”

His first official duty after college was the care of the boxwood in the upper garden. Norton worked his way up, and became head horticulturist in 1980. All of his work is steeped in history. The estate actively tries to duplicate the plantings done by the first president with the same (or close) varieties. Norton’s care for all of the estate’s trees, including the historic trees, relies primarily on careful daily observation and regular visits by a certified arborist.

**Identifying Washington trees**

While all trees on the estate are considered important, those that form a living link to Washington are specially watched. Before Washington lived at Mount Vernon, his father and then his older brother owned the property.

“We don’t know for sure if any of the trees that we date from George Washington’s time were planted by him or by his brother, Lawrence, who died in 1737,” explains Norton. Efforts at the estate concentrate on dating trees to the time the first president owned the grounds.

Dating is based on various methods.
Norton has the equipment to do core samples, but avoids that, not wanting to harm the trees in any way. Most of the identified trees are those noted in what has come to be known as the definitive catalog of trees planted by George Washington. Charles Sprague Sargent, director of the Arnold Arboretum at Harvard University in Boston, compiled the book in 1926. Based on his own previous work, Washington’s papers, size of trees pictured in old photos and oral tradition, Sargent identified many Washington trees.

From many to few

Unfortunately, heavy storms struck Mount Vernon in force in the 1940s and 1950s, reducing the number to 14. Then a white ash was lost to disease, reducing the cadre of Washington trees to a precious 13.

“The annual inspection by our contract arborist picked up on damage in the main cavity of the tree. The tree looked healthy, but the arborist warned us that it had to come down,” recalls Norton. “He told us that its integrity had been compromised. The huge leaders posed a danger to one of the public areas by the upper garden gate.

“We decided to remove the tree. We cordoned off the area and ordered a crane to take care of the removal on the following Monday. That very Saturday night one of the leaders fell down into the historic garden. It looked as if a bomb had exploded! No one was injured because we had the area roped off, but it was a close call.”

The wood from Washington’s white ash was used for a variety of commemorative items, from plaques to pens. Each of the remaining 13 is cherished. The two tulip poplars hold a special place in the heart of the estate’s caretakers because they are the last living example of his hand in the bowling green’s overall design.

“Of the trees presently identified as Washington plantings, the tulip poplars can be dated most exactly. Their location marks them as likely to have been planted in 1785-7, when the serpentine was redone in the front of the house,” says Norton. “But the pair also reveal something else—Washington’s passion for the then-popular design element of symmetry. Washington was his own architect and took an active role in designing the gardens, bowling green in front of the house and adjacent serpentine paths. Washington matched whatever he planted on each side of the bowling green.

“The tulip poplars are the only example we have left showing this mirror image planting,” notes Norton.

The pecan problem

Adjacent to the south of the house on the kitchen side are two towering pecan trees. No one disputes that these twin towers are well over 100 years old—and still producing. Oral tradition conflicts with the Sargent report on the status of these trees, however, so the estate has never promoted those as original to Washington.

Norton says that while there is documentary evidence that Thomas Jefferson sent Washington a bundle of pecan seedlings, some pictures of the house and grounds in the 1850s show the trees and some do not.
But in the early photos where they are present, it is apparent that these trees are obviously already old. Are they Washington-era trees? Should there be a re-examination of all of the evidence? Norton replies, “Well, I have to fall back on this year’s election and answer that it is too close to call.”

The regular care program

According to Norton, the most important tools in the care system are daily observation and a regular annual visit for each tree by an arborist. Along with that, a sound feeding program and close attention to the local weather form the care program for all of the estate’s trees—historic, disputed and recent.

“Part of the care of these historic trees is made easier by their original placement by Washington himself,” says Norton. “Washington planted them in an area where we can watch them easily and the area is easy to irrigate in the summer. There are enough other trees and natural ground matter around to protect the root systems.

“We don’t need to give them a lot of fertilizer because the grass, the closest organic matter, is taken care of regularly,” he adds. “We do give them a deep-root feeding through ground injections every few years.”

Simply looking at the trees carefully, every day, is a regular and very important part of the care program. “Observation lets us keep right on top of problems,” relates Norton. “If we see insects, then we treat for them right away. Limbs with potential problems are pruned.”

The staff pays special attention during drought and examines them closely after each major storm. Storms are an ever-present danger, since the estate is in an area that gets the tail end of some hurricanes and experiences spectacular summer storms. The great trees on the estate all have lightning protection installed.

“If we see that a limb looks like it has been damaged, we like to remove it before it falls,” says Norton. “A fall can further damage the tree, tearing at the spot of breakage and breaking more limbs as it comes down. Of course, with a break and fall, there is always danger to those on the ground.”

Key to the program of care is the regular visit by an arborist. For many years the estate has used the services of Guardian Tree Experts from nearby Springfield, Va., now a division of Bartlett.

“Many of these trees are more than 100 feet high,” notes Norton. “We can look from below and see a lot. But to judge the health of the leaders and truly examine the tree, the arborist brings special knowledge and goes up into the tree for a close look.”

Survivors

Today’s care program is a gentle one, interacting with nature. One of the most amazing things to Norton about the Washington-era trees and others on the estate is that the trees survived the aggressive care philosophies of earlier times.

“For many years,” explains Norton, “it was the practice to prune and then paint the cuts, which we know not to do today. One of the worst practices of those years
was the scraping away of diseased areas in a tree. Then they filled with concrete. Without realizing it, the caretakers of that earlier era were wounding the tree twice. It is a miracle that some of these trees survived their aggressive care. There is probably not an old tree on this property that was not touched by the era’s pruning and painting.”

Despite the good care, another tree is in danger. The health of a white mulberry at the crossroads is in question. The mulberry is a link to another great story about Washington. Ever the good businessman, he knew the value of diversification. The mulberry arrived at Mount Vernon as a part of a plan to grow silkworms. While this effort did not succeed, other ventures were successful. Washington changed the cash crop of the farm from tobacco to wheat and then integrated his operation by building a gristmill and a distillery. He also farmed the Potomac River and continued throughout his life to experiment with seeds and plants to see what would grow best on his land.

Other dangers: compaction and visitors

Mount Vernon had more than one million visitors in 1999—sometimes as many as 10,000 in one day. Staff uses vertical mulching to combat the potential for compaction, which invigorates the roots and adds to the water flow in the area. The presence of daily and nightly visitors to the estate mean that sometimes there must be compromises between care and the needs of the visitors. Lighting for the grounds is a necessity. While the horticulturists would prefer not to put any in the trees, several do hold lights.

Norton makes sure that when lights are put in they take a route to do as little damage as possible. “We watch carefully so that they do not dig grooves in the ground that will damage the tree roots.”

Sharing history

Mount Vernon does not have room for a nursery on site, so they work with the American Forests Famous and Historic Trees Project in Jacksonville, FL, to provide opportunities for people to plant a piece of history in their own backyards. The tulip poplar is the Washington-era tree that is a part of the program.

When it was first designated for propagation, special means were taken to produce the precious seedlings. Norton says, “Tulip poplars have a low percentage of germination and honey bees apparently do not fly high enough to pollinate many of the flowers. So the tulip poplars suffered that fate of infertility, much to the dismay of those who wanted to breed them for the historic tree program.”

Dr. Santamour of the American Forests Group [formerly with the National Arboretum; now deceased] decided to tackle the problem personally. He rode up in a cherry picker to blossom level. He carefully squeezed open each and every one of the 100 seed pods found. Using a cotton tipped swab, he carefully applied pollen to each pod. The project

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was successful and the pods germinated. When fall arrived the pods were clipped and then placed in a cold storage to simulate winter. Then, the stratified seeds were ready to plant. In a few weeks, George Washington Tulip Poplars were sprouting.

**Other important plants**

According to Norton, it is likely that the boxwood in the lower garden dates from Washington's time. The upper garden boxwood was probably propagated with stock from the older one.

"We are very proud of our American elms," says Norton. They are not Washington-era, but they did survive bouts of Dutch elm disease. "We guard them carefully. We spray the elms for beetles on a preventive basis and treat them regularly with a fungicide."

**Summary**

Washington's writings often spoke of his love of redbud, dogwood, and the color of fall leaves. His keen observation of the natural world and appreciation for trees in particular comes up repeatedly in his diaries and letters. Above all of his titles—even those of general and president—Washington valued the title of and life of a farmer. In a Dec. 4, 1788 letter to an Arthur Young, Washington wrote: "I am led to reflect on how much more delightful to an undebauched mind is the task of making improvements on the earth than to all vain glory which can be acquired from ravaging it by the most uninterrupted career of conquests."

Modern plantings try to imitate in both type and placement what was done by Washington. The estate aims to restore the grounds to their appearance in 1799. A visit to the Mount Vernon Estate would be a far poorer experience without a stroll under the tulip poplars on the serpentine and an amble about the other trees and gardens Washington so keenly loved.
I like the entire genus of dogwoods (*Cornus*). There is a reason the old favorites are old favorites—they're nice. Dogwoods have nice flowers and fall color. Many have berries and some have an elegant winter branch pattern.

**Watersprouts**

The most important thing to remember about pruning dogwoods is they throw watersprouts at the drop of a hat. Prune too much (and it doesn't take much) and the next growing season will bring a bushel basket of watersprouts growing from the site of each cut. Watersprouts are the rapidly growing, skinny, ugly, straight shoots that grow as a result of mal-pruning. Sometimes, they are erroneously referred to as suckers by Northwest gardeners who also use it as a verb. They might say something like, “Boy, that dogwood sure suckered-back like crazy!”, which is easier to say than “watersprouted-back.”

With most trees, we advise that you remove up to one-fifth of the foliage. But prune less with a dogwood—maybe one-eighth of the foliage or perhaps as little one-sixteenth. If it doesn’t grow a host of watersprouts from the pruning cuts in a year’s time, then you have not overpruned and you may try more.

**Sunscald**

A dogwood’s bark, especially the Eastern dogwood (*C. florida*), is thin and prone to sunscald—another reason not to overthin. I once heard a garden columnist advise people to shade the trunk by planting shrubs to shield it, but I think this just makes everything look crowded and messy. I would rather people retain enough lower limbs on the tree trunk itself, or, if not, try to see that that the tree is protected by the high shade of trees nearby.

Dr. Alex Shigo has stated that there is no such thing as sunscald caused solely by exposure to sun, not even on a dogwood. His work indicates that the splitting bark (sunscald) is a result of two cuts being made one directly above the other, or by improperly placed cuts, specifically flush cuts (which remove the collar). In either case, the “take-home” message is “avoid limbing-up dogwoods” whenever possible.

**General pruning**

All of the advice above doesn’t mean that you shouldn’t prune. If a limb is growing out into the pathway, prune it off to the collar. Certainly take off any deadwood, which is easy to spot in the summer because the dead branch has no live leaves on it. Old, previously mal-pruned or anthracnose-ridden trees will have plenty of deadwood. The greatest pruning secret is to remove deadwood. Good pruners do it first and do it always. We also look for any obviously broken or damaged branches.

**Size control**

Do not attempt height control or reduction on a dogwood! It won’t work. Even with proper selective heading cuts (also called dropcrotch or crown reduction), a dogwood will explode into wild regrowth of ugly watersprouts. Prune those off and three times as many grow back!

Only on rare occasions is a selective heading cut used on a tree, especially a dogwood. I can remember such a cut made on a previously mal-pruned Eastern dogwood. The branch in question had been headed and the end of it sported a nasty snarl of watersprouts. It was not an option to take the limb off entirely because it was too large and, in addition, the cut would have left an unbalanced-looking tree. Instead, we followed the branch back from the tip to a place where there was a large, well-placed lateral branch and cut back to there. The remaining cuts on the tree were all true thinning cuts, removing lateral branches at their point of origin.

**Thinning**

Many of the remaining branches to be removed will be located near the crotches. Pruning out small branchlets from the space nearest where the branches attach to the trunk seems to make the tree look cleaner and more well defined. On many dogwoods, especially the Eastern dogwood, the elegant branch structure can also be accentuated by taking out some (never all) of the duplicating or parallel branches. A limb of this species tends to have a smaller branch attached to it that exactly parallels its parent. Pruning off this branch (or the parallel part of it) may make your plant look better. (See illustration 2.) This sort of general thinning is the artistic part of pruning, and is quite enjoyable. But be careful not to over-prune—a caution that is hard once you see how much better it looks thinned out. The overriding law is to stay within the pruning budget, which is extremely small for dogwoods.

In general, you should work from the bottom up and the inside out, pruning in an upward spiral fashion. When confronted with a difficult pruning decision, I have found it best to skip it and move on. Only remove those branches you are quite certain need to be removed and will not leave a large hole. Know that your feelings
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of uncertainty never really go away. Professional pruners just learn to "push through it." Whenever I find myself paralyzed with indecision, I move over to another part of the tree. I know I can come back later after I have viewed it from different angles outside the tree.

Species by species

- Cornelian cherry (C. mas)
  Cornus mas is a plant lover's tree because it blooms very early (February) with small, cheerful yellow flowers. Like forsythia, it blooms before the leaves come on. In fall, Cornelian cherries have big red fruits reminiscent of cherries (hence the name). It's also a plant lover's tree because it lacks structural grace. This is to say its branches tend to be skinny and straight, crossed like T's, and parallel all over the place in a most unfortunate way. Only as mature trees do they develop more arching grace. Go easy on these trees. Pruning more won't make the branches any prettier and watersprout regrowth could make it a lot worse.
- Eastern (C. florida)
  The Florida dogwood is a favorite small garden tree. It comes with either pink or white flowers, and there are even some with tricolor leaves. They bloom in May, have the classic "turban’s cap" buds—good for winter identification purposes. They also have good fall color and an elegant branch structure I love to look at in the winter. They are shorter and more densely branched than the Western dogwood (C. nuttallii). Many Eastern dogwoods grow with a spreading double-leader, which by the way should not be corrected into a single-trunked tree by people who have more book knowledge of pruning than they have experience. They are also extremely prone to anthracnose that turns all the leaves crispy brown in the summer. Not all the Eastern dogwoods have the disease. The healthy ones I see tend to be living in tall open shade or mild sun, as opposed to being tightly jammed in a courtyard.

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Good circulation is important. However, do not try to create good circulation by over-thinning. You will just cause a great many watersprouts to regrow, making the tree thick and prone to disease. On the other hand, cutting down the Douglas fir next to it can help. If your customer is not averse to a chemical program, there are products that will effectively control the disease. Or, one can just learn to live with the sight of crispy leaves in the summer.

By the way, all dogwoods appear a little more drought-stricken than they actually are. In summer, leaves directly exposed to sun start to fold, looking roughly like taco shells. This is normal and is even an identifying characteristic of the tree. This is not to say it’s okay not to water; it’s just something to know.

- Korean (C. kousa)

The Korean dogwood seems to be somewhat disease resistant (meaning it doesn’t get anthracnose as badly) and is quickly becoming a new favorite small street tree—especially under power lines. It can be a multi-trunked, twiggy tree that in older age develops a nice, fan-shaped branching habit. Sometimes it blooms so heavily it pulls the limbs over, which can be very impressive. It is one of the trees that, when I was first becoming interested in gardening, I actually stopped the car and tracked down, going through several yards to find out what it was. The reason I was interested was that it bloomed solid white in summer (when most everything else was through blooming) and then faded to pink! The same pruning rules apply as with other dogwoods.

- Western (C. nuttallii)

My favorite dogwood is our native tree, C. nuttallii, but I never recommend planting it because it is extremely susceptible and defenseless against anthracnose. It is a much taller and more openly branched tree than the Eastern dogwood. Its flower bracts are tinged slightly cream. The flowers load up the trees in early spring and one can see why it is British Columbia’s Provincial Tree. They sometimes enjoy a second bloom in the fall. They have, in my opinion, the nicest branches, like delicate ripples of water. They also develop a nifty seed pod.

In an effort to simulate the feeling of a Western dogwood (but without the anthracnose problem), one can recommend Eddie’s White Wonder, a cross between the Eastern and Western. Though it doesn’t have quite the same flower-bract, it does have lovely fall color and only gets a little anthracnose if planted in areas with poor air circulation. For several years, I would go outside to find the top foot of my own Eddie’s White Wonder broken. I have never figured out why, though I suspect a crow or squirrel had something to do with it. Following each break, it would send up several new shoots, and I always felt I should be a good pruner and train it back to a single leader. I found, however, that if I just put it off long enough, the tree would choose its own new leader and the other competitors would subside into side branches. Now when people ask me if they
Illustration 2

should train a new leader on a broken top. I'm not sure what to say. Sometimes you should work on it (to prevent a double leader from developing) and sometimes you can ignore it and it will go away on its own. I have found this to be true of many problems in life. The hard part of problem solving is knowing which is which.

Rehabilitative pruning

Since dogwoods have such a lovely branch structure and they watersprout back so horribly, arborists consider the mal-pruning of them particularly bad. The three most common forms of mal-pruning are topping, shearing into a ball or other shape and over-thinning. The good news is that, given enough time, they can be pruned back into good shape. It's hard, and it takes nerves of steel. The overwhelming impulse is to remove all of the ugly watersprouts, which that won't work, since more will grow in their place.

The four steps to rehabilitative pruning are:

1. Wait
2. Thin
3. Wait
4. Thin

Watersprouts will shoot way, way up, but eventually arch over and turn into youthful, decent-looking branches. The problem is they look different than all the original old branches, which are more curved and generally better looking. The contrast between the two types of branches drives people crazy. As a professional, I have developed specialty pruning to mitigate the intolerable contrast. This keeps the tree owner calm long enough for the tree to outgrow the mal-pruning. Specialty pruning also helps the tree regain its natural shape sooner. Such pruning is counter-intuitive. It is very hard not to over-prune while working on the tree. It will take five years or so before the tree is fully restored.

This is the process to rehabilitate a mal-pruned tree:

Take out all of the deadwood and stubs. Wait a year. Go back in and take out a few of the watersprouts from some of the clusters along the branches. Take out more of those closest to the branch crotches. Wait another year. Now, begin to make the two branch types (the old curved and the new straighter) look more uniform. Do this by removing some of the pretty curved branches, leaving straighter old growth (that's the part that doesn't make sense). Then, cut off some of the most impossibly ugly, long, or wrong way shoots of new growth, leaving the shorter more curvaceous new shoots. Now the top and bottom (or the interior and the exterior) more closely resemble each other. Only do some pruning now. Come back next year or the year after and do more. Eventually, you will come back and everything will look pretty good.

Cass Turnbull is the founder of PlantAmnesty in Seattle, Wash.
Yellow Pages Advertising for the Tree Care Industry

By Fran Finley

Barry Maher, author of Getting the Most from Your Yellow Pages Advertising, conducts workshops at conventions and trade shows across the country. According to TIME magazine, “Barry Maher has helped thousands of small businesses get the most cost-effective Yellow Pages advertising possible. [He’s] easily the most widely respected speaker, consultant and writer on the subject.”

We spoke with Barry Maher at his Santa Barbara, Calif., home.

Does advertising in the Yellow Pages really work for tree care and landscape professionals?

Does it work or can it work? I’ve met more than a few who worry that their Yellow Pages advertising is costing them more than it’s making them. Others feel that their competition’s getting all the calls. Or it may be that nobody is getting all the calls, and that advertising under headings like Tree Service is like making a monthly donation to the directory company. But can it work?

Absolutely. And it’s far more likely to work if you pay attention to a few key rules of Yellow Pages advertising.

Can’t you rely on your Yellow Pages sales rep for any help you need?

Sometimes, the rep can be part of the problem. Too many Yellow Page ads are image the ad projects. If your ad looks dated and disorganized, potential customers will feel that your business, your equipment and your skills may be just as dated and disorganized.

Your goal should be to have the best ad under any heading you’re in. At the very least, you want to have one of the best ads there. Ask—no, insist—that your directory publishers develop an ad that justifies the cost. If they can’t do better than standard Yellow Pages block lettering, cluttered and jumbled layout and 1950s clip-art, you can and should have the ad produced yourself.

Okay, so you need a great looking ad. What about the content?

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Is Acme Tree Service really likely to do that? Or Green Growth Tree Service?

Sorry, but the average business name—unless the reader is already familiar with the company—has little selling power. Most of the people who look at Yellow Pages display ads for tree care are shoppers. They're looking for information to help them decide which business to call; they aren't seeking a specific business by name. Never use your company name as your headline unless that name is truly the most important selling copy in the ad. Give them your strongest selling point—the single piece of copy they're likely to care about most. Then you can tell them your name.

What other copy should you include?

You have to give potential customers all the information they need before they decide to call: be it about image, market niche, services, features, pricing, quality, reliability, insurance, experience, hours, service area, brand names, credit—whatever it might be.

So, you should use every bit of the ad space you're paying for?

Absolutely not. If your ad is difficult to read, it won't be read. Your ad is competing for visibility and readability with every other ad under the heading. That means you've got to hone your copy, then hone it some more. Until you can provide all the information directory users want and need in an ad that's so uncluttered and inviting that reading it becomes automatic.

What about visuals—like drawings and photos?

Nothing can turn a mediocre Yellow Pages ad into a great one faster than the right illustration. It can be even more of a grabber than the headline. Far too often, ads have no illustration, or one that's far too small to command attention. If your picture isn't worth a thousand words, find one that is.

Is bigger better?

You can waste a small fortune buying more advertising than you should—and you can lose just as much buying less than you need. The bad news is that ad size is important. All things being equal, bigger ads get a greater response. They also get the best placement—closest to the front of the heading. Placement can be even more important than size.

The good news is that all things are seldom equal. The biggest ad under the heading is not always the most effective. And a well-designed, visually appealing ad can make up for a lot of size, especially under a smaller heading like Tree Service where all the ads are on the same page or two. Of course, it's much more difficult to compete with ads on an earlier page, because that page may never even be turned.

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Not matter what, always consider placement when you’re deciding on ad size. Have your sales rep show you where the size you’re considering would fall. That should give you an approximate idea of the position—relative to the competition—you’d have next year. Sometimes going up a single size and spending just a few more dollars will move you much closer to the front of the heading.

What about using color?
Red, blue, green, white knockout, full color: all are eye catching. All are expensive. If the money you’d be spending is approximately the same, you’re far better off improving the size and placement of your ad than paying for color.

Should you buy ads in all of the competing directories out there today?
Perhaps the surest way to waste money is to advertise in a directory no one is using. Always make your sales rep prove value—especially when you’re considering an independent directory. If the directory seems worthwhile, try something small: a simple in-column ad or even just a listing. Then track your response—survey your customers to discover how they discovered you—and next year you’ll have your own proof.

What do you think of buying an ad in the white pages?
If your customers are looking for you alphabetically in the white pages, they will find you. And call you. You don’t have any competition in the white pages. A bold listing is sufficient. I only recommend white page ads in very specialized cases. If you’re Houston Tree Care and you’re in the midst of seven white pages of businesses starting with the word Houston, you do need something beyond a bold listing to help your customers find you. Or perhaps you’re Terry’s Tree Service and Terra Trees usually falls on the same page, and you want to siphon off a few of their calls. Otherwise, put the money in the Yellow Pages.

What’s the biggest Yellow Pages mistake you’ve ever encountered?
Actually the biggest mistake was a very small mistake. Just one little extra space. So an ad that should have read, Dan Hadley, therapist read, Dan Hadley, the rapist. Some sales reps and publishers don’t like to send out proofs even on display ads. Proofs cost money and often create additional work. Always insist on a proof. If you’re ever tempted not to, remember Dan Hadley.

This article is adapted from Fran Finley’s forthcoming book, “Ask the Experts: How to Promote Your Business.” Barry Maher can be reached at barrymaher@aol.com, or 805-962-2599.

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Dr. Bruce Fraedrich (second from left) and the staff at the Bartlett Tree Research Lab provided a full-day tour of the facility, highlighting ongoing research, new tools and practical tree care trials.

On with the show!

Margarito Garibo (left) provided a TCI EXPO first - simultaneous English to Spanish translation at the Tree Demo area.

The tree was back in Charlotte, and demonstrators Robert Phillips (seen here) and Mark Chisholm gave expert advice on rigging, climbing, chain saw use in the tree and mechanical advantage.
Another happy ArborBucks winner prepares to spend her $250 in winnings.

Robert Tucker presents the most important do's and don'ts in attracting and managing upcoming generations in the workforce.

Chad Spangler with Wood/Chuck (left) congratulates John Brown of Farmer Brown's Outdoor Services, the lucky winner of this year's Wood/Chuck Chipper raffle to benefit the Robert Felix Memorial Endowment.

Scott Prophett with Arboguard Tree Specialists (right) explains the details behind "You make the call," a new feature at TCI EXPO from the NAA's Safety Committee. Arborists were encouraged to come up with innovative tools and techniques to deal with unique hazard tree removals.

Another member along with many others over the past decade seeking assistance from Pat Felix at the NAA.

TCI EXPO has become the venue for arborists to explore the latest technology in tree care.

Dr. Steffen Rust traveled from Germany to offer his insights into decay detection at one of the arborist skills areas.
On Nov. 14, 2000, OSHA issued its final ergonomics standard. The standard takes effect on Jan. 16, 2001 and covered employers are required to be in compliance on Oct. 14, 2001. However, legal challenges to the standard will affect OSHA's implementation timetable.

The standard applies broadly to general industry. Employers with jobs that involve "manual handling"—by definition encompassing most if not all tree care field positions—are required to follow through with the standard's initial compliance steps. For other jobs that do not involve manual handling, such as office clerical positions, compliance is triggered by a covered "incident."

### OSHA Regulatory Agenda

In late November, OSHA published a list of the rules and initiatives it plans to be working on in the next 12- to 18-month period. Listed below are those with likely relevance to employers and employees in the tree care industry.

<table>
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<th>Description</th>
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**Initial compliance steps**

By Oct. 14, 2001, covered employers are required to provide all employees with basic information on common ergonomics disorders; the importance of early reporting of such disorders and the physical consequences of failing to report them. Employees must be instructed in how to report work-related ergonomics disorders and their signs and symptoms; the kinds of risk factors and jobs associated with MSD hazards; and given a short description of the ergonomics standard.

When an employee reports an incident

Further employer responsibilities trigger when an employee reports discomfort that may be related to an ergonomics disorder. The employer must first determine that the disorder is work-related—either through observation, talking to the employee or sending the employee to a health care provider—and that the disorder has lasted for more than seven days, requires a work restriction or requires time off from work. Then, the employer must determine whether the employee's job activities exceed the "action trigger" in the standard. If the job meets the action trigger, an employer is required to implement a full ergonomics program. Most notable, the employer must provide medical attention and "controls" for the affected employee, including, if necessary, up to 90 days of paid leave at 90 of percent the employee's earnings. The employer also must set up a full ergonomics program for all employees performing similar work to reduce potential hazards to the acceptable levels.

A full ergonomics program consists of management leadership, employee participation, medical management, job hazard analysis, hazard reduction and control, train-
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D.C. court chosen to hear lawsuits

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit was chosen as the court in which to consolidate all the lawsuits that have been filed since the issuance of the final ergonomics standard. Absent any challenge to the selection, the chosen court will issue a briefing schedule, most likely by early January, according to several industry attorneys working on the lawsuits.

The ergonomics program is being challenged by no less than ten petitions. Plaintiffs include:

- AFL-CIO and United Food and Commercial Workers
- American Iron and Steel Institute
- American Moving and Storage Association, Inc.
- Insurance companies
- International Brotherhood of Teamsters and the Oregon AFL-CIO
- National Association of Manufacturers (NAM)
- National Coalition on Ergonomics (NCE)
- U.S. Chamber of Commerce
- Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees
- United Steelworkers

The NAA will keep members up to date as the political and legal process unfolds.

Peter Gerstenberger is vice president of business management, safety and education for the National Arborist Association. 

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Hiring the “I’ve Never Held a Job Before” Worker

By Phillip M. Perry

“So tell me about your previous job.”
“What were your responsibilities?”
“Describe a situation in which you solved a tough problem for a customer.”

All great interrogation when you’re hiring for an entry-level job. Seasoned interviewers know that a candidate’s previous work achievements are the best indicators of future success. But how do you evaluate a young, wet-behind-the-ears worker who says, “I’ve never held a job before?”

That’s a vital question in this age of shrinking labor pools, where employers are often forced to fill positions with high school students and recent college graduates—individuals who are new to the world of work. In a tight labor market, a rising economy lifts all resumes. Even so, employers face costly risks in hiring untested workers. The hard reality is that many of these individuals will come in late, perform poorly and treat customers shabbily. In other words, they will have bad attitudes. And that’s the number one reason why so many new hires end up being escorted off the premises after a few weeks on the job.

“The U.S. Department of Labor tells us 87 percent of all hiring failures occur not because people can’t do the job, but because they won’t,” says Mel Kleiman, president of Humetrics, a Houston-based consultancy that helps businesses hire the right people. “Attitude makes the difference between a successful employee and a workplace washout.”

Hiring for attitude

When faced with inexperienced candidates, most interviewers try to assess verbal skill and personality. Bill, here, is friendly, and accommodating. He says he loves working with people. It follows that he will show initiative on the job, charm customers with his easy-going style, and merge with your team like a hand into a glove. Or so goes the prevailing theory. Wrong.

“Verbal skills don’t magically develop into workplace skills,” warns Kleiman. “Many people are friendly and outgoing. That’s wonderful. But you are hiring employees, not friends.” Hiring by personality is gambling with the future of your business. Nothing tells you if Bill will be late for work, carries a cache of cocaine in his truck, will only perform duties specified in his job description, or will exhibit any of a host of headache-inducing attributes that give many first-time hires a bad reputation. A candidate can be an interview wizard but a workplace dud. Okay. If you can’t assess Bill’s skills, since he’s never worked in tree care before, and you can’t go by his surface personality, what can you do?

“Interview for attitudes,” recommends Kleiman. “Before any of us get to our first job we have developed a set of attitudes that we carry around with us.”

Hire for attitude

Prior to making job offers, assess individuals’ perspectives toward the world of work. Do they pitch in and help when the opportunity arises? Do they take leadership positions? Do they take pride in being on time? Do they go above and beyond the requirements of the position? You can interview for attitudes, if you plan ahead. Here’s some guidance.

Conduct interviews that assess punctuality and teamwork. What’s the number one problem with first-time hires? Most employers would cite a lack of punctuality. Here’s some advice from
Kleiman on how to get an early reading on dependability.

"Specify appointment times with all of the candidates," he says. "Let them know you have nothing else scheduled for that time frame. If people show up late, that already tells you they do not believe it is important to be prompt or to be mindful of another person's time."

If you plan it right, the initial interview can be a vital tool for assessing how well applicants work with others. Kleiman suggests meeting with a number of the candidates in a group. For the first 20 minutes or so of the interview, provide an overview of your business and the positions that are open. Then talk a bit to observe the skills of the applicants when working with others. Stimulate interaction among the group members by asking questions such as, "Tell us the funniest thing that happened in your life," or "What happened when you disagree with someone recently?"

"Observe how the candidates listen to each other," suggests Kleiman. "Who was paying attention rather than just thinking about themselves? Did someone try to show the others up? Was there a natural leader in the group?"

**Bonus tip:** Invite your foreman and crewleaders to observe the individuals.

When you identify the individuals with the characteristics you want, invite them back for more traditional one-on-one interviews. Set the stage for productive interviews. Your goal as an interviewer is to open up applicants so they reveal their true selves. This can be difficult when applicants are so nervous they cannot give a good answer if their lives depended on it. You must set the candidates at ease before you can expect them to remove their emotional guard and open up to you, says Mary Bresnahan, president of The Bresnahan Group in Wheaton, Ill.

"Invite the candidates to relax and start with some small talk about their trip to the interview," suggests Bresnahan. "Ask if they got lost along the way or if the directions were clear. Then you can move on to a general question as to why they have chosen your company for an application."

Some will know more about your business than others. That will tell you something about their awareness. Finally, give some thought to the physical setting of the interview.

"Avoid sitting behind a large desk," says Bresnahan. "It looks like an inquisition. Try sitting near the person instead."

When you appear relaxed, your partner in conversation will be encouraged to feel the same way. The main idea at this point is to encourage the applicant to feel good about both their application and your business environment.

"Like all of us, first-time job applicants..."
have the need to feel worthy and accepted and to feel competent in what they do,” notes Fred Martels, president of People Solution Strategies in Chesterfield, Mo. While the rate of pay is important, people really want to know answers to questions such as:

- Am I going to fit in here?
- When I get there, who will show me where to hang up my coat?
- If I ask a question, will I sound dumb?
- What if I fail?

For teenagers, the worst thing in the world is to feel stupid, so treat them with respect. Smile and look them in the eye. Watch for indications of a good hire as you chat with the candidate. “Even with unskilled workers, you want to find out two things,” says Dr. Alan Weiss, president of Summit Consulting in East Greenwich, R.I. “The first is their level of enthusiasm. Are they excited about something? Maybe it’s a hobby, hard rock or basketball. The fact they have passions about anything is a good sign that they can become motivated about the job once they know what it entails. “Second, if they will be dealing with the public at all, they need to show communication skills,” says Weiss. “Do they establish eye contact when they speak? Do they comprehend your questions and respond to them in understandable English? And are they able to ask questions intelligently when they do not understand something?”

During the interview, watch body language to assess any sudden increase of nervousness that may indicate the person is not telling the truth. Examples of such behavior are fidgeting, crossing and uncrossing the legs, and holding a hand over the mouth.

Ask questions that reveal attitudes

Here’s where we uncork some magic potions. What are the questions that conjure up the truth about attitudes? Kleiman of Humetrics offers these examples:

1. “Tell me about the very first job you got paid for.” Wait a second—isn’t it true that this applicant has never held down a job before? Yes, but the average young person spends from $25 to $50 a week. Has that money been given to him by doting parents, or has he earned it? When you ask how the applicant earns money you may learn that he babysat, cut lawns or delivered papers. You are looking for evidence that this person has developed good work habits and the resultant attitudes that money must be earned.

2. “Did you have chores around the house?” Here is a good follow-up question. Once again, a detailed response will indicate the individual has developed the attitude that work responsibilities are important.

3. “What is the hardest thing you ever did or the hardest (part time or temporary) job you ever had?” Look for evidence that the applicant has devoted great effort to some task or has done something to earn money. This will reflect good attitudes toward hard work and perseverance.

4. “What is your definition of being on time?” This may seem like a dumb question, but when you hear some answers you may change your mind. Watch for responses that devalue promptness. Here’s an example: “If I get in, like, an hour after I am asked to arrive, then I’ve been told I was doing okay.”

5. “How many times have you been late to school in the last six months?” The idea once again is to assess attitudes toward punctuality.

6. “Tell me about the worst trouble you have ever been in.” You may hear a response such as, “I went joy riding.” Express an interest in this response and repeat it back with another question. “That’s very interesting. You went joy riding. Is that the worst trouble you have ever been in?” The idea here is to uncover details about actions that reflect attitudes of dishonesty or lack of dependability.

7. “Tell me about your school experience. What courses did you like and dislike?” The actual courses cited as “most liked” are less important than the individual’s attitudes toward school, which represents work. You are seeking individuals who took their schooling seriously.

8. “Have you ever had a situation in which you were asked to do something that wasn’t right? What did you do?” This question reveals attitudes toward honesty and fair dealing with others. Prompt the individual about actions taken when friends wanted to do something that was not right.

9. “Have you ever planned a party, and what was your role?” Ask questions such as this one to elicit information about the individual’s attitude toward taking responsibility.

10. “I’d like the names and phone numbers for several of your teachers, friends, parents and grandparents. When I call them what will they tell me about you?” These questions leverage out the truth about attitudes that would otherwise remain hidden. Applicants realize it is better for them to reveal information rather than...
than have you hear it from a third party. Following the interview, call the individuals whose names and numbers have been given you. These individuals are great sources of information about the applicant’s attitudes. In particular, grandmothers don’t lie,” says Kleiman. “Ask Grandma to tell you about Bill and you may hear something like: ‘I’m so glad Bill is looking for work—maybe he will get off his drug habit.’”

II. “If you had a date and were supposed to be home on time, what’s the latest time you came home after you were supposed to?” Now you have a specific question to ask the applicant’s parents. You can confirm what the applicant says about rules he or she has lived under.

We’ve covered some questions that will take the lid off hidden problems that first time job applicants carry with them. Notice the lack of hypothetical questions. Such questions too often elicit only answers that the applicant feels you want to hear. Situational questions, in contrast, uncover how the applicants have responded to actual incidents. Attitudes live inside the head and the heart: We can only see them in their physical manifestations.

Communicate your expectations

At the end of the interview, tell applicants what you expect of them should they be hired. Since these people have never held a job before, you can take nothing for granted concerning their work habits.

“Start by explaining your work rules,” stresses Kleiman. “They must arrive on time, be willing to do more than what is in their job description and show initiative in helping customers. Give the reasons why you hire and fire individuals.”

At the same time, it’s important to communicate your intention to treat individuals fairly should they join your organization. You want top applicants to realize you are the best employer around. Tell them your place of business treats people well. You will give them the time off they need to pursue their other life activities long as they communicate these needs to you well in advance. You will give them opportunities to be entrepreneurial when you can. If they are conscientious in their work habits, you will not penalize them by piling on more work because another worker slacks off.

And you maintain a workplace in which two-way communication about conflicts is not only encouraged but required. Equally important, says Friedman of Time & Place Strategies, is to let the candidates know there is room for advancement for individuals who perform well.

“These kids are in a hurry and have unreasonable expectations,” he says. “They have not yet learned about time and patience. So establish a mini-career path to move them long more quickly.”

For example, let them know that six months down the road they will receive a modest pay increase if their performance is good. By communicating your expectations to potential employees you have laid out the ground rules for success. The prospect is on notice that if a hiring decision is made, honest dealings and hard work are required to keep the job. And the applicant understands that your place of business is, in many ways, superior to others because you treat workers fairly.

Call the references

Finally, follow up on the interview by making the calls to references. “Talk with coaches, the parents they have been babysitting for, and others at their school who can provide insights into their reliability,” says Bresnahan. “All of these people can tell you if the applicant has shown up on time and is a team player.”

Bresnahan suggests asking specific questions, such as how often the person was more than half an hour late. One person’s standard of punctuality may be different from your own. With the help of this article, you should be well on your way to hiring first-time employees who contribute to the health of your bottom line.

Get More Information

✓ Hire Tough: How to Find and Hire the Best Hourly Employees by Mel Kleiman. Practical advice on avoiding costly turnover by hiring right the first time. Humetrics Press, 8300 Bissonnet, Suite 490, Houston. Texas. 77074. 1-800-627-4473.

Tuscon Making Way for Trees

By Don Dale

For a city reputed to have only one season, almost no rain and a landscape that features giant cacti, Tucson is concentrating awfully hard on trees. How? By making trees part of the urban landscape, making sure neighbors know how to care for trees, and planting trees for special occasions.

“In the upper Sonoran Desert there are a lot of trees,” Doug Koppinger reminds a visitor to the Old Pueblo, as the city is known locally. But, he says, the trees—natives such as ironwood, mesquite and palo verde—are usually cleared for development.

Old neighborhoods have sometimes neglected their trees. In addition, desert trees seem a little smaller and thinner, so the city looks a little bare in places.

Koppinger, who is coordinator of the Trees for Tucson Program, is trying to correct that. The program was started in the late 1980s as part of the Tucson Clean and Beautiful Program, a non-profit organization with City of Tucson office space. It has several projects that encourage trees in the city.

The goal of the program was to plant more trees, notes Koppinger, so his first priority is to do just that. The organization is ingenious at getting grant money from a variety of sources. His first project, at the Davis Monthan Air Force base, was an intensive tree planting designed to test energy savings by shading houses there.

It was part of the Cool Community Program, which was tested in seven cities nationwide. Research statistics, including results from the base, showed savings of up to 15 percent on summer utility bills when trees shade the dwelling.

One of Koppinger’s biggest programs is the Street Tree Program, undertaken to beautify neighborhoods and provide shade for parking around Tucson. Neighborhood tree aficionados are encouraged to organize into groups that will put in the effort to beautify their neighborhoods.

“They organize and find out who wants trees,” Koppinger says. The groups select locations and species, usually natives or other xeric species. Tucson Clean and Beautiful—which gets funding from a number of sources, such as the local utility company, National Tree Trust and the State Land Department—will split the cost of the trees with the group. In addition, they often get the trees at wholesale prices through deals.
with nurseries.

Then, Koppinger will meet the group on-site and help plant the trees. The City of Tucson will often donate labor or equipment. Some groups will have ten volunteers ready to plant, and other groups will mobilize more than 100. All told, these groups have planted thousands of trees.

"I don’t know what the exact number is," Koppinger admits, but they have really beautified some streetscapes. Those landscapes will only improve as the trees mature.

In conjunction with this program, Koppinger and other tree experts teach a Neighborhood Forester Workshop sponsored by the National Tree Trust. A four-hour training session teaches volunteers how to plant and care for trees. An additional benefit is that new tree boosters are recruited at these workshops, people who later become involved in other programs.

Over 100 people have gone through the workshops who are now better prepared to maintain the trees they have planted. A related benefit is that they learn enough to become better stewards of the trees on their own properties.

“Neighborhood foresters are the ones who will keep that program going,” Koppinger notes. “We try to get them interested enough to get involved in the process.”

Trees for Tucson provides tools such as loppers, shovels and saws to these groups so they can care for and plant new trees whenever they get the notion. The program counts its greatest successes in some of the old and rundown neighborhoods that had trees neglected for decades.

“It’s fantastic,” says Brad Lancaster, whose house in the Dunbar/Spring neighborhood, one of the old residential areas near downtown, has benefited greatly. “We’ve planted more than 500 trees since 1996.”

When Lancaster moved into the neighborhood in ’94, there were few trees in the right-of-ways along streets. A barren, junky look predominated, because people would park their cars on the dirt pathways and throw trash there.

“The right-of-ways were denuded of any vegetation,” he notes, and it was a hot neighborhood without shade. Lancaster helped organize 50 volunteers who planted native, heat-tolerant trees. He feels it has lowered summer temperatures around his house.

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“Wildlife has reappeared, too,” Lancaster points out. Birds have proliferated, and so has the local interest in trees. Lancaster has gone on to plant 25 trees on his own lot, and volunteers have assisted elderly people in the neighborhood who wanted trees but were unable to plant them themselves. This rundown section of town experienced other unforeseen benefits.

“Ever since we’ve been planting trees, the number of crack houses in the neighborhood has gone way down,” Lancaster claims. Much of that is due, he thinks, to a community spirit that develops and carries over to other areas as pride of ownership takes hold. “As people plant trees, they take ownership.”

A closely related program, Trees for the Community, is designed to assist other non-profit groups interested in planting trees at a specific site.

“We do quite a few of those very year,” Koppinger explains, as many as 40 in some years. For example, The Primavera Foundation, a shelter for homeless and abused women, wanted to plant some trees on its property. All the group needed was a little guidance and support, and they got it.

One of the multi-purpose offshoots of this program involves kids who can benefit in more ways than one from the plantings. One high school class for special-needs kids landscaped a public housing project, which benefited the tree planters as much as it did the recipients. Koppinger also helps the county’s Child Protective Services involve kids under their care in planting.

Yet another program is Trees for Schools, which involves speaking to school groups about the benefits and care of trees.

“I’ll go out and talk to them about trees. We’ll almost always plant a tree on the grounds,” says Koppinger. He talks to about 1,000 students every year in 50 to 60 schools. Interested teachers really get the kids excited about trees, and they will often help plant trees through the neighborhood program, as well.

Joan Lionetti, director of Tucson Clean and Beautiful, says that one of the most popular programs for trees has been the Paseo de los Arboles (walkway of trees)—a program started in 1994 for planting commemorative
Doug Koppinger (left) talks to neighborhood tree activist Brad Lancaster about some of the trees that 50 volunteers have planted in the Dunbar/Springs neighborhood of Tucson.

Trees for loved ones.

"We wanted to create a commemorative park," Lionetti recalls. Prior to that, commemorative trees had been allowed by the city, but care was very difficult in far-flung locations. The solution was a mile-long strip of city land along the west bank of the Santa Cruz River where people could plant and dedicate trees to loved ones.

"It was very popular," Koppinger remembers. "It sold out in half the time that we predicted."

The park was once a strip of denuded land west of downtown. It now contains 600 trees, a walkway and commemorative plaques that list the contributors. Using money from corporate sponsors, the Arizona Forestry Council and individuals who wanted to donate trees, the park has become a shady and scenic part of the city. Only four species of trees are allowed in the Paseo: palo verde, desert willow, mesquite and acacia. This reduces the need for irrigation and maintenance.

"The ongoing operation and maintenance comes out of the county's budget," Lionetti says. The program has been so popular that a second park, this one along the Pantano Wash on the east side of Tucson, is being readied for planting.

Koppinger stresses that a city can make its urban forest with volunteers—even in a desert city like Tucson. Today, he has tree tours every year to show people both native and exotic trees planted in and around the city. It's called The Great Trees of the Old Pueblo Tree Tour.

Lionetti insists even more trees are needed, and she is trying to cultivate a better working relationship with the City of Tucson in the planting and maintenance of all these trees. But that will all come. Who knows? Tucson may someday be known as more than a city of cacti. Might it someday be known as a city of cacti and trees?

Don Dale is a freelance writer in Hollywood, Calif.

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TREE CARE INDUSTRY - JANUARY 2001
Deregulation will be the single greatest issue facing vegetation specialists in the next 10 years, according to analysts at the Edison Electric Institute in Washington.

Utility line clearing may not look like an arborist’s growth industry in this uncertain era of deregulation, but times may be changing in the not-too-distant future as the demand for more reliable power increases in a political environment hostile to new power plants.

In a bit of an ironic twist, utility and vegetation experts think recent utility cutbacks in contract tree work actually could turn to commercial tree care companies’ advantage, given time. Regardless of the size of the business, analysts foresee significant opportunities for commercial tree care companies—especially knowledgeable ones. Small operations might do well partnering and managing the neighborhood line-clearance business, while larger outfits could be poised to harvest increased work, as well as land-clearing for new telecommunications lines.

Unfortunately, utility line clearance specialists (and customers, too) will have to ride out some short-term discomfort as newly deregulated utilities continue to cut back or consolidate on contractor costs. The utilities’ common objective, of course, is to strive for profitability as they simultaneously try to figure the ideal level of maintenance. The chance they take is leaving questionable, if not improper, arboricultural practices in their wake.

Translation: in an effort to save a buck in the short term, utilities may be creating more—or more costly—work for themselves in the long term.

Deregulation at a Glance

Since the first power and phone lines were strung more than 100 years ago, the monopoly system worked very well for America, ensuring an organized, reliable supply of power and phone service at stable, government-mandated prices.

The original deals guaranteed orderly, closed, non-competitive and profitable markets for the utilities. In return, regulators insisted that utilities build and maintain a highly reliable infrastructure. Nowadays, the national power and phone grids are in place and functioning, though quality, capacity, reliability and price are becoming questionable.

Recently, consumers comfortable with phone deregulation seemed convinced that a utility monopoly was a remnant of an earlier era. Instead, competition in the marketplace would drive down the price of electricity. The shakeup has only just begun, but profit pressures have already resulted in mergers, acquisitions, buyouts and budget cutbacks.

Layoffs and early retirements have caused the number of seasoned right-of-way managers to dwindle. Struggling power companies have cut or eliminated their contractor business hoping to manage with on-hand staff. Others—way understaffed and facing a whole new set of responsibilities—are forced to outsource, but they, too, are looking for lower costs, job quality notwithstanding.

Counterproductive Cutbacks

At ground zero are professionals like Richard A. Johnstone, system forester with Conectiv Power Delivery in the New Jersey-Delaware-Virginia-Maryland region and past president of the Utility Arborist Association.

As he noted in a recent interview, the uncertainty of utility deregulation over the last decade has resulted in little new investment in generation, transmission or distribution infrastructure. “Deregulation-driven budget cuts have led to low-bid contracting and improper arboricultural practices,” he charges, “resulting in overgrown and precarious vegetative conditions in utility rights of way.”

But Johnstone has noticed the pendulum is beginning to swing the other way, as the industry is forced to focus less on short-term price structures and more on reliability of service and long-term costs to keep their customer retention up and repair costs down.

“Look at [electrical] reliability through the ’90s,” he says. “It was deteriorating. A lot of companies needing to generate money looked internally, since they couldn’t go to rate-setting commissions anymore. The first place they tend to cut is contracting.”

According to Johnstone, most budget cuts tend to make the economic problem—as well as the vegetation problem—worse. A variety of things begin to occur when tree maintenance budgets are slashed. Cutbacks in prices mean drops in skill levels, as contractors can no longer afford veteran trimmers. Trees are left to grow too long between pruning cycles, making them more hazardous to prune near high voltage lines. This has left difficult work in the hands of ill-prepared utility or private crews. The result, Johnstone complains, are rights-of-way that either aren’t properly cleared or grow back too quickly because maintenance workers don’t understand the ecosystem.

Triumph of the Bean Counters?

Jim Barnhart, supervisor of system forestry for Northern Indiana Public Service Company (NIPSCO), sees deregulation as
part of a larger, complex economic problem that includes escalating energy prices and a desire to meet Wall Street's goals.

"Tree trimming funds historically came from operations and maintenance budgets and were not looked at closely as long as one made a good case for the request," Barnhart says. "As the single largest line item expense in any utility's operations and maintenance, accountants and purchasing agents have become interested all of a sudden. They apply general purchasing theories to beat prices back on what is a unique contract service."

So, for Barnhart, the reduction in quality line-clearing work is the fault of the utilities, since they're not willing to pay for quality work. Add to this a job market that makes a foreman employable at higher wages in other industries and the difficulty in finding people willing to work a difficult job season after season. The result is a loss of experienced, quality workers.

"It's going to get really ugly in states like California," Barnhart predicts, "where utilities are not willing to pay for quality tree care. At the same time, you have price controls and rules from the legislature that go so far as to require that no branch encroach within 18 inches of an energized line anywhere on the system—or fines will be imposed. And finally, at what point will the utilities get serious in finding ways to pay contractors comparable wages to line-men when the risk and the work difficulty make it one of the most physically difficult jobs in the utility?" wonders Barnhart. "This is a difficult situation in which to recruit and retain quality workers."

Regardless of the role deregulation plays, "It's a Rodney Dangerfield job—very important but it 'gets no respect'," Barnhart concludes.

Utility Contract Switch

"Nationwide, utilities need to switch how we contract out if we want to reduce costs and improve service," Johnstone insists. First, he says, the three types of bidding procedures need review. Each is intended to keep crew time down. Period.

The three types of bidding an arborist will encounter are:
♦ time-and-material
♦ lump-sum
♦ unit cost

Whether it's pay as you go, a 2-3 year contract ensuring specific results, or a per-tree-trimmed-or-removed cost, each has one thing in common: The price is kept low.
by favoring the lowest cost bidder, not the one who will result in the lowest long-term overall maintenance cost.

For Johnstone, the time has come for utilities to think not so much of the lowest price. Rather, they should begin seeking out contractors known for "best practices," resulting in lower long-term costs—not just lowest job cost.

"Normally," he relates, "we don't have people planning the trimming. It's usually left to the contractor or perhaps the local community." Past practices were to remove encroaching limbs and deadwood with little thought given to invasive, fast-growing trees likely to fill in quickly. Johnstone notes problems created by "junk" varieties like Ailanthus or Norway maple sowed by seeds, birds and well-meaning homeowners.

Improper trimming, he says, usually means faster growth of water sprouts, which will cost even more—sooner.

"The way we've been doing it is just spinning our wheels," he laments.

The Right Way on Rights of Way

"What I am advocating is to do right-of-way maintenance correctly by managing the vegetation, not maintaining the status quo," says Johnstone. "Begin by taking particular circuits—potentially the most troublesome ones—and plan out our right-of-way work." He would like to encourage utilities to work more closely with foresters and arborists and begin to know the long-term ramifications of the job before work begins.

In Johnstone's view, the situation has gotten so bad that, "We need reclamation of our right-of-ways, not maintenance. Many problem trees need to be removed and herbicides applied to encourage low-growing, compatible trees and shrubs. We need to remove overhanging branches before ice and snow do the work for us.

"Outages are no longer just an inconvenience... they are a matter of health, safety and economic vitality," says Johnstone. "Planning work, using contractors with best practices, and managing vegetation results in better trees and better power reliability. The need for professional vegetation management has never been higher."

Public Outreach

Communities, utilities and arborists can help in educating the public, especially in residential rights-of-way, who forget when they plant a tree "for Aunt Martha" under a wire, that it will grow—up! It's time to educate property owners and to get counties and community ordinances not to plant in the right-of-way corridor. At the resi-
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dent street level, that would be 15 feet on both sides of a pole and its lines.

"This situation is a huge opportunity," claims Johnstone. He laments the fact that few trade or vocational schools teach arboriculture. "Students don't know that arboriculture is a viable career. There's so much work for a trained arborist it's unbelievable," he says.

Beyond the "Overhead"

Environmentalists at the Edison Electric Institute state bluntly that utility vegetation specialists need to adjust to the new marketplace by thinking beyond "overhead" management, balancing diversified control plans with circuit management and long-term budget control. Therein lies the greatest value of a professional contractor to the local utility.

How can a commercial tree care company, working with system foresters, sell the idea of proper maintenance to those who control the budget strings? By knowing what utilities respond to in the new age of deregulation.

Taking a tip from Peggy Landini, vice president of commercial operations at the Northern Indiana Public Service Company (NIPSCO), the best way to sell a vegetation management program is to develop a plan that increases reliability.

Landini uses four points in making a program proposal. A savvy private contractor might consider addressing them in pitching the local phone or electric company for work. Whereas NIPSCO is looking to develop its own performance benchmarks, improve record keeping, develop more efficient practices, and improve customer relations, commercial companies can help by "selling into" that mission. How?

- consider ways to help the utility develop hard data on improved productivity and efficiency due to new practices
- supply supporting data on the impact of total vegetation control, especially as it relates to reliability
- justify the use of balanced best practices (cutting, planting and herbicides)
- find ways to engender community support for the utility regarding vegetation management

Getting Rational

For forward-thinking companies once worried about contractors taking their jobs in the new deregulated environment, the quest for quality can be a way of taking ownership. Together, the utility and the commercial company can decide on the best, most efficient way to do a job. The utility forester can refer to service interruption reports and a circuit plan to award a bid to a qualified contractor who knows how to make the situation better. A cost-efficient contractor will have to present a unified, diversified plan that combines pruning with targeted herbicide use.

Johnstone and others like him have a big job on their hands, especially if they hope to succeed in changing people's mentality regarding the costs and value of vegetation management.
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What's New in Cabling, Bracing & Guying?

By Michael Roche

New standards for cabling, bracing, and guying trees were approved by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) in May 2000. Professional arborists should take note of these new standards—not because it makes good bedtime reading—but because if you do read it you will become a better arborist.

Much of the information standardizes common knowledge, such as using eye bolts that go all the way through a limb or lag bolts seated to the full length of their threads. However, other areas of the standard may not be as well known. For instance, only one cable shall be installed into each bolt, and the angle of the bolts must be at the same angle as the cable. No more drilling straight across the limb if one bolt is higher than the other. More about this later. First an overview.

ANSI, which approved the new standards, is a nonprofit organization that works with different professions to help create industry-consensus standards. In essence, a committee made of a group of volunteers from the green industry and the U.S. government worked together to create standards for performing the various tasks in our trade properly. The committee follows ANSI procedures on how to develop standards, write those standards, then submit them to ANSI for approval.

The committee that wrote the standards included people from agencies and organizations, such as the National Arborist Association, International Society of Arboriculture, National Park Service, United States Forest Service, and several of the larger tree care companies. The cabling and bracing standard is the third of a potentially eight-part series and is entitled “Support Systems a. Cabling, Bracing, and Guying.”

Existing ANSI standards include ones for tree pruning and fertilization. Future standards will include lightning protection, tree protection (from construction injury), tree growth regulators, pesticide application, and soil amendments. If all of the above is news to you, then you aren’t doing yourself, your business or your clients any favors. These standards lay out, in great detail, how you should carry out proper tree work—starting with bid and job specifications.

The support systems standard gives information that many people might not know, so you are not out there “winging it.” Frankly, it may help you from doing something, like countersinking washers into the wood, which is just plain wrong. In addition, it might save you from serious liability down the road. If for some reason a cable you installed fails, and there is a lawsuit, you can point out that the system was installed in compliance with ANSI A300 standards, thereby limiting some of your exposure.

The standards can also help when purchasing cabling gear. If you know the diameter of the limbs you are going to cable in the future, you can use the standard’s hardware table to decide the size of the materials you will need (see Figure 1). For example, if you know you are going to install cables into limbs 5 inches and 15 inches in diameter, you will need one-quarter inch eye bolts and one-quarter inch common grade cable for the 5-inch limb, and 3/8-inch bolts and 7/16-inch common grade cable for the 15-inch limb.

The ANSI standards also make a good sales tool. Customers often do not understand cabling and bracing. You can show them pictures explaining how you install a cable and charts giving the exact sizes of the materials. If a customer wants more information on bracing, you can show them diagrams of brace alignment. This information may give you the necessary edge in a bid. You can also incorporate written cabling specifications into your estimate so the client can compare exactly what work you plan to do against what your competitor is planning.

Description of standard

The Support System standard starts with a forward. The most important part is that it sets the tone for the use of the standard. One thing that stands out are these three statements in the third paragraph:

1. “Users of this standard must first in-
terpret it's wording.” Translation = Yes, you have to read and understand the standard, luckily there are many diagrams that will help you understand what the standard is saying.

2. “Then (users must) apply their knowledge of growth habits of certain plant species in a given environment.” Translation = You need to consider the tree(s) your going to work on before trying to use the standard to write a work specification. You can’t just write generic work specifications and keep using them over and over again.

3. “The users ultimately develops their own specification for plant maintenance.” Translation = After doing number 1 and number 2 you write your own work specification using the standard for help.

A listing follows the forward of the people and organizations responsible for the standards. If you have a question about the standards, or if you would like to offer comment when the standard is revised, they’re the ones to contact.

Next are the scope, purpose and application sections, which say the document is a standard for professionals who care for trees or manage trees, such as groundskeepers, facility managers, city officials, etc. No surprises here, but it does note that specifications should be written by an arborist. This does mean you need a Ph.D. in arboriculture, but it does mean you should have experience and training in proper tree care techniques.

Where the standards get real interesting, believe it or not, are in the definitions area. By reading the definitions, you begin to see standardization of names that might change from one area of the country to another. More important are the definitions of two usually innocuous words, “shall” and “should” that are everything to the standards and the way you install cables, braces and guys.

Shall “denotes a mandatory requirement,” and should “denotes an advisory recommendation.” In other words, from here on in, if you see the word should, you should try to follow the standard, if you can’t, you must have a good reason for not doing so. If you see the word shall, you must follow the standard. For that matter, the difference between shall and should must be understood by every arborist, for these differences extend beyond cabling. The industry-consensus standard for safe tree care operation, known as ANSI Z133, defines safe operations in ways that can help you avoid an OSHA citation ... and save your life! If all of this is news to you, then you really aren’t doing yourself, your business or your clients any favors. Where have you been?

The next section explains why you install tree support systems. Again, it is written in a technical manner. Bob Rouse, secretary of the ANSI A300 standards, explains it more simply: “Cables provide supplemental support—and are not sold as actual support—by lengthening the useful life of a tree, and reducing the chance a
split might otherwise occur."

This segment is followed by short descriptions on tree inspection and tools. It is very important that you do not gloss over paragraph 37.2. The standard places a responsibility on both you and the client in this paragraph. It is recommended that you, the arborist, notify the client, or the client’s agent (groundkeepers, facility managers, city officials, etc.) before the installation is started, that the support system requires periodic inspections. You should also tell the client that they have the responsibility of performing the inspection and that the inspection should include the condition, position, and cable tension of the system and the structural integrity of the tree.

This is a “should” meaning it is a recommendation, since, the client could be vacationing in Cancun when you arrive to inspect the tree and write the estimate. However, there are probably very few good excuses for not getting this information to the client at some point, short of the client’s death, (or worse, your death!).

A good way avoid the whole problem is to incorporate the notification of the need for periodic inspections on your estimate or bid. Also include notice that the client agrees or at least understands this provision by accepting and signing the estimate.

The next sections—general, installation practices, cabling, bracing and guyying—are the meat of the document. If you are uncertain how to cable, these areas give you an idea of exactly what you should learn when you get additional training. If you already know, you should still read it. Even people who have been installing cables for years will find it useful.

For instance, section 38.4 states, “Only one termination shall be attached to an anchor.”

“What about a multi-stemmed white birch?” I wondered. “If you drill a hole for each cable, won’t a small tree be compromised and develop the potential to snap?”

According to Rouse, “In this situation...
you can take a look at paragraph 38.1 (see, all that numbering really does help!). This paragraph reads: “Holes should not be drilled closer together than the diameter of the branch or trunk being drilled. The diameter of the hole shall not be greater than one-sixth (1/6) the diameter of the limb, trunk, or branch at the point of installation (see Figure 2).” If you still have concerns you could consider one of the synthetic-fiber systems like Cobra or Skybrace, they are considered a cable in the A300 standards.”

Another standard worth mentioning is section 38.3. It is a tough standard that requires bolts be set on the same angle as the cable. If the opposing bolts are on the same height, you drill straight through. However, when one bolt is higher or lower than the other, you have to drill each bolt hole at an angle into the tree so that it points toward the opposing bolt. (Figure 3)

This is difficult. Here you are, hanging way up in a hardwood with one foot dangling and the other foot throbbing because it is pinched in a narrow V-crotch. Your lower back aches because it is tweaked at an angle that would make a yoga instructor groan, your arms and shoulders feel like putty as you drill into a tree with a dull bit that you swore you would replace but forgot. And now some people have written a standard that instructs you to drill a hole longer than straight through the tree. You can't even attach another cable to it. No, you have to drill new holes for each cable. "Well.

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you aren’t going to be pleased. But the annoying part is … they’re right, you’re a professional, and this is the standard. Truth be told, it’s correct, so you have to do it (sore arms or not).

Why is the standard right in this circumstance? It all relates to side loading. When they wrote the standard, they relied on breaking strength tests of the hardware that were done by engineers, for other industries, not the tree care industry. Engineers perform breaking strength tests on straight pulls, not sideways pulls, since the hardware is not designed for side-loading. If bolts and cables are at different angles, side loading occurs and the hardware will not perform at its strength rating. This means that if you side-load an eyebolt, the whole hardware chart becomes inaccurate. For example, a 10-inch limb requires a 3/8-inch eye bolt and 3/8-inch common grade cable. This cable has a maximum load capacity of 900 pounds. An improperly installed bolt will reduce the holding capacity of the bolt, meaning that the bolt now might not be able to support the cable even though the sizes are matched up properly according to the table.

Another standard that requires technical knowledge is section 39.3.1, which states, “Steel cables should be taut following installation.” According to Rouse, the standards committee spent more time on this short phrase than almost anything else. That’s because it was hard to determine just what the definition of “taut” is. (Note: the committee insists that it does know what the definition of “is” is!). What is taut by one person’s definition could be tight by another’s. In addition seasonal loading variation needs to be taken into account. Often a cable may be installed taut on a limb with leaves, but the cable might slacken after the leaves fall off. Also the opposite is true, if you install a cable on a limb with no leaves, it might be too tight after the leaves fall, causing undo pressure.

Well, basically “taut” is right. The cable after installation should be taut in any season, leaves or no leaves. The standard makes the arborist responsible for determining the right amount of “taut” to apply.

So after all this, you should get a copy of the ANSI A300 support systems standards (actually you should get all the ANSI A300 standards). The important sections are not that hard to read and it’s only ten pages long with lots of pictures. Winter is here, so there should be time to read it. It may be a little painful at first, but once you grasp how the standards are written, it flows easily. Then next season, you can carry it in your truck, use it to write estimates and present it to customers when needed. You’ll be a better arborist for it.

Here are some sample cabling and bracing specifications so you can see what a specification written according to A300 standards might look like (see Figure 4 for help):

**Example #1:**

All work will conform to ANSI A300 Part 3-2000 standards.

**Tree:** 24-inch diameter red oak with split crotch in back yard of residence.

**Cabling objective(s):** To provide supplemental support to the two codominant limbs forming the split crotch in order to limit additional splitting and lengthen the useful life of the tree.

**Cabling type(s) to meet objective(s):** Direct

**Cable hardware:** (two) 3/8 inch eyebolt anchors; (one) 1/4 inch EHS cable span

**Bracing objective(s):** Prevent rubbing of the split sections and limit associated decay.

**Brace type(s) to meet the objective(s):** Parallel

**Brace hardware:** (two) 5/8 inch through-bolts, secured with heavy-duty washers and nuts.
Example #2

All work will conform to ANSI A300 Part 3-2000 standards.

Tree: 80-foot American elm with multiple leaders at front entrance drive of residence.

Cabling objective(s): To provide supplemental support* for leaders in order to limit limb breakage.

Cabling type(s) to meet objectives(s):
Triangular

Cable hardware#: (twelve) 5/8 inch lag hook anchors; (six) 3/8 inch common grade cable spans

Example #3

All work will conform to ANSI A300 Part 3-2000 support system standards.


Guying objective(s): To provide supplemental support* while the tree’s root system recovers from recent landscape construction damage (severed roots).

Guying type(s) to meet objectives(s):
Tree-to-tree

Guying hardware#: (four) 5/8 inch lag hook anchors; (two) 1/4 inch EHS cable spans

Guying anchor #: Trees: 24-inch diameter red maple in NW garden border; 18-inch Japanese cedar in SW garden border.

* = Never, ever, say “to provide support, prevent tree or limb failure, make the tree safe, etc.” Cabling, bracing, and guying only provide additional, supplemental support. Do not imply that cables or braces, alone can support, save, or otherwise make a tree safe. If you do, you will also increase your liability should the tree you worked on fail in the future.

# = ANSI A300 standards do not require that this information be provided but including it in your written work specifications can give you a business edge. Especially when you have to compete with less-reputable businesses that undercut your price by performing sub-standard work. It also provides clear instructions to your crew, improving communication.

Michael Roche is a certified arborist and owner of Stowe Tree and Landscape Service in Stowe, Vt.
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... continued on page 72
Employment-Employment-Employment


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Another Witness to History Bites the (Saw) Dust

A honey locust growing near the spot where the surrender ending the Civil War took place has died and will be removed. But fear not—a forward-thinking company says it has some saplings to help remember it.

The tree stood behind the Appomattox Courthouse in Virginia, where Confederate General Robert E. Lee surrendered to Ulysses S. Grant on April 9, 1865.

The Morris Arboretum, which cares for the trees on the National Historic Park around the surrender site, said the tree apparently died of simple old age. A 1997 study inventory put the tree at 183 years old.

It was around the same time that American Forests’ Famous and Historic Trees started collecting seeds off the tree. The company is now selling seedlings for $50 a pop.

If the Civil War isn’t one of your interests, don’t worry. The company has the offspring of other historic trees for sale, ranging from trees that witnessed the American Revolution to those grown from acorns collected from Abraham Lincoln’s boyhood home.

Offerings include the Sergeant York Tulip Poplar—offspring of trees growing in the hometown of the World War I sharpshooter and Pacific war hero immortalized by Hollywood. You can also buy no fewer than four Elvis Presley species, including the Elvis Pin Oak, the Elvis Sweetgum and, of course, the Elvis Weeping Willow.

Smokejumpers Pitch In

Arborists in New York City and Chicago had some company in the trees this fall. Smokejumpers, specially trained forest firefighters who parachute from airplanes into remote areas, could be found climbing urban trees in and around the two cities.

In all, 26 smokejumpers practiced their climbing skills under the watchful eyes of instructors in the cities in what the U.S. Forest Service billed as a three-day intensive course.

Smokejumpers have to learn their way around a tree because that’s where they often land on their way to fight a backcountry fire. But in what may be a rare example of government efficiency, the smokejumpers were doing double duty up in the trees. They were also trained to spot the Asian long-horned beetle, a pest that has had the Forest Service issuing stern warnings for a couple years now. Smokejumpers found four infested trees in the New York City area alone, the agency said.

More Great Publicity

As if well-trained arborists who follow all the rules and do good work don’t face enough obstacles as they try to raise the public opinion of their profession, here’s something else to worry about.

Seems that at least two people in Modesto, Calif., have been going from door-to-door telling people—mostly the elderly—that city tree trimming crews had been in the area and played on the fears of the homeowners that their trees would get passed over to get them to pre-pay.

At least two homeowners were bilked out of a couple hundred dollars each and police believe more may have been taken by the scam before word of it got out to the local media.
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Chemical Warfare

By Jim Chastain

A quick check of the weather channel confirmed what I already knew—no chance of rain. It had been extremely dry for weeks, very unusual for “sunny” Florida, where the rainy days are as common as tourists. It was early spring and temperatures were already in the low '90s.

When we arrived at the job site I took another look at our bid sheet and then at the two trees slated for removal. (Note: this is important to check, because, as all tree workers know, most trees grow an average of 50 feet immediately after the bid is accepted by the customer. Horticulturists really should investigate this phenomenon.)

Today’s victims were two sycamores about 60 feet tall with approximately 250-inch circumference bases. They were to be removed to facilitate a new driveway. A quick survey revealed no hazards or obstructions—a simple drop-and-chop operation. It should take no more than two hours at the most, with an early lunch in the air-conditioning. I should have known better!

As the first saw started clearing the lower branches, I noticed that Jerry was sneezing frequently. I thought he might have a summer cold. Shortly after that, Kenny, who was climbing that day, began sneezing. Then Brad started up too!

“What’s the deal?” I joked. “Are you guys allergic to work?” Then it hit me. As I got close to the base of the tree I could see a fine yellow “dust” filtering through the sunlight. There was a month’s supply of pollen that no rains had washed away. The sneezing started; my eyes began to itch and burn. I began to cough and choke. I had never been affected by anything like this before.

“We’re not gonna let a little pollen stop us!” I shouted.

For the next three hours my crew and I looked like a gang of looters who had been tear-gassed by the police riot squad! The work went like this: run to the tree; saw until you sneeze or cough to the point of exhaustion; run to the cooler to rinse your face, eyes and throat. A wet towel around the face brought only a few extra minutes of work time.

When we made the final cut and dropped the base, a yellow cloud of dust the size of our chip box truck arose in the hot, still air. Unfortunately, that was the easy part. Chipping was worse than a World War I mustard gas attack!

We finally finished and choking and wheezing loaded our equipment for the ride to the dump. On the way there, Kenny made an observation. “I guess there are a lot of folks in this area that miss those old trees.”

“What do you mean?” I replied.

“Well,” he said, “everyone that passes our truck is crying.”

Jim Chastain is the owner of Advanced Trimming and Cutting, Inc. in Tampa, Fla.

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11. Chipper Air Exhaust Vents

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   - Width: 92”

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   2. Sides & Front: 12-ga. plate
   3. Top: 14-ga. plate
   4. Tailgate: 12-ga. plate with tubing frame (270° swing)
   5. Runners: 8” structural channel
   6. Cross Members: 3” structural channel
   7. Rear Vertical Support: formed 1/4” plate
   8. Rear Horizontal Support: 4” x 4” x 1/4” square tubing

D. Tool Boxes: (14-ga. Galvannealed)
   1. Underbody Tool Boxes:
      (two) 48” long x 20” high x 20” deep
   2. “L” Cross Box:
      24” long x 92” wide x 26” high across chassis rails
      Door: 24” long x 48” high; six rope hooks, stationary shelf and water cooler holder
   3. Ladder Box: (inside chip box)
      143” long x 17” wide x 27” high
   4. Pruner Box: (inside chip box)
      168” long x 17” wide x 12” high
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      Slam, keyed with hidden theft resistant rods

E. Optional
   1. Tool boxes and Step-Type Rear Bumper
      Behind rear axle 34” long x 20” high x 20” deep
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