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Creating the Next Phase...

How many of us actually thought that when we undertook the responsibilities to lead a business or a team that what we were actually agreeing to do was to be the ongoing creators of new possibilities for our company, our profession, and an industry?

Think about photos of businesses 50 or 100 years ago. Look at the pictures and a sense of sentimentality and assumptions of what it must have been like float through our thoughts. We see photos of people in front of country stores or ice wagons bringing ice to homes before refrigerators existed or look at train stations and see people arriving with great glee. We seem to forget that those are single moments in time, and we miss the challenges that economies and business owners faced when trucks and highways ripped businesses’ hearts out as the railroads stopped coming through their towns. We forget what happened to the ice factories and ice wagons when the refrigerator arrived. We think that life was simple back then and perhaps that people didn’t struggle with complicated business problems. Yet, they had to weather catastrophic transitions and transform along the way in order to survive or reinvent themselves.

We build creations in our minds of how running a business is going to be a lovely way to have independence, create personal wealth, and do things our way. We sometimes forget that it also means taking on the responsibility for maintaining jobs for families that we have taken under our wing; for providing long-term benefits for people who are counting on us to have a sustainable business; and for the community that trusts us to provide quality services, not just be around. We don’t think about our need for ongoing professional development and personal challenges in order to stretch and grow our business into new areas. We miss that we have an example to set for those whom we want to work with us every day.

If we conducted a poll, those who inherited businesses probably had long lists of how we would do things differently and how much better it would be. We forgot that there is another list of fresh challenges that will arise in our own time that will demand just as much of us, if not more, to navigate through. We don’t anticipate the tough times that will inevitably come our way in a lifetime of owning and managing a business.

As we move into the next phase of the Transformation of the Industry, we see that there are building blocks for true greatness that are settling in place now for tree care companies. The industry is beginning to see a different picture of who arborists can be and what this industry can be perceived as, particularly as “Green” takes on a whole new characteristic around the globe. Just as the teacher, preacher and doctor were the most revered professionals in a town; there is coming a time when the arborist will be seen with the same respected professional credibility, and acknowledged for the life-enhancing contributions that can be made.

Your time is now. Have you stopped to think about what is going to be perceived of you and your company if someone snaps a photo now? What will it represent? As we create this next phase together, we are making moments in time when our successors will either look back with great sentimentality and assumptions of what it must have been like “back then.” Or they may look at us and wonder why we didn’t press forward with more confidence, with greater determination, with the recognition and understanding that it was up to us to stand up in this moment, in this time, to grasp what our profession has the capability of doing and meet our challenges. I believe that you are more equipped now to take on the responsibilities of being a respected profession than in your previous 100 years.

Creating the next phase will determine whether you Transform the Industry...

Cynthia Mills, CAE, CMC
Publisher
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FEBRUARY

Features

8 Down, But Not Out – Marketing Waste Wood
By Janet Aird

32 Big Toys for Big Boys
What’s hot in ROW clearing equipment?
By Rick Howland

44 Using Structural Soil in the Urban Environment
By Nina Bassuk

47 The Soil Food Web:
Common Denominator in the Landscape
By Dr. Elaine Ingham

Departments

2 Outlook
By Cynthia Mills
Will those in the future look back with great sentimentality and fondness of what we worked together to create, or will they wonder why we didn’t press forward

16 Cutting Edge
New products and services, and news in the tree care industry.

20 Industry Almanac
Important regional and national meetings and activities.

(Continued on page 6)
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RAYCO...When You Get Serious
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Departments

24 Accreditation Profile
   By Don Staruk
   Hamm’s ArborCare: Small companies benefit from Accreditation, too!

26 Management Exchange
   By Mary McVicker
   Managing your cash flow to keep your sales, and your business, on track.

30 Letters

42 Member Forum
   By Joe Engberg
   Proper leadership can create a “culture of safety” at your company.

50 Branch Office
   By Tony Smith
   Are you addicted to certain behaviors. If so, make them work for you.

54 Washington in Review
   DOT & OSHA Updates: Electronic Onboard Recorders Rule

56 Conservation
   By Denis Gathanju
   Cry for the music tree – Saving the African ebony.

58 Classified Advertising

68 TREE Fund
   Picnicking on a trampoline at 60 feet.

70 Accident Briefs

72 TCIA Reporter
   Safety and training products, news, commentary and benefits of membership with the TCIA

78 Tree News

79 Advertiser Listing

80 From the Field
   By Doc Ricketts
   True stories from the school of hard knocks!
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When a tree falls in the urban forest, does it have to end up as chips or firewood?

Definitely not.

Wood from urban trees can be made into everything from small objects, such as puzzles, jewelry boxes and stunning wood sculptures, to large ones, such as park benches and high-quality furniture. Even wood that seems useless can be valuable.

In fact, the wood that usually gives arborists a problem when they feed it into the chipper is the best for carving, says David Flood, an artist who creates abstract, fine-art wood sculptures. “It’s the last wood to get chipped,” he says. “The pieces are knotted and twisted. They have character to them.”

Other characteristics Flood looks for are trees with hollow trunks, especially at ground level, where branches break, where trees trunks break in storms, and insect damage – the kinds of trees that arborists take down all the time.

Flood studied art when he was younger and has been a wood sculptor for about six years. One of his recent sculptures, ‘Bwana,’ a 10-foot-tall, 800-pound piece of abstract art that came from a 50- to 60-foot cherry tree, is on loan to New England Biolabs in Ipswich, Mass.

“I see it as a piece of abstract art, and that is how I work on all my pieces. My art is non-representational and/or non-figurative,” says Flood. “But this never stops people, when they study the wood’s spectacular burls, from seeing any number of faces – animal and human and other features – as the eye of the beholder sees them.”

According to a USDA Web site, splatted wood and burl wood, which are caused by viruses, and crotch wood all sell for retail prices as much as four times the retail price for standard lumber, just because of their special features.

Even plain hardwood can fetch good prices. The city of Olympia, Washington, which has done a lot of research into the uses of downed trees, figures that the retail value per board foot ranges from $1-$3 for alder used for pallets to $5-$10 for walnut...
**Chain Saw Artist**

*By Janet Aird*

Since 1997, Bill Shippen has been carving everything from life-sized bears to a miniature boy playing golf, all with a chain saw and all from fallen trees. And for almost that long, he’s been carving sculptures for Tim Back, owner of Back Tree Service in Cincinnati, Ohio, and a newly accredited TCIA member.

“Usually he wants something big,” says Shippen, who is a draftsman for a steel company when he isn’t carving wood sculptures.

Back provides Shippen with the trees and the ideas for the sculptures, and usually displays them at his booth at the Cincinnati Home & Garden Show. After becoming TCIA accredited last fall, Back had Shippen carve a sculpture of the TCIA Accreditation logo, which Back took to TCI EXPO in Baltimore in November. (The sculpture graced the cover of TCI magazine in January.)

“He envisioned it bigger than I had room for,” Shippen says. Shippen himself had wanted to carve the logo on both sides. In the end, though, he had to make it smaller and one-sided, because the 8-foot-tall, 5-ton tree wasn’t big enough.

“I have to deal with the physical properties of the tree,” Shippen explains. He usually cuts away about 20 percent of the tree, but there can be surprises inside. Once Back asked him to carve an eagle from a cherry tree, but when Shippen started carving, he discovered it was too rotted to use at all.

This is why paying for trees can be tricky. Shippen is happy to pay for ones he can use, he says. The problem is that he can’t tell if he’ll be able to use them before he starts working on them.

Another problem Shippen has had is with foreign objects embedded in the trees. One carving came from a huge tree in a cemetery in Cincinnati. “Someone had thrown a piece of a tombstone in the crotch. That ruined a chain saw blade,” he says.

Shippen does like crotch wood, though, particularly for carving eagles. “The grain is really tight there,” he says. Crotch wood also gives him a chance to get especially creative. One tree had a crotch with three limbs, and one of the limbs had a crotch with two more limbs. He carved an Indian, with an eagle on one of his arms.

To Back, it’s important to see the value in urban trees that have to be removed, and not automatically chip them, chop them or haul them to the landfill. “If you see some art in it,” he says, “use it.”

What to look for

Hardwoods, which fill most urban forests, are the best for furniture and sculptures.

“Every place offers its own wood,” says Flood, who lives in Ipswich. “We have a lot of beautiful wood around here – virtually every fruiting hardwood.”

He especially likes oak, but uses a variety of local woods, including cherry, cedar and maple. He’s also interested in experimenting with wood from other places. He still has some pieces he found in Sri Lanka when he was living there in the 1990s. The character of the wood is more important than the kind, although he doesn’t use tree roots or wood that is too rotted. The trees have to be a good size – a sculpture that ends up weighing only about 20 pounds when it’s finished can begin as a 300-pound log. And they have to be accessible.

Jim Newsom, owner of Urban Hardwoods in Seattle, Washington, which specializes in making furniture from reclaimed urban wood, uses local trees such as ash, elm, oak and madrone.
“We get huge pieces of wood here,” Newsom says. He prefers them to be 8 to 10 feet long, which are the lengths of most of his tables, and at least 18 inches in diameter.

“I’ve always been a scavenger,” says Newsom, who founded his company in 2002. He has made furniture all his life, but his career as a manufacturer of reclaimed wood furniture began almost by accident, when he spotted some beached logs on a deserted shore and bought an old tugboat to pull them to Seattle. These days his company sells to interior designers and at retail outlets.

According to the USDA Web site, in New Jersey the most desirable woods are walnut, butternut, ash, oak, cherry and paulownia, and the most desirable sizes are 16 inches or more in diameter and 8 feet or more in length.

Markets

There are many furniture makers and wood artists who use reclaimed urban wood, and their number is growing every year.

“It’s shocking how much material comes down (in the Northwest) every year,” Newsom says. “When people come to my log yard and see what’s laying there, their jaws drop. The lumber is starting to pile up.” The company recently moved to a new factory, with a showroom where they can sell lumber, just to keep up with the supply and the demand for finished product. Newsom’s company will haul the trees away for you.

Another market is wood artists like Flood, who will also pick it up. He’s been to the western end of the state for wood, and is willing to travel further.

“If there’s one piece, there’s usually another piece,” he says. Jokingly, he describes himself: “Wood artist, will travel.”

Flood doesn’t have a reliable source of wood. “It’s been my biggest constraint. I
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spend at least 20 hours a week walking around looking for wood and have only found 15 good pieces.”

The problem, he says, is that “I compete directly with a chipper. A lot of arborists are busy and they don’t have time to wait for me to get there. It’s generally easier for them to chip it up.”

Arborists are more likely to look for a wood artist when the commercial value of the wood is exceptional, for example, when there are good burls. On the other hand, Flood adds, “Arborists are generally very receptive to the arts. There are a lot of people in the tree industry who love it when they come across a piece.”

He networks with arborists and strikes up relationships with other people as well. He lets them all know he’s looking for interesting pieces of wood.

Another market for urban trees is hauling companies, which find their own buyers. The city of Olympia calculates the cost to haul trees to a log yard on city prop-
erty to be from $35 to $65 per hour, with most jobs taking between two to four hours. One thing Newsom advises arborists not to do is to get into the log yard/milling business: If you’re a tree care provider and tree trimmer, trim and care for trees, he recommends. It can be very expensive, "once you consider the cost of sawmills, a kiln, assorted forklifts – and the yard to keep all that equipment in, not to mention the logs. Some hardwoods take two years to dry in a log yard before they’re ready to be put into a kiln.”

Newsom also recommends that arborists not mill logs that will be used for furniture. Newsom does all his milling himself, but he has two saws, including one large enough to cut a tree that is six and a half feet wide. If you do have a log yard, you can store the trees until you have enough to take to a sawmill. The USDA suggests finding one or more small sawmills (ones that saw less than 1.5 million board feet per year) in your area interested in buying the trees. Follow their specifications when cutting the trees down, and remove all metal and other foreign material in the logs.

You can find more markets for urban
trees in your area by checking with local municipalities, state forestry offices, consulting foresters, forestry and wood products extension offices, as well as resource conservation and development programs.
What’s in this for arborists?

There hasn’t been a lot of money for arborists in this work, but things are looking up. Awareness of the value of reclaimed urban trees is growing on all sides, and this is likely to lead to higher prices. More municipalities are looking for creative ways to keep urban trees out of landfills. More consumers are seeing using reclaimed wood products as a way to live a “green” lifestyle.

Flood has begun to offer $100 for pieces under 3 feet long and $200 for pieces more than 6 feet, but he needs to see photos of the trees before he goes to get them. (E-mail him at shippen1@windstream.net.)

Newsom pays for the trees, too, but he adds that the costs associated with turning them into quality furniture are very high. Whether arborists are paid for the trees or not, they still come out ahead, he points out. “It doesn’t cost them anything to take it to the dump, and it gets hauled away for free.

“If I were in the tree business,” Newsom says, “I’d specialize in removals of nicer trees and get equipment for that. I don’t expect that the demand for raw material will wane. I think it will increase every year.”
Cutting Edge - Products

Husqvarna’s 339XP chain saw designed for tree care pros

The compact design of the new Husqvarna 339XP chain saw provides easier handling for professional tree care applications. Ergonomic features such as the wide soft-grip handle, slim body, and lighter weight offer greater operator control and comfort. The 2.4 hp engine provides the power to get projects done smoothly and efficiently. For ease of operation and better control, the 339XP is equipped with Husqvarna’s LowVib anti-vibration system. The Air Injection pre-filtering system removes up to 97 percent of debris before it enters the air filter, resulting in smoother operation while reducing maintenance needs and engine wear. Contact Husqvarna via www.usa.husqvarna.com.

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Cone Head chipper technology available as module

Dynamic Manufacturing Corp. is now offering the Cone Head chipper module separately, designed to replace comparably sized chipper/drum/housing assemblies in any fleet. At the heart of this module is the patented Cone Head drum, which tests have shown to be 21 percent to 63 percent more efficient than conventional designs, according to the manufacturer. The knife angle of the Cone Head drum creates a slicing cut as opposed to the typical chopping of traditional chippers. This results in less vibration and increased knife life as well as increased fuel efficiency, and reduces the need for greater horsepower. All hydraulic components are included and this unit can be installed and in the field working in a matter of hours. Contact Dynamic at (989) 644-8109 or via www.dynamicmfgcorp.com.

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Terex introduces hybrid vehicle aerial device

Terex Utilities’ new HRX-55 Overcenter Material Handling Aerial Device is outfitted for the first time on a Peterbilt hybrid-electric, medium duty truck to reduce noise and improve fuel economy. The HRX-55 on a medium-duty truck base is widely used in municipal and utility applications. With Peterbilt’s Class 7 hybrid Model 335, the PTO can operate for approximately 25 minutes before requiring battery recharging. Then the diesel engine will automatically start to recharge the batteries – typically for about three minutes. This means that the diesel engine may run less than one hour during eight hours of operation of the unit, an advantage in highly populated areas. The combination unit will be in limited production in 2007. Contact Terex via www.terex.com.

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“Worm Poop” plant food and lawn fertilizer

From the content to the packaging, TerraCycle Plant Food and TerraCycle Lawn Fertilizer are made from waste. Both products are processed from all-natural worm poop that is liquefied and then packaged in recycled soda bottles. Organic waste is first fed to millions of worms that consume and ‘process’ it. The resulting worm poop is completely natural and rich in plant nutrients. TerraCycle liquefies the worm poop, extracts the valuable compounds it contains and creates a potent product that can be sprayed on poured onto plants or soil. Bottles for packaging are collected through fundraising efforts at schools and non-profit organizations throughout the U.S. and Canada. Tests conducted at the Rutgers University EcoComplex confirm that TerraCycle Plant Food outperforms synthetic plant foods in many aspects of plant growth. Also, it will not burn plants if over-applied. TerraCycle Lawn Fertilizer is for fertilizing home and commercial lawns. The concentrates directly attach to garden hoses and automatically mix with water. Packaged in sets of two 1-liter bottles, the product covers up to 5,000 square feet and contains an increased amount of nitrogen, promoting color and promoting grass that is lush and vibrant green. TerraCycle Garden Fertilizer sells in packages of two 20 ounce bottles. TerraCycle products are available at leading retailers and hardware stores. Contact TerraCycle Inc. via www.terracycle.net.

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Sandvik’s Bandsaw

As sawmills move towards higher speed machines in order to boost productivity, Sandvik Materials Technology introduces the Durashift – a higher tensile strength that is at the same time a “forgiving” bandsaw blade steel. Durashift blades are already in use in sawmills in Sweden and Finland. The higher tensile strength gives a high and maintained blade tension producing extra stability in the saw blade. Combined with a forgiving steel (it reacts well to processing variations), which leads to a straighter and narrower cut giving less yield loss from the sawn logs, reduced vibration during cutting, and less risk of crack formation. The two characteristics of higher tensile strength and a forgiving steel have not been available previously in a bandsaw steel. Durashift bandsaw blades maintain their shape over a longer running time – up to 50 percent longer in some instances before regrinding – reducing downtime through fewer blade changes and increasing overall productivity. Blades can be swaged up to three times the blade thickness. They also have good weldability due to the steel’s chemistry. To further increase wear resistance, the cutting edge can be tipped with a cobalt alloy. For information, contact Sandvik Materials Technology Company, PO Box 1220, Scranton, PA 18501. Phone: (570) 585-7500; www.smt.sandvik.com.

Vermeer’s HG200 compact horizontal grinder

Vermeer’s new HG200 compact horizontal grinder is designed for material reduction in confined urban areas. The HG200 processes brush and sizes the end product in one pass, producing mulch that can be used for general ground cover, landscape mulch, compost, or animal bedding. The HG200 shares the same platform as the Vermeer BC1000XL brush chipper and is powered by an 85 hp (63 kW) turbocharged Cummins diesel engine. The gross weight of 5,500 pounds allows it to be towed with a 1-ton truck. A hammermill drum has the ability to process light contaminants such as nails, small gravel/stone aggregates, bolts, glass fragments, and plastics that are commonly found in light construction and demolition materials, pallets or wood chips. Features include easy access to the hammermill drum and screens for maintenance; the patented SmartFeed control system, a patented clutchless PTO; a 17-inch (43-cm) wide, 4-foot (1.2-m) long in-feed conveyor belt with an optional 2 foot (.61 m) extension; an optional magnetic tail pulley that attracts metal objects and transfers them onto a nail chute located under the conveyor. Contact Vermeer Manufacturing Company at salesinfo@vermeermfg.com or via www.vermeer.com.
Valley Crest Tree Company and Stay Green Honored for Safety

Two TCIA members, Valley Crest Tree Company and Stay Green Inc., recently received top honors in safety from PLANET (Professional Landcare Network), the leading professional association of the national landscape industry. Recipients of the prestigious industry awards are given by the association annually as part of PLANET’s Safety Recognition Awards Program. Recognized for overall safety performance with a Silver Performance Award each were Valley Crest’s Specimen Tree Division and the Nursery Division South. The Company’s Nursery Division North received the Silver Performance and recognition for no accidents or illnesses and no time lost from work.

"Safety is always our number one priority and we make it part of each job and every employee’s work day“ said Valley Crest President Robert Crudup. "Our safety program goes beyond the traditional tailgate meetings. We include Health Fairs which cover topics like diet, blood pressure, and even safety at home. People are our number one asset and we want them to come to work safely each day and return home safely to their family each night."

Stay Green Inc. was evaluated on number of accidents, number of days that employees were away from work, and number of employee injuries and illnesses. Additionally, a checklist was used to rate the company’s complete safety program. "It’s how we feel outside of work with our family and friends that makes work so satisfying,” states Chris Angelo, Stay Green’s Financial Controller. "That is why in our type of business working smarter and safer is the most rewarding habit. We will always continue to emphasize on safe work habits so that each employee can work safe for the family."

The Care of Trees Promotes Brugger

Tony Brugger has been named regional manager and operating officer of The Care of Trees Illinois region. Brugger is responsible for overseeing the operations, sales and growth of nine districts in Illinois, a region with 200 employees and $20 million in sales. He has more than 12 years of management experience and is proficient in Spanish. This allows him to better communicate with The Care of Trees employees who speak English as a second language. Before joining The Care of Trees team, he spent several years as regional operations manager for commercial laundry supplier MacGray and operations manager for CBI Fulfillment Center. He received the Operation Excellence Award from MacGray in 2002.

"Tony is a much-needed asset to our team with his great interpersonal skills and proficiency in Spanish," said Scott Jamieson, president and CEO of The Care of Trees. "His breadth of experience in managing and mentoring will improve communication among employees at all levels. This is critical to the success of our leadership program that seeks to build on our successful employee safety record.”

Cottle Promoted at Davey

Keith Cottle has been promoted to field production manager, asset management for Davey Resource Group (DRG). His responsibilities will include startup, staffing, production management and customer support for Davey’s joint use, streetlight, stray voltage, pole inspection, and NESC audit projects. Cottle began his career with Davey Tree in 1993 and transferred to DRG in 2002. Since then, he has managed numerous successful inventory projects including Niagara Mohawk Joint Use, First Energy New Jersey, Progress Energy, Jones Onslow EMC and Four County EMC. Davey Resource Group is a division of The Davey Tree Expert Company.

Bon President of Samson

Samson recently announced the appointment of Tony Bon to serve as the president, effective Jan. 1, 2007. Bon has been a member of the Samson team since 1974, when he began on the manufacturing floor in Samson’s Massachusetts facility. He soon progressed to production superintendent, and later transferred in 1980 to Samson’s Ferndale, Wash., factory to be plant manager. Since then he has held positions as materials manager, vice president of operations, senior vice president, and most recently chief operating officer (COO), overseeing Samson’s sales, operations, and research and development activities. Bon also enjoys a seat on the Board of Directors for United Way of Whatcom County.

Steve Swiackey, the company’s former president, said, “Tony has had an extensive association with the company and so I am pleased that he is taking over the helm of our senior leadership team.”

“Although the majority of my experience is in operations, working closely with sales over the past three years has firmly grounded me in that aspect of the business as well,” according to Bon. “I look forward to serving Samson in this broader capacity.” In his new role, Bon will have complete responsibility for the day to day operations of Samson. Swiackey will remain with the company and assume the position of Chief Executive Officer (CEO), retaining overall responsibility for Samson.
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Go with the flow

The new Barko 930 Mulcher is an uncompromising 305hp brush eating machine engineered for demanding right-of-way, land clearing, and site-prep work. Its 96 GPM attachment flow, yielding 270 net hydraulic horsepower, wipes out everything in its path including the competition. Nothing matches its speed, power and dependability for large clearing applications.

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Industry Almanac

Events & Seminars

February 4-6, 2007
42nd Annual Shade Tree Symposium
Penn-Del Chapter ISA, Lancaster, PA
Contact: E. Wertz (215) 795-0411; www.penndelisa.org

February 6-8, 2007
New England Grows
Boston Convention & Exhibition Center, Boston, MA
Contact: www.negrows.org

February 8, 2007
Connect With Living Process: Tree Biology & Treatment Targets, Bingham Farms, MI
Contact: MGIA (248) 646-4992

February 10, 2007
Long Island Arboricultural Assoc. Annual Tree Conf.
Farmingdale State University
Contact: LAA; (516) 454-6550; www.liaatrees.org

February 11-15, 2007
Winter Management Conference 2007
Tree Care Industry Association
Hilton Cancun Golf & Spa Resort, Cancun, Mexico
Contact: Deb Cyr 1-800-733-2622, Ext. 106; cyr@treecareindustry.org or www.tcia.org

February 14-18, 2007
19th Annual Northwest Flower & Garden Show
Washington State Convention Center, Seattle, WA
Contact: 1-800-569-2832; www.gardenshow.com

February 18, 2007 (Spring)
Hazardous Tree Identification
Rutgers Univ. Cont. Prof. Educ., NJAES
New Brunswick, NJ
Contact: (732) 932-9271 x625; www.cookce.rutgers.edu

February 20-21, 2007
ANSI A-300 Standards
Rutgers Univ. Cont. Prof. Educ., New Brunswick, NJ
Contact: (732) 932-9271 x625; www.cookce.rutgers.edu

February 20-23, 2007
ASCA 2007 Consulting Academy
Hyatt Regency Sacramento, Sacramento, CA
Contact: (301) 947-0483; www.asca-consultants.org

February 22-23, 2007
Certified Treecare Safety Professional (CTSP) Workshop
Husqvarna Training Facility
Charlotte, NC
Contact: 1-800-733-2622 or peter@tcia.org

February 22 & March 21, 2007 (2-day class)
Arborists: Innovations, Techniques and Solutions
Rutgers Univ. Cont. Prof. Educ., NJAES
New Brunswick, NJ
Contact: (732) 932-9271 x625; www.cookce.rutgers.edu

February 27, 2007
Ecosystem Service Markets, Texas Forest Service
Westin Galleria Hotel, Houston, TX
Contact: Jan Davis (979) 458-6630, jdavis@tfs.tamu.edu; Dr. Neal Wilkins (979) 845-7726, nwilkins@tamu.edu

February 23, 2007
Chicago Botanic Garden Woody Plant Symposium
Chicago Botanic Garden, Chicago, IL
Contact: (847) 835-8261; www.chicagobotanic.org/continuinged

February 27, 2007
Woody Ornamental Update: Review ’06, Anticipate ’07
Bingham Farms, MI
Contact: MGIA (248) 646-4992

February 28-March 2, 2007
Midwestern Chapter ISA Shade Tree Conference
Topeka Holidome, Topeka, KS
Contact: Ivan Katzer ivan_katzer@hotmail.com; (816) 765-4241

March 1-3, 2007
13th Annual Winter Conference & Eco-Marketplace
Creating Sustainable Landscapes & Healthy Communities
Ecological Landscaping Association
Mass Mutual Center, Springfield, MA
Contact: www.ecolandscaping.org; (617) 436-5838

March 6-7, 2007
MGIA’s 20th Annual Trade Show & Convention
Rock Financial Show Place, Novi MI
Contact: (248) 646-4992

March 6-7, 2007
Hazard Trees/Trees, People & the Law seminars
National Arbor Day Foundation
Providence, RI
Contact: www.arborday.org/hazardtrees; 1-888-448-7337

March 7-9, 2007
Work Truck Show 2007
Indianapolis, Indiana
Contact: www.ntea.com

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www.treecareindustry.org ⇒ news ⇒ industry calendar
March 14-15, 2007
Certified Treecare Safety Professional (CTSP) Workshop
Holiday Inn Countryside
Countryside, IL (close to Midway Airport)
Contact: (603) 314-5380; peter@tcia.org

March 20-21, 2007
Certified Treecare Safety Professional (CTSP) Workshop
New Brunswick, NJ
Contact: (603) 314-5380; peter@tcia.org

March 20-22, 2007
Certified Pesticide Applicator or Registered Technician (CARTS) training
Farmington Hills, MI
Contact: (248) 646-4992

March 21-24, 2007
ISA Southern Chapter Conference
Little Rock, AR
Contact: (336) 789-4747

March 21-25, 2007
22nd Annual San Francisco Flower & Garden Show
Cow Palace, Daly City, CA
Contact: 1-800-569-2832; www.gardenshow.com

March 25-26, 2007
NJAISA Garden State Tree Conference
Cook Campus Center, Rutgers University
New Brunswick, NJ
Contact: www.njaitsisa.com

March 27-28, 2007
Large Tree Climbing and Rigging
Rutgers Univ. Cont. Prof. Educ., New Brunswick, NJ
Contact: (732) 932-9271 x625; www.cookce.rutgers.edu

March 27-29, 2007
West Virginia Vegetation Management Association annual meeting
Stonewall Jackson State Park resort, Roanoke, VA
Contact: Mike Cheedester (304) 234-3143; machedester@aep.com

March 31, 2007
Pruning Shrubs
New England Wild Flower Society course
Garden in the Woods, Framingham, MA
Contact: registrar@newfs.org; www.newfs.org

April 16-18, 2007
Trees & Utilities National Conference
National Arbor Day Foundation
Tuscan Suites,
Las Vegas, NV
Contact: www.arborday.org/TUconference;
1-888-448-7337

April 16-18, 2007
Trees & Utilities National Conference
National Arbor Day Foundation
Tuscan Suites,
Las Vegas, NV
Contact: www.arborday.org/TUconference
1-888-448-7337

May 1-2, 2007
Trees, People & the Law Symposium
National Arbor Day Foundation
Seattle, WA
Contact: www.arborday.org/TPL; 1-888-448-7337

May 1-3, 2007
TOCA Annual Conference
Savannah, GA
Contact: www.toca.org

May 1, 2007
Oak Wilt Workshop
Dallas/Ft. Worth area (TBA), TX
Contact: Texas ISA, www.isatexas.com

May 16-17, 2007
Hazard Trees/Tree Planting & Establishment
National Arbor Day Foundation
Indianapolis, IN
Contact: www.arborday.org/conferences; 1-888-448-7337

May 18-19, 2007
SAWLEX Sawmill & Logging Expo
Columbia, SC
Contact: (207) 799–1356; www.sawlex.com

May 21-22, 2007
Storms Over the Urban Forest, National Conference
National Arbor Day Foundation
Atlanta, GA
Contact: www.arborday.org/conferences; 1-888-448-7337

June 5-7, 2007
National Oak Wilt Symposium – Texas Chapter ISA
Austin Hilton, Austin, Texas
Contact: Mike Walterscheidt, (512) 587-7515, mbwalt@totalaccess.net; www.trees-isa.org/events; www.isatexas.com

June 9-12, 2007
Trees Florida 2007
Innisbrook Resort, Palm Harbor, FL
Contact: floridaisa.org

June 18-19, 2007
Urban Wildlife Management National Conference
National Arbor Day Foundation
Portland, OR
Contact: www.arborday.org/conferences; 1-888-448-7337

July 15-17, 2007
Green Industry Legislative Conference
Sponsored by TCIA and PLANET
Washington, D.C.
Contact: TOIA (603) 314-5380; www.tcia.org

July 21-24, 2007
BOMA North American Real Estate Congress & The Office Building Show (Building Owners & Mgrs Assn)
New York, NY
www.boma.org

November 8-10, 2007
TCI EXPO 2007
Connecticut Convention Center, Hartford, CT
Contact: Deb Cyr 1-800-733-2622; cyr@treecareindustry.org; www.tcia.org

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Accreditation

Small firms benefit from Accreditation, too!

By Don Staruk

Though in business for nine years, Hamm’s ArborCare Inc. has never had a bucket truck.

“We’re exclusively climbing, and so our selling niche is ‘No trucks on your lawn.’ And that certainly is unique,” says Kevin Hamm, owner and president, adding that he is always looking for ways to help his company stand out. Having incorporated in 1998, Hamm currently has four production employees, two office staff and himself on the payroll.

“Our business is primarily residential. We get commercial and municipal contracts on occasion, but 90 percent of what we do is residential. It ranges from plant health care to removals.”

Kevin Hamm

Hamm uses local Yellow Pages ads and his own database to find business. “We have a little over 2,000 customers in our database that we send a quarterly newsletter to.” They also have a Web site (www.hammsarborcare.com).

And, earning TCIA Accreditation, which he attained in December 2005, was just one more of the many ways he tries to be cutting edge, Hamm says.

“Our biggest challenge is the bottom line,” he says. “Definitely in TCIA there are many of those benefits available to me without the Accreditation, but I think what Accreditation did was more on the line of setting ourselves apart from other companies and showing that professionalism means something to us.”

He related an anecdote. He was out of the country recently and had left his crew in charge for a week. He had a job scheduled and his crew didn’t get to it. The client was angry and told them they couldn’t get there. When he got back, the same job was scheduled for the Wednesday before Thanksgiving. Something came up and they missed it again – and he did not call the cus-

spider lift we’re going to be able to keep our niche. So our motto will be ‘Climbers – no trucks on your lawn. A 75-foot spider lift – and still no trucks on your lawn.’ “

While Hamm’s business is thriving, he does have challenges. “My biggest challenge is the bottom line,” he says.

That is one of the reason’s Hamm is planning to attend Winter Management Conference in Cancun in February. He says Paul Markworth of Wachtel Tree Service in Merton, Wisconsin, convinced him to go.

“His quote to me was, ‘The Winter Management Conference has never cost me money, Kevin. It’s always made me money.’ He says, ‘you’ve got to go to that.’ I want to touch base with some people who have been where I am now – I’ve got a good thing going, except we’re having trouble with the bottom line. Some of that may be that I put such a priority on training and professionalism that I’m spending money where other people aren’t, and I’m trying to act like a big company when maybe I’m not quite there yet. So business management is my biggest struggle.”

Attaining a bit more business understanding was certainly part of why Hamm sought TCIA Accreditation. Hamm’s was the fourth tree care company accredited in Wisconsin.

“Our Yellow Pages ad, that’s one of the biggest things in the ad and that’s what gets people is, ‘Oh, I saw that, no trucks on your lawn. I like that.’ Because they assume, ‘I’ve got a tree service coming in, I’m going to have some yard work to do.’ We’re low impact specialists, so that’s something that sets us apart.”

But Hamm’s is moderating that slant a bit, as they have a spider lift from Teupen on order.

“In February, our spider lift will be arriving … we are looking forward to that,” Hamm says. “Certainly there are advantages to that, especially in takedowns there could be a big time savings. And with the low impact of the
about it.”

“It’s accountability. I can’t speak enough things that you’re required to do,” he says. Accreditation he said no, we’ve go to do it. “The art of detail I guess. By nature I’m more on the meticulous beaver side of business sense I think it was wise. It’s good to have that Accreditation platform to say, ‘We want to do business with you.’”

“Every sales (call) we do, we have Accreditation material we’re giving out. Every time we touch a new person we’re educating them on what’s available out there in tree service and on the value of Accreditation. We’ve always had that mentality of ‘how do we set ourselves apart.’ That’s why we went to the computer-based Accreditation was another tool. At first it seemed foreboding to me and I thought, ‘oh, it’s probably a lot easier for these larger companies to do it.’ But it’s not really easier for the larger companies. They’ve got more horses to tame.”

“Once I got the attitude that, ‘Hey, we can do this,’ we dove after it and we made it happen.”

“Every sales (call) we do, we have Accreditation material we’re giving out. Every time we touch a new person we’re educating them on what’s available out there in tree service and on the value of Accreditation. We’ve always had that mentality of ‘how do we set ourselves apart.’ That’s why we went to the computer-based Accreditation was another tool. At first it seemed foreboding to me and I thought, ‘oh, it’s probably a lot easier for these larger companies to do it.’ But it’s not really easier for the larger companies. They’ve got more horses to tame.”

“Once I got the attitude that, ‘Hey, we can do this,’ we dove after it and we made it happen.”

Where will his business be in five years?

“Well the goal in the business plan is to at least be marketable as a company. I know mergers and acquisitions are occurring and I’ve looked at that as an opportunity. That’s one of the reasons Accreditation was important to me, because to be marketable you’ve got to be tight, and one way to be tight was to get accredited.”

Ten years ago, Hamm says, there was not a tree care company in his area that he would work for, so he started his own company – to do things the way he thought they should be done. He says there are now companies who are doing it right and who he would work for, pointing out in particular The Care of Trees in Chicago. But, he says, since he is never moving to Chicago, he figures maybe he’ll have to bring The Care of Trees to Wisconsin.

“‘There are other big companies out there that are aspiring, but that’s an accolade to the Care of Trees. I think they’re doing a lot of things right.’”

TCI Mag_2.07_Frontv2.qxp 2/5/2007 4:32 PM Page 25
As the economy slows and shifts, your business’s cash flow assumes even greater importance, if possible. Two elements are involved:

- keeping track of the cash flow, and
- keeping the cash flow on track with projections, budgets, and expectations.

Considerations range from “Can I pay the bills and salaries” to “Can I pay myself?” to “Can I finance my future plans for the business?”

No single strategy works for everyone. At the end of the day, strategy has to fit the dynamics of the business and its management. One element is consistent, though: You need to think about cash flow consistently and often. And obviously the best strategies are those that help you avoid, or counteract, the prevalent pitfalls.

The boom or bust syndrome

One reason this pitfall is so prevalent is that it occurs so naturally. You put the greatest focus on cash flow when business is slow. When the business is really going well, there’s a lot of cash coming in, and scrutiny of cash flow falls off. Everyone is caught up in the challenge of taking care of the customers and the heavier volume of business.

But when the current boom ends, what replaces the flow of orders? Where’s the new business? Because no one has been working on generating new business, there’s a sharp drop in cash flow.

What’s needed is consistent efforts to generate new business – but how, when you can barely keep up? The technique involves process and consistency. One very effective technique is to prepare – monthly, a report on key prospects for new business that would include new contacts, leads, new clients, and ideas for future marketing. One month’s report builds on the report from the previous report, the follow-through on these leads and ideas, and where the business is with respect to prospecting specific new clients. The advantage of this strategy is that marketing becomes part of the routine of the business, and you avoid the quandary of coming to the end of the boom and wondering where the business goes from there.

The mature business

More mature businesses sometimes have a tendency to focus less on the details of cash flow, as long as the business is maintaining a “comfortable” level of sales. When the business has an overall record of profitability, owners will “go along with” a few months of declining sales, rather than see this as a trend they need to react to. Overall, the need for constant vigilance seems less acute in a mature business with a general record of profitability; however, patterns of sales, changing market conditions, changes in demand or in the customer base can go unnoticed, with the result that the business doesn’t respond to change.

Owners who have been with their businesses for a period of years are also more likely invest larger amounts of money and personal assets to bolster the business, rather than address a cash flow situation. Owners need to have a limit on the amount of personal assets they’re willing to put...
Newer businesses

The classic scenario for a new business is that the owner is in a hurry to get the door open and business underway. And once underway, there’s always the next client or project, with the result the owner doesn’t have time to work out and establish templates and reports. The pitfall is that an owner never has time to work out effective processes for tracking business activity. He or she keeps track of cash in the context of paying bills, but more is needed. It’s especially critical in the early days of a business to track and analyze cash flow in order to understand the patterns of sales, costs, and the business overall.

Lack of careful tracking and analysis often means that selling opportunities go unnoticed. An existing customer may be a ready market for additional tree care or collateral services.

It’s worth repeating, that it’s essential from the beginning to consistently, preferably on a monthly basis, generate a marketing report that focuses on the ongoing marketing efforts of the business: new contacts, leads, customer referrals, new clients, and ideas for future marketing. Each monthly report builds on the report from the last month, what was done, what remains to be done, what is in process and, critically, new initiatives and contacts.

This can sound like one chore too many to an entrepreneur who is having trouble keeping up with the demands of the new business. But such ongoing marketing efforts should have a very high priority in the business. (For one thing, it’s the way to expand the business’s revenues enough so that the entrepreneur can hire some help!)

A business that lacks a coherent plan for generating new sales is under-marketed or, worse, un-marketed.

Your business’s economic pattern

Tracking cash flow goes beyond noting changes in numbers. You need to be aware of how a change affects the economics of your business, the economic picture of your profitability. Questions of where the business makes money and what costs the business money aren’t always as straightforward as they might appear.

Types of services differ in profitability. Not all services are cost effective. The dollar value of the sales of a certain project or service may look good at the top of the page, but disproportionately high costs of equipment and labor make the bottom line of that particular revenue element low.

You need to manage both the top line (income) and the bottom line. If sales are going up but profit isn’t, what is the connective tissue between those two facts?

It’s also essential to check on your assumptions. Where is your revenue coming from? Is it coming from where you thought it would? If not, what does that say about your assumptions for future revenues, about your budget projections, and
About your marketing?

Eggs and baskets

Businesses whose customers are other businesses need to be aware of their vulnerability to what happens in those businesses. Management turnover in a customer’s business may result in someone new making decisions about continuing as a customer of your business or seeking another arborist, or even if they should continue spending money on tree care. And, if this customer’s business accounts for a significant portion of your business’s revenues, your vulnerability level has increased.

As you track your cash flow and revenues, be watchful of where those revenues come from. In your monthly marketing report, you’ll want to emphasize your strategy for expanding your customer base.

Some of the new business you embark on may not be as profitable or as cost effective as sales to your major customer. You’ll need to weigh the advantages of less dependency on one or two customers against the disadvantage of work that may be less cost effective.

Another consideration is the possibility of building your sales to these newer, smaller customers, mixing in more profitable sales. Small, seemingly less significant customers frequently become a business’s “rent-payers.”

That said, however, not every customer is a good customer; not every revenue element is good for the business.

The overview

Tracking and analyzing your cash flow gives you an essential part of the picture of what is going on within your business. Its utility lies not only in the detail it provides, but looking at the cash flow with respect to the broader aspects of your business gives you the economic picture of the business as a whole.

Questions about the business’s progress tell you something about your expatiations and assumptions. Look at whether the business is moving forward and how it’s making progress. Consider, also, not only whether you’re on target with your revenue projections and expectations, but also how the business looks from a purely operating perspective.

Are some products or elements of your business higher risk than others? Risk, here, is associated with the service or work itself, who the customer is, and how cost effective the sale and the customer is.

Periodically it’s useful (and interesting) to consider your cash flow financial statements in view of your business plan.

- What assumptions went into my business plan? Are those assumptions holding up? If not, why no?
- Do you need to revise your assumptions?
- Where is the business with respect to the plan as a whole?
- Is the business today where you want it to be?
- Is it where you assumed it would be?
- How is the business making money?
  (This refers not only to customers and products, but patterns as well.)

This isn’t a hollow exercise to fill time, as if you didn’t have enough to do. The information from questions like these and from more penetrating analysis gives you not only a clearer perception of your business and its economic dynamics, but also hard information, useful information, that will prove invaluable for planning, managing, and operating the business.

Mary McVicker is a freelance writer from Oak Park, Illinois.

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Responding to Dennis Ryan’s Cabling/Bracing Letter

Thank you for printing Dennis Ryan’s comments (“Letters,” TCI December 2006) on the poor illustration of spiral wrapping. I agree with Dennis that it would have been better in the long run to install support hardware, but the client was in mid-decision and needed a temporary fix.

In the article (“Softer Strategies for Supporting Smaller Trees,” TCI November 2006), I described the pain of finding strangulated trees, so I only install ties when I know they will be monitored. The camera auto-focused on a distant leaf, so it obscured the spiral configuration that prevents girdling. I need to outsource photography, get new glasses – or both.

Thanks also to Bob Rouse for his careful reading of the ANSI standards. TCI has always strictly reviewed my articles for ANSI compliance before they are printed. I wouldn’t have it any other way – I rely on the standards to make my business more credible, profitable and rewarding. The new safety standards are hot off the presses, and the pruning standards will follow. I like to show clients the real thing, because relying on paraphrased recollections can lead to trouble.

Bob and Dennis both work hard on ANSI committees, and they deserve our thanks, our support and our comments!

Guy Meilleur
Better Tree Care
Apex, North Carolina

More on A300 Cabling & Bracing explanation

I read the item about the A300 cabling and bracing standard. We have a bit of an issue with the whole cabling idea.

This thing has morphed from an art form in the ’30s to a practical appliance for keeping trees from breaking apart in predictable spots. A lot of old oak trees in upscale neighborhoods sport fancy cables and props – many unnecessary. I think it is more of an accent – a sort of sculpture item in the landscape – than a practical way of holding a tree together. Lots of these cables simply string tree branches together with little rhyme or reason. They might have been a practical business procedure in the days when labor and cable was cheap.

We live in an area where trees are growing very fast. Many big oaks around here actually add 1 inch of diameter increment to their trunks every year! So, in 20 years, a 20-inch DBH live oak weighing 3 tons can mushroom into a 40 inch monster weighing 15 tons. So it is with major tree branches. Any standard cabling product available is simply too light to secure the great weights under extreme loading during hurricanes and storms.

So, we went to 1/2-inch, case-hardened bolts and rods drilled through the two limbs. Special welded diamonds of steel plate keep the bolt from pulling through. We hooked eyes, clevises and heavy chain (not mere cable) across the gulf. We refuse a cable job unless it is accompanied by a heavy, heavy prune job. Now we’re talking $400 for cabling and $1,000 or so for pruning. What we end up with is an appliance like a tooth filling or a crown that still has to be monitored over time. We do very few of these each year.

This is the case locally of a water oak owned by a Ms. Nasrallah. When this tree was first treated for termites on April 9, 1997, it had a DBH of 41 inches and a small termite pocket in the center. We heavy pruned it and installed a chain to stabilize a V-crotch at 40 feet. By May 13, 2004, the tree had grown to 47 inches DBH. That’s a 40 percent increase in basal area (BV) – and a larger increase in loading on that chain. By then, I noticed a small Nectria canker developing on the limb four feet under the chain. Hurricane Katrina (August 2005) snapped the limb off at the canker. The chain held it while it spun around 90 degrees – missing the houses – and landing in the yard safely. The chain failed where the 1/2-inch bolt snapped off at one end.

You can NEVER have too stout a cable or too strong a chain. Trees grow fast and the cables and other appliances are only figured to be strong enough to hold the trees together when they are installed. As trees grow and the system is stressed by a storm, anything can happen!

Adrian Juttner
Adrian’s Tree Care,
New Orleans, Louisiana
In the real world, one requirement that never changes is finding ways to help your crews work more safely. That's why Altec tree care equipment is rugged, reliable and designed with integral safety features. Our complete line of aerial devices and wood chippers is highlighted by our newest machine - the Altec LRV60-E7P. It will help your crews work smarter and more efficiently. This unit combines 75 feet of working height and smooth maneuverability with the lowest cost of equipment ownership in the industry and unmatched financing options. For tree care units that help you work "Safer and Smarter," call the company that builds them - Altec.
The general consensus is that the interest in right-of-way clearing got jump-started about the time of the great electrical blackout of August 14, 2003. It was then, as the story goes, that a low-hanging branch touched a power line causing an outage that, like dominoes, triggered a series of shutdowns across the northern United States, knocking out 100 power plants and leaving millions of North Americans in the dark for up to four days.

Fast-forward to 2007.

Even after a three-and-a-half year flurry of activity to get caught up clearing away brush and trees, the news remains quite good for those in the utility right-of-way business – or those who want to get in. And it’s good for the residential and land development side, too. But, all with a bit of caution and the right equipment.

In “Cutting a Clear Path to Profitability” in the August 2006 issue of TCI, we focused the features and benefits of brush cutters and, to a lesser extent, other right-of-way clearing equipment. Here, we focus on the business itself and equipment trends among right-of-way specialists – all of whom are TCIA members.

Chuck Cotton is regional manager for Lucas Tree Expert Company in Portland, Maine. The company has been in business since 1926 and does a lot of “bucket truck” work for utilities in Maine, as well as North and South Carolina and in Canada through the Maritime Provinces and Alberta. The company also does residential distribution work in addition to its high-line transmission utility business. While Lucas’ profit centers include lawn care and residential plant health care and tree work, largely in southern Maine, utility work accounts for 80 to 85 percent of its business.

“The trend we are seeing in right-of-way clearing is toward more mechanization. We
used to do more hand trimming and climbing, and we still do a fair amount, but we are using more skidder buckets and tools like the boom-type rotary saws from Jarraff,” Cotton says. “For us here in the Northeast, the challenge is what we call floor maintenance.”

Cotton explained that most rights of way the company is responsible for have been cut down and are now kept down by regular herbicide maintenance. Other trimming is usually for larger trees overhanging the ROW or side-branch encroachment.

“Up here (the Northeast), we use largely a Yanmar (loader) with a bucket,” Cotton says. “Down south we use more of the Jarraff-type equipment. That has to do with the speed of vegetation growth. It’s more cost effective, and it is a more accepted practice in that part of the country.”

“I’ve been hearing a bit about multi-function equipment (right-of-way clearing equipment that cuts as well as applies herbicides, for example). Right-of-way practice, generally, in New England, for the transmission side, is to use herbicides to keep vegetation under control. In northern New England, it’s still mostly handwork and not a lot of big machinery – crew cabs, ATVs and saws – that sort of thing. However, in the faster-growth areas like South Carolina, the multi-function tools would be used more heavily – mow first then apply herbicides after the fact.”

“When it comes to right-of-way clearing for utility distribution (at the user, e.g. residential or commercial level) we continue to use bucket trucks and hand tools. That hasn’t changed much, although we are always on the lookout for better pruning equipment and overall better safety and efficiencies for all right-of-way jobs,” Cotton concludes. “And, of course, anything to save labor – that’s always a big issue.”

Line clearing continues to be a growing business, according to Fred Dotson, regional manager for Nelson Tree Service, headquartered in Ashland, Ohio. Nelson is a national tree service company dating back to 1919 and now employs about 4,000. Dotson manages the Northern Ohio, Western Pennsylvania and Michigan region.

“In the last few years, since that big blackout, we have seen a renewed concern for clearing transmission and distribution lines. It’s a matter of proper clearance and a more frequent, stepped-up maintenance cycle. We run the whole gamut from mechanical trimmers with big blades to a full array of mowers, from the Bull Hog to the Super Hydro-Axe with the newest Fecon head,” he says.

Dotson agrees that there is more of a trend to treating rights of way with herbi-
cides after knocking down the vegetation with equipment, then monitoring and controlling re-growth with spraying. To affect that, he says, Nelson has a mower setup with a self-contained sprayer designed by the company for its own use. “Done correctly, one has to mow once, then you’re done,” he says. “It’s a very cost-efficient way to do right-of-way maintenance.”

Dotson says the trend toward cutting followed by herbicide maintenance should not diminish existing business and scare away newcomers any too soon. “We are still in a catch-up cycle. There’s still plenty of cutting to do for a few more years. And utilities are continuing to build more lines. There will always be business. And, then, existing trees always need to be cut back.”

Like other utility line clearance firms, Nelson also employs smaller spider-type lifts for backyard residential work, small enough to get through the backyard gate yet sufficient to reach to about 37 feet. He noted that the company has begun using the new Fecon units with rubber tracks for efficiency and the fact they don’t tear up rights of way as much as wheeled vehicles. “And you can go places you never could go before.”

Tom Wolf is partners with his brother in the family business, Wolf Tree Experts Inc., of Knoxville, Tenn. He says utility and pipeline right-of-way clearing and maintenance is always a good business to be in because, as people demand more power in the computer and broadcast age, reliability is more and more an issue. The 600-person company works the Southeastern U.S. west to Oklahoma and south to Florida.

The company uses a lot of aerial lifts and “reel” cutters. Wolf feels they leave a better processed chip-product on the floor of the right of way and they throw less material, which is safer for bystanders.

He says the increased use of herbicides is a result of safer and, simultaneously, more effective materials. One of the newer pieces of equipment in use by Wolf is the Brown Brush Monitor, a combination brush cutter and herbicide applicator that accomplishes both functions in one pass. Its low profile is said to keep the process limited from public view.

For Wolf, other tools include the telescoping mechanical trimmers and other mechanical trimmers in addition to mowers. “When you’re thinking right of way in a rural or utility application,” he says, “you have side trimming – the wall, if you will – and the floor to consider.”

Steve Marshall is executive vice president of operations for Davey Tree Expert Company, a national company headquartered in Kent, Ohio, and comprised of four divisions: utility, residential/commercial, commercial and the Davey Resource Group. Utility, he says, comprises about 50
Freedom of movement

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percent of annual sales. That involves every aspect of utility right-of-way clearance – transmission, distribution and pipeline – rural right down to residential distribution in urban areas.

Founded in the mid 19th century, Marshall notes the company has been in the right-of-way maintenance business since the birth of the utility industry. “I like to think we were the first,” he says.

“There’s a bigger demand in different locations of the country, but overall business has increased steadily in the past few years, a direct relation to the blackout,” according to Marshall, who has experience in both the U.S. and Canada – both areas dramatically affected by the power outage.

Marshall says that, because of the broad capabilities of the company, Davey employs “everything from Skyworker lifts to heavy ground clearance equipment.
Equipment demand depends on the environmental conditions. The demand for right-of-way clearance is constant and more sustained than in the past, however there may be changes in the orientation of the equipment according to demands of the job."

“What’s happened in recent years is the use of more large mechanical equipment (versus hand tools). Specialized equipment is the norm,” he added, referring to task-oriented gear like mowers and boom-saws.

“Better dependability has come as a matter of course as equipment makers build in more efficiency. With that, though, has to come better training and better understanding of the operation of the equipment.”

**Safety is the priority**

Marshall’s take on right-of-way equipment is that, “Operators have to understand all aspects of the interaction of the crew members. Here, it is very important that all personnel understand each other’s function in line with the safety requirements our company has.”

“I think we will see a lot more automation and with it multi-function equipment, pieces that can do a couple of things at a time.” Marshall says. That means you will see an increase in use of specialized equipment continuing for the foreseeable future.”

As far as business opportunities for right-of-way contracts, he believes the overall number of crews nationally will increase slightly over the next four years or so, then level off. The reason is that, after reclamation of the rights of way have taken place, there will be diminished opportunities. For smaller commercial tree care companies looking to get into the business or expand, he cautions that the cost of equipment can be prohibitive, and there is instability in contracts.

“You can get hurt if you are a small contractor relying on a contract that gets canceled or delayed,” cautions Marshall. “There’s a lot of overhead to keep busy. Look to broad-based alternatives. Diversify and look to job alternatives that allow you to allocate resources in different areas, kind of like a diversified portfolio.”
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Working in the tree care industry, it’s easy to take for granted the inherent risk of our jobs. However, recent research by the University of South Dakota reminds all of us that tree care is a dangerous business.

According to the research, tree care workers have the highest accident rate of any job for a municipality. In fact, one of the most dangerous acts you can do on the job is to remove a tree.

This sobering fact is one reason that we at The Care of Trees decided to intensify our focus on safety leadership. After years of focusing on improving our company’s safety record, we had reached a consistent safety level, but we were not content with that. We wanted to find ways to get even better. “No one in our family gets hurt.”

This simple sentence depicts our vision for our employee safety leadership program. We also borrowed H.O.P.E. from ArborMaster Training, as an easy way to remember how to help keep our teams safe:

► Hazards – things that can hurt us
► Obstacles – things that we can hurt
► Plan – isolate hazards, protect obstacles and get the job done
► Equipment – right equipment for the job

We use H.O.P.E. in our sales process as well as for a job briefing template.

The Care of Trees commissioned Behavioral Science Technology, Inc. (BST) in Ojai, Calif., to evaluate the company’s safety leadership practices. The Care of Trees was the first tree care company to participate in the BST Strategic Safety Leadership program, which is similar to safety programs employed by BST clients DaimlerChrysler, Johnson & Johnson and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

The research program entailed hundreds of focus groups, one-on-one interviews and in-depth surveys with staff members—from ground crews to upper management. Overall, the results were encouraging – The Care of Trees compared favorably to other companies in the areas of management credibility, the organization’s value for safety, and employees’ perception that the organization is concerned for their needs and interests.

Two areas for improvement were also identified:

► Employees’ comfort level in approaching others about safety
► Perception of workers regarding reporting injuries and incidents.

These are major issues that we moved to resolve immediately. We began by emphasizing to managers the importance of having risk conversations with hourly workers on the job. Managers must be strong leaders who are comfortable and competent in speaking to employees about work safety practices. For example, the manager or sales arborist at the job site can ask the crew to identify the risks they will face and how they can eliminate or avoid these risks. While the manager may know the risks associated with a particular job, initiating risk conversations clearly demonstrates that the manager wants to understand and help to address the risks that the workers face.

When leaders consistently engage workers in risk conversations, the workers are more likely to approach their coworkers on safety issues on their own. Also, because the conversations reinforce a positive relationship with the district manager, they increase the likelihood that the hourly workers will report injuries and incidents.

We strongly believe that leadership development is directly connected to a total safety culture. Every manager participated in a confidential evaluation of their leadership skills and, once they received the results back, met one-on-one with the BST consultant to interpret their results and learn ways to strengthen their skills. After the regular meetings concluded, the managers received weekly e-mail reminders about their individual leadership goals.

Of the many epiphanies we had during this process, three stood out most.

First, the most critical factor is whether your hourly workers believe you care
The most critical factor is whether your hourly workers believe you care about their safety. They are on the frontlines with customers every day, and their opinion of your company, whether positive or negative, will affect the customers’ experience.

The second realization was recognizing the important role of district managers in the hourly workers’ experience. The district managers are the people within the company who usually have the most contact with hourly workers; they personify the company to employees. The workers’ opinion of the entire company depends on their positive or negative perception of the district manager.

Third, the effectiveness of leadership is a strong predictor of safety success. Working toward a zero-injury workplace begins with leadership throughout the entire company. By helping our management team strengthen their leadership skills, they become better performers not only in safety, but also in all aspects of our business.

Joe Engberg is field safety and education manager for The Care of Trees in Wheeling, Ill.
Urban trees experience a litany of environmental insults: soil and air pollution, heat loads, deicing salts, and interference from utilities, vehicles and buildings. The most significant problem that urban trees face, however, is lack of useable soil volume for root growth – because trees are often an afterthought in city planning.

Ongoing construction, including sidewalk and road repair, disturbs and compacts soil, crushing macropores. Loss of macropores has two negative consequences – restricted aeration and water drainage, and dense soil that is difficult for roots to penetrate. Both effects limit useable rooting space.

When roots encounter dense soil, they change direction, stop growing, or adapt by remaining abnormally close to the surface. On the other hand, if a dense soil low in macropores is waterlogged, tree roots can rot from lack of oxygen.

The soil in urban “tree lawns” can be improved by amendment, but where soil volume is limited by pavement, tree roots suffer. The highly compacted bases required for pavement do not allow root penetration, resulting in the declining specimens all too common in cities. Yet it is precisely these parking lots, medians and other paved areas that most need the mitigating effects of shade trees.

Healthy trees need a large volume of non-compacted soil with adequate drainage and aeration and reasonable fertility. CU Structural Soil (originally developed by Cornell University – see sidebar) meets these needs while also fulfilling engineers’ load-bearing requirements for pavement.

**Structural soil basics**

CU Structural Soil is a two-part system comprised of a stone lattice, or network, to meet engineering needs, and a smaller quantity of soil, to meet horticultural needs (about 80 percent stone and 20 percent soil by weight). The lattice of connecting stones provides stability as well as interconnected voids for root penetration and air and water movement. The stones are of uniform size for the most porosity (stones of varying sizes would “nest,” reducing the amount of pore space). Angular stone provides more porosity than round stone. Because stone is the load-bearing component of structural soil, the aggregates used should meet regional standards for pavement bases.

Since among soil textures clay has the most water and nutrient-holding capacity, a heavy clay loam – minimum of 20 percent clay – is designated for the structural soil system. It should have at least 5 percent organic matter content to ensure nutrient and water holding while encouraging beneficial microbial activity.

With carefully chosen gap-graded (uniform-sized) stone and the proper stone and soil ratio, a medium for healthy root growth is created that also can be compacted to meet engineers’ specifications. The intention is to “suspend” the clay soil between the stones without over-filling the voids, which would compromise aeration and bearing capacity. CU Structural Soil benefits from the addition of a tackifying agent to keep the stones and soil uniformly mixed and to prevent separation as the material is moved, dumped and installed. An agricultural hydrogel serves well as a tackifier.

**Using Structural Soil**

CU Structural Soil is intended for paved sites where there are no other design solutions available to provide
adequate soil volumes for tree roots. It can be used under pedestrian malls, sidewalks, parking lots and low-use access roads. Research at Cornell has shown that tree roots in CU Structural Soil profiles grow deep into the material, away from the heat at the surface. One benefit of this is that roots are less likely to heave and crack pavement than they are in conventional systems.

Planting a tree in CU Structural Soil is much like conventional planting in a rocky soil. If possible, the pavement opening should be expandable (via removable pavers) for the sake of the anticipated buttress roots of mature trees. CU Structural Soil should be used at a minimum depth of 24 inches, and preferably 36 inches. The medium can be used right up to the surface grade where the pavement opening allows for installation, watering and aeration.

Given the large volume of CU Structural Soil for tree roots to explore, irrigation may not be necessary – the decision depends on the region of the country and on management needs. While there is less moisture in structural soil on a per-volume basis than in conventional soil, the root system in structural soil has more room for expansion, allowing for increased water absorption. Supplemental water should be provided during the first growing season as would be expected for any newly planted tree. In regions where irrigation is necessary to grow trees, low-volume, under-pavement irrigation systems have been successful.

Fertilizer can be dissolved into the irrigation water if necessary, although to date, nutrient deficiencies have not been noted, probably due to the large volume of rooting media.

Drainage

Positive drainage below the root system is necessary in this system. Because the sub-grade below the structural soil may be compacted and impermeable, a perforated and wrapped drain, connected to storm drainage, should be placed between the structural soil and the compacted sub-grade.

If removable pavers are used, a setting bed of open-graded sand that possesses no fine sands, silts or clays should be used, to a depth specified by regional standards. To discourage rooting in this layer, a geo-textile – one that does not restrict water movement – can be used between this material and the structural soil.

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**Structural Soil definition**

*From the University of Washington’s College of Architecture & Urban Planning*

“Structural soil” is an artificially engineered medium that meets or exceeds road bearing-load requirements for structurally sound pavement design and installation while supporting tree growth, remaining root penetrable, and encouraging deep root growth away from the pavement surface.

Structural soil, generally, accepts the fact that soil compaction is necessary for safe sidewalks and pavement as a cost-effective way to increase the strength and stability of existing soils and to prevent their settlement under or around designed structures as well as to strengthen the bearing capacity of the materials underneath the pavement, and to reduce the shrinking and swelling of soils caused by water movement and frost actions. Therefore, structural soil attempts to create a supportive environment for trees within compacted soils by designing soil mixes that form a stone-matrix and pores, which provide necessary materials for tree growth.

The term “structural soil” was invented by Cornell University (CU) Urban Horticulture Institute (UHI) to describe their stone-soil mixed product. The term became popular and widely used by many individuals, who employed similar systems. The term became broadly accepted to illustrate the concept, and does not indicate a particular product. This term is not suited to portray materials since many similar but different materials fall into this concept of “structural soil.”

According to Urban and Patterson, the term “structural soil” began to include materials not originating from the idea of CU-Soils. They can be summarized into four different types:

- **UHI’s crushed-stone-and-soil mix**, which can achieve 95 percent compaction and still admit roots.
- **Lightweight mixes based on internally porous aggregates (expanded shale or slate), also achieving 95 percent**
- **Sand-based “Amsterdam tree soil,” compactable 85 percent to 90 percent.**
- **Natural “compaction resistant,” sandy loams.**

Soils based on the similar concept are also called “two part soils” or “gap graded soils.”

It appears that the term “structural soil” is commonly used to describe the soil with heavy load-bearing capacity, such as car traffic, and “engineered soil” is used more to describe the same type of soil without a large load-bearing capacity, supporting only pedestrian traffic. Although “structural soil” has become a commonly known term today, there is not a clear definition among professionals since it is relatively new terminology.
Trees compatible with structural soil

Ideally, trees used in CU Structural Soil should be alkaline tolerant. The stone used (frequently limestone) will, on average, raise the pH to 8.0. Trees should also be somewhat drought tolerant. The list in the box at right identifies trees that are both alkaline tolerant and reasonably drought tolerant and, therefore, are good candidates for CU Structural Soil.

Trees suitable for use in CU Structural Soil

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Botanical Name</th>
<th>Common name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acer campestre</td>
<td>Hedge Maple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acer miyabei</td>
<td>Miyabei Maple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acer platanoides</td>
<td>Norway Maple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acer pseudoplatanus</td>
<td>Sycamore Maple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acer truncatum</td>
<td>Shantung Maple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpinus betulus</td>
<td>European Hornbeam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catalpa speciosa</td>
<td>Northern Catalpa</td>
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<tr>
<td>Celtis occidentalis</td>
<td>Common Hackberry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cercis canadensis</td>
<td>Eastern Redbud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cornus mas</td>
<td>Corneliancherry Dogwood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corylus column</td>
<td>Turkish Filbert</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crataegus crus-galli var. inermis</td>
<td>Thornless Cockspur Hawthorn</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crataegus phaenopyrum</td>
<td>Washington Hawthorn</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crataegus punctata var. inermis ‘Ohio Pioneer’</td>
<td>Ohio Pioneer Dotted Hawthorn</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crataegus viridis ‘Winter King’</td>
<td>Winter King Hawthorn</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eucommia ulmoides</td>
<td>Hardy Rubber Tree</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fraxinus Americana</td>
<td>White Ash</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fraxinus excelsior</td>
<td>European Ash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraxinus ‘Northern Gem’ and ‘Northern Treasure’</td>
<td>Northern Gem Ash and Northern Treasure Ash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraxinus pennsylvanica</td>
<td>Green Ash</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ginkgo biloba</td>
<td>Ginkgo</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gleditsia triacanthos var. inermis</td>
<td>Thornless Common Honeylocust</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gymnocladus dioicus</td>
<td>Kentucky Coffeetree</td>
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<tr>
<td>Koelreuteria paniculata</td>
<td>Goldenraintree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maclura pomifera var. inermis</td>
<td>Osage Orange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malus species</td>
<td>Crabapple</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parrotia persica</td>
<td>Persian Parrotia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phellodendron amurense</td>
<td>Amur Corktree</td>
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<tr>
<td>Platanus x acerifolia</td>
<td>London Planetree</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pyrus betulifolia</td>
<td>Birchleaf Pear</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pyrus calleryana</td>
<td>Callery Pear</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pyrus fauriei ‘Westwood’</td>
<td>Korean Sun™ Pear</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pyrus ussurienisis</td>
<td>Ussurian Pear</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quercus maclearp</td>
<td>Bur Oak</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quercus muehlenbergii</td>
<td>Chinkapin Oak</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quercus robur</td>
<td>English Oak</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robinia pseudoacacia</td>
<td>Black Locust</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sorbus alnifolia</td>
<td>Korean Mountainash</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sorbus intermedia</td>
<td>Swedish Mountainash</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sorbus x hybrida and Sorbus x thuringiaca</td>
<td>Oak-Leaf Mountainash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Styrhopholium japonicum (Sophora japonica)</td>
<td>Japanese Pagoda Tree</td>
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<tr>
<td>Syringa reticulata</td>
<td>Japanese Tree Lilac</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tilia americana</td>
<td>Basswood</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tilia cordata</td>
<td>Littleleaf Linden</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tilia x euchlora</td>
<td>Crinmal Linden</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tilia tomentosa</td>
<td>Silver Linden</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ulmus Americana</td>
<td>American Elm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ulmus parvifolia</td>
<td>Chinese Elm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ulmus x species</td>
<td>Elm Hybrids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zelkova serrata</td>
<td>Japanese Zelkova</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Healthy plants start with healthy soil. Understanding the relationship between plants and soil is key to designing and creating sustainable, ecological landscapes.

The type of soil most desirable in a landscape depends on the plant communities that exist on, or are planned for, the site. Unlike agricultural fields, landscapes contain many different types of plant communities and many different types of soils, ranging from rock gardens to perennial beds to managed forests. In general, most landscape plant communities do well in organic, well-drained soils. However, a wildflower meadow garden prefers sandier, less fertile soil. A forest thrives in soil with different qualities than the soil in a vegetable garden.

Understanding the soil will help you select appropriate plants for the site, which is of primary importance, especially if you do not intend to alter the soil. Alternatively, your understanding will help you prepare the soil as needed to best support various plant communities.

What is the soil food web?

Life in the soil takes a multitude of forms, many of which are undetectable by the un-aided eye. These organisms range in size from microscopic, one-celled bacteria, algae, fungi and protozoa, to larger nematodes, arthropods, earthworms, insects, plant roots and small animals. By living all or part of their lives in the soil, they make up the community called the soil food web. Within this community, energy and nutrients are cycled between organisms and plants in a complex, web-like system. The soil organisms decompose organic matter, recycle nutrients and energy, and aid in the formation of humus. They convert nutrients into forms plants can use. In fact, all plants – grass, trees, shrubs and agricultural crops – depend on the soil food web for their nutrition. In turn, plant roots exude sugars and proteins that feed bacteria and fungi.

Why encourage a complex soil food web?

The great majority of soil organisms are beneficial or benign to plant life. The relatively few soil organisms that create problems in the landscape are less likely to dominate a system that is also home to their predators. Biodiversity in the soil increases its productivity because the interactions between different types of soil organisms greatly multiply the value of their activities as individuals. The more abundant, diverse forms of life we can nurture in the soil, the more fruitful and self-sustaining our landscapes will be.

Why is the soil food web important?

The soil food web performs an amazing number and variety of functions that contribute to soil quality, plant health and the cycles that allow life on earth to exist. Some soil organisms produce sticky substances that aid in the formation and stability of soil aggregates, which are essential to good soil structure. The soil food web contributes to the formation of humus, a complex compound that resists further decomposition and stores carbon in the soil for years. Humus holds water and nutrients in the soil and binds to heavy metals such as mercury and lead, making them less readily absorbed by plants or leached into groundwater. According to Webster’s Unabridged Dictionary, humus...
is “the dark organic material in soils, produced by the decomposition of vegetable or animal matter and essential to the fertility of the earth.” While much remains to be discovered about the chemical nature and structure of humus, its importance to soil fertility remains undisputed.

A healthy soil food web is essential for the long-term health of plants. It helps reduce or eliminate the need for fertilizers, pesticides and irrigation. The food web stores and cycles nutrients necessary for plant health, and healthier plants are much less susceptible to insects and disease. The deeper and more developed root systems of well-nourished plants allow the roots to access moisture deep in the soil, making the plants more resistant to drought. Also, the organic matter produced by soil organisms helps the soil retain moisture during dry periods.

In addition to supporting healthy plants, the soil food web provides broader benefits, such as helping to reduce pollution and purify water as it passes through the soil. Soil organisms decompose organic compounds such as manure and pesticides, preventing them from polluting groundwater. Because soil organisms increase soil aggregation and porosity, they improve rainwater infiltration rates, reducing runoff and erosion.

Although each organism in the soil food web plays a particular role, the sum of the whole exceeds the parts. We can maximize the overall health, sustainability and productivity of the soil by encouraging conditions under which all soil organisms thrive.

By maintaining a thriving population of soil organisms, the other key elements of healthy soil – good tilth (physical condition of the soil) and fertility – will develop over time.

To quote Paul Sachs, author of the book “EDAPHOS Dynamics of a Natural Soil System”:

“Humus in the soil has more real value than money, real estate, stocks or bonds. Its value doesn’t fluctuate, it doesn’t become scarce in a recession, its worth can’t be depleted by inflation, and it can’t be stolen. It is the source, directly or indirectly, of sustenance for all life on earth. It can sometimes be lost by environmental changes, but more often its demise results from either the apathy or the inadvertent errors of the steward who tends it.”

Dr. Elaine Ingham is president and director of research at Soil Foodweb Inc., a business that grew out of her university research program at Oregon State University. Ingham and Paul Sachs will be among the presenters at the 2007 Ecological Landscaping Association Winter Conference and Eco-Marketplace March 1-3 in Springfield, Mass. In addition to the keynote address, Ingham will run a day-long soil food web workshop at the conference. For more about the event, contact the Ecological Landscaping Association at (617) 436-5838 or via www.ecolandscaping.org.
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Please circle 36 on Reader Service Card
By Tony Smith

First of all, the answer is probably yes. We are all addicted to something. I’m not talking about drugs or alcohol or gambling. Those addictions get a lot of press, but aren’t nearly as widespread as what I’m talking about.

Everyone knows that it’s human nature to dislike, be uncomfortable by or, worse yet, be afraid of CHANGE. Change brings about the unknown. Change is hard work – affecting it, getting used to it, sustaining it. Even good changes – sometimes especially good changes – are resisted and abandoned by human nature. If they weren’t, every New Year’s resolution we ever made would stick. More than 6 percent of smokers would remain smoke-free when they quit. And we’d never hear the statistic that 92 percent of all dieters gain the weight back – and then some.

Being addicted to the past is being addicted to patterns that don’t work.

That said, there is something that tempts and woos us as much as any drug. It is comfortable. It is seductive. It is the PAST.

Most people live in the past. And when faced with opportunity (which falls into the CHANGE category), the past can be quite seductive. It’s difficult to resist. After a while, people often ignore Nancy Reagan’s “Just Say No” advice and give in to the past.

Like any addiction, admitting the problem is half the battle. So embrace this premise: Being addicted to the past is being addicted to patterns that don’t work. That’s an important concept to internalize. True leaders are aware of this tendency, and they know when they are being seduced by the past.

Put the past in its place

Look, it’s not your fault. We are trained from a young age to use the past when making any future decisions. And to some extent, this works. Knowing the past does help you manage the future. But just incrementally. If you use what you already know to make future decisions, all you will get is the same result as the past, plus or minus an increment. Basically, you’re gonna get what you’ve already got.

If you want a departure from the results you’ve always gotten – if you want a breakthrough future, you need to invent it. You have to lead from the future to the present. The past doesn’t inspire you, it informs you.

I coach company leaders on something called transformational leadership. I help leaders transform their businesses with breakthrough thinking. By leading from the future into the present, a transformational leader can create possibilities for their organization, then inspire action from the appropriate people.

The leader makes a declaration of something that doesn’t yet exist. Then he works backward to the present and figures out, with his people, how to create it, make it happen.

Putting a man on the moon

Here’s an example you may remember: In September of 1962, President John F. Kennedy made a declaration. He said that
the United States would have a man on the moon – and bring him home safely – by the end of the decade. Here’s an excerpt from that speech:

“We have given this program a high priority – even though I realize that this is in some measure an act of faith and vision, for we do not now know what benefits await us.

“But if I were to say, my fellow citizens, that we shall send a man to the moon, 240,000 miles away from control station in Houston, in a giant rocket more than 300 feet tall, made of new metal alloys, some of which have not yet been invented, capable of standing heat and stresses several times more than we have ever experienced, fitted together with a precision better than the finest watch, carrying all the equipment needed for propulsion, guidance, control, communications, food and survival, on an untried mission, to an unknown celestial body, and then return it safely to earth, re-entering the atmosphere at speeds of over 25,000 miles per hour, causing heat about half the temperature of the sun, and do all of this, and do it right, and do it before this decade is out, then we must be bold.”

Now, to many, this was an absurd notion. Incomprehensible. Can’t be done – especially in eight years or less! But the president made a declaration. He was leading from the future. The next step was creating solutions to make it happen. He put it to the team of experts, who asked, “what’s missing?”

- We need sheet metal that will withstand re-entry heat. That’s what’s missing. Let’s do research. This is the beginning of a breakthrough.
- We don’t have the computer technology to navigate. What do we need? What’s missing?
- We don’t have the thrust fuel that the Russians have. Let’s find out what they are doing.

We all know the outcome. In 1969, America put a man on the moon. How did that happen? The president took a stand for a possibility.

He made a declaration. And then he inspired his team to find the answers.

**If you want a departure from the results you’ve always gotten – if you want a breakthrough future, you need to invent it.**

**Stars, leaders and coaches**

In the world, there are stars, leaders and coaches. The stars have “got it” – they have access to the future, but they don’t realize it. Leaders, good leaders, have access to the future and inspire the stars to work for the benefit of the group. I’m a coach. I recognize the ability for leaders and stars to achieve breakthrough results, and I help them get there.

Are you a transformational leader? Here is my advice to you: Do not succumb to the seduction of the past. Lead from the future. Realize the possibilities and make a declaration (even if it sounds absurd). Then inspire your team to achieve breakthrough results.

Remember, the past has it’s place. We are informed by the past. We are accountable for the past. But we are not derived by it. All your success lies in the future. Find it. Declare it. Create it.

**An exercise for the future**

If you are serious about trying this concept, do this exercise.
Sit down with pen and paper and brainstorm. Ask yourself, “What is possible – and not predictable – in the next five years?”

Write down everything that occurs to you (again, even if it seems absurd). There are no negatives in this exercise. If you start second guessing (“But that’s never been done” or “That will never work”), you are being seduced by the past. Keep your thinking in the future.

Choose the top one or two things you would most like to happen.

Then start the “what’s missing?” process. Determine what events, decisions and circumstances would have to happen to achieve your goal.

Bring your team in. Allow “what’s missing?” questions, but dismiss all negative past-oriented thinking.

Once the details are roughed out, begin making a task list. The future is yours. Make it happen!

If you want a departure from the results you’ve always gotten – if you want a breakthrough future, you need to invent it.

Tony Smith, an advocate, practitioner and master of breakthrough thinking, empowers corporate CEOs, executives and entrepreneurs to reach business success. A graduate of Harvard University, he holds a master of education degree from the University of New Hampshire and a certificate of advanced graduate study from Boston University in counseling and community-based health systems. He has been featured on The Today Show and The Donahue Show, as well as in Fortune Magazine, The Wall St. Journal and The New York Times. He is scheduled to speak this month at TCIA’s Winter Management Conference in Cancun, Mexico.
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## Vermeer

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Federal safety regulators have proposed that motor carriers who repeatedly violate U.S. hours-of-service rules be required to use electronic onboard recorders (EOBRs) to monitor their performance.

The proposal was unveiled by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) in a press conference January 11 and was due to be made public knowledge in the Federal Register later in the month. It also contains incentives to encourage other fleets to use EOBRs voluntarily.

It will likely be at least four years before any such proposal is implemented.

Under the proposed performance standards, EOBRs installed on commercial motor vehicles (CMVs) manufactured two years after the effective date of the final rule would be required to meet specific standards. The proposed standards would require the EOBRs to record basic information including name of driver, duty status, date and time, location of the CMV, distance traveled, and name and USDOT number of the motor carrier.

The FMCSA proposed rule will target the worst offenders. Companies with a history of serious hours-of-service violations will be required to install EOBRs in all of their commercial motor vehicles for a minimum of two years. The agency believes that the proposed performance standards would standardize the display of data fields and require that data be easily downloadable.

Under the proposal, EOBRs meeting FMCSA’s current requirements and voluntarily installed in CMVs manufactured before the implementation date may continue to be used for the remainder of the service life of those CMVs.

This information may be academic for many of the fleet operators in the tree service industry. Fairly recently, as FMCSA updated its HOS rules, the Tree Care Industry Association worked with the Edison Electric Institute and other allied organizations to win a permanent HOS exemption for utility service vehicles. Thus, utility line clearance tree trimming crews are protected.

OSHA sued over PPE rule

On January 3, the AFL-CIO and the United Food and Commercial Workers Union filed suit in the U.S. Court of Appeals in Washington D.C. to force the OSHA to complete the long-postponed “Employer Payment for PPE” rule. The suit contends that for almost eight years, unions have been waiting for the Labor Department to finish writing rules that would make it clear that employers are supposed to pick up the tab for personal protective equipment for millions of workers.

Many companies, including the vast majority of tree care companies, already foot the bill for hard hats, hearing protection and other gear that by rule they have been required to provide since 1994. But some industry sectors say that a mandate requiring them to pay would be too open-ended.

TCIA filed comments on the proposed PPE rule saying, in essence, that the tree care industry had two main issues. First, the rule had to clearly delineate what was PPE and what wasn’t, and secondly, the rule could not require the employer to pay for items such as work boots that in reality were part of an employee’s personal effects. OSHA received a lot of similar comments on these two issues and agreed to them in its final draft rule.

Labor officials say the complicated nature of the issue, both legal and practical, has caused the delay. For one thing, the government estimates the rule would cost businesses about $62 million a year.

On the other hand, unions claim the Bush administration has stalled because it is looking out for corporate interests.

Their suit asks that OSHA be directed to complete the regulation within two months of a court order.
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Please circle 47 on Reader Service Card
As the tropical sun gracefully shines on the scenic Mt. Kilimanjaro in northern Tanzania, a group of village women snake their way to a small field, singing celebratory songs to embark on the day’s main activity – planting tree seedlings.

But this is no ordinary tree planting exercise; this is an exercise that seeks to restore the depleted African Blackwood (Dalbergia melanoxylon), locally known as Mpingo. Prized by instrument makers and African carvers alike, its dark, dense wood is highly stable under extremes of temperature and humidity, while its tight grain and oily nature take a durable polish. You most probably have never heard of the Mpingo tree, but you have undoubtedly heard its sweet, soothing music. Instrument makers use the tree to manufacture clarinets, oboes, piccolos, flutes and bagpipes.

Once plentiful across the continent, the numbers of the slow-growing Mpingo – it takes between 70 and 200 years to mature – are now in alarming decline as land is cleared for farming, and the valuable wood – at $23,000 a cubic meter one of the most expensive timbers on earth – is cut down by people desperate to make ends meet in this impoverished country. It is estimated that fewer than three million Mpingo trees remain in Africa, yet every year more than 20,000 are felled in Tanzania alone.

Within Africa several generations of woodcarvers have relied on Mpingo for their livelihood, including the Kamba artists of Kenya and the Zaramo and Makonde artists of Tanzania. The Makonde carve intricate inspirational and creative works based on their religious and philosophical background. They are known for their “tree of life” sculptures that utilize a single tree trunk to carve a column of dozens of small intertwined ancestral figures, displaying the connectedness and interdependence of all human life. Makonde art is displayed in museums throughout the world.

African Blackwood is also used by U.S. and European wood artisans who practice a rare form of lathework called ornamental turning. Their techniques rely on the excellent machining properties of the wood in order to produce the highly defined geometric patterns characteristic of the work.

In traditional African homesteads, the tree is important for domestic uses such as fuel, building materials, medicine and animal fodder. In the Miombo woodlands of East Africa, its natural range, it provides habitat and food for animals. It is important as a soil enhancer because its roots support bacteria that fix nitrogen in the soil.

These are the contributing factors that have brought the hardy African ebony and Tanzania’s national tree to the brink of extinction. Neither the commercial musical instrument manufacturers nor the Makonde wood carvers replant the tree in the wild, probably due to its long maturity status. Following massive exploitation by wood...
carvers and musical instrument makers, the African Blackwood, also popularly known as the musical tree, is now extinct in Kenya, parts of Mozambique and was, until a few years ago, taking its last kick to be completely wiped off the face of the earth.

However, due to the visionary work of Sebastian Chuwa, a respected Tanzanian botanist and an Mpingo expert, the tree is slowly regaining its place in the bush lands and homesteads of Tanzania. Says Chuwa, “It is amazing that when I was little I could not see the peak of Kilimanjaro from our home because there were so many tall trees everywhere … This has worried me very much and I have resolved to spend my time in helping to correct the factors that have caused (this) to happen.”

Chuwa long worried about the fate of the Mpingo, which seemed to have escaped attention. “In spite of its great importance, there have been almost no efforts to monitor or conserve it,” he laments.

In the early 1990s, Chuwa embarked on an active campaign to correct environmental damage on Kilimanjaro by focusing on tree planting and environmental education. He established a tree nursery in his back yard and began to distribute seedlings into the surrounding areas, educating his neighbors on the basics of conservation and reforestation.

Through his many years of conducting growth experiments with the tree, Chuwa has learned its optimum growth requirements. First, he sprouts the seedlings in a partially shaded seedbed and then plants them in successively larger containers until they are mature enough to be permanently transplanted. He has found that it takes about 15 months until the seedlings are of a size and vitality to resist the fires, drought, and insect depredation that threaten them in the wild. He has held a number of training sessions to teach nursery attendants and interested area residents about Mpingo cultivation.

He went on to establish the Malihai Clubs of Tanzania (MCT) in 1992, modeled after similar youth wildlife clubs in Kenya and Uganda. Meaning “Living Wealth,” Malihai’s objective was to teach students how to care for themselves and their surroundings while establishing sound conservation practices and coming to an understanding of the living communities in the African ecosystem and what is needed for them to coexist successfully.

The Malihai have focused on reforestation by establishing nurseries for indigenous tree seedlings, including Mpingo, and later replanting them in deforested regions. The project has been resoundingly successful when they celebrated planting their millionth tree in June 2004.

Says Stella Mang’enny, a leader of the Fonga Women’s Group – one of the numerous interest groups initiated by Chuwa, “We discovered that we could combine our efforts, knowledge and experience to solve our difficulties. It was from there we started to clean up our environment because we realized we were surrounded by rubbish and plastic bags, etc.” As a result, the group started holding a weekly “Clean-Up Day” in their village for purposes of beautification and sanitation and began to organize initiatives that would have social and environmental impact.

Chuwa’s quest to save the African ebony have seen him gain worldwide recognition and has won numerous awards that include an Associate Laureate Award from the prestigious Rolex Awards for Enterprise in 2002 for his design of a five-year program that would take his environmental programs into other areas of northern Tanzania, thereby widening the scope of his work. His work was also recognized by the Salt Lake City Olympic Committee, which awarded him for his exemplary conservation and environmental awareness campaigns. He received the award in Salt Lake City, Utah, during the 2002 Winter Olympics.
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Dennis Tourangeau, Director of Operations, Arborguard, P.O. Box 477, Avondale Estates, GA 30002, or send fax to (404) 294-0090, or e-mail dtourangeau@arborguard.com.

Arboriculture/Urban Forestry Instructors, Oregon & Illinois
ACRT, Inc. teaches urban forestry classes at several Job Corps centers throughout the U.S. Job Corp is the nation’s largest & most comprehensive residential, educational, & job training program for disadvantaged youth. Instructors provide vocational training to students in the fundamentals of urban forestry & arboriculture as well as life & employment skills. This position requires an individual that possess leadership, motivation & interpersonal skills as well as a desire to teach & inspire young adults. Applicants must have climbing experience, valid driver’s license, & a minimum 2 yr. degree (H.S. diploma PLUS 4 yrs of experience may substitute). Great pay, excellent benefits & AWESOME work environment. Send cover letters & resumes to jobs@acrtinc.com or fax (330) 945-7200. Reference #TCI0906. ACRT, Inc. is 100% Employee-Owned, (EEO/AA & Drug Free Workplace).

Crew Foremen, Climbers, Groundspersons
Growing mid-size San Diego-based tree service company hiring crew foremen, climbers and groundsmen; minimum 2 years’ experience, $15-$20 an hour, EOE. Certified Arborist a PLUS. Benefits, drug screening. Must have valid driver’s license. Immediate openings, year-round work. Fax resume to (760) 727-3813 or call (760) 941-3992.

Sales Rep Atlanta area
Great opportunity for certified Arborist w/commercial sales exp. Enjoy a company car & exc. benefits. Be a part of the team in a full-service company and earn $60K-$80K. Fax resume to Bob Delbridge, 404-CUT-TREE (770) 729-1980.

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TREE CARE INDUSTRY – FEBRUARY 2007
Exciting Career Opportunities for
Service Industry Managers

Come join one of the largest Vegetation Management Companies in the United States. DeAngelo Brothers, Inc., is experiencing tremendous growth throughout the country creating the following openings:

Division Managers
Branch Managers

We have immediate openings in:
VA, New England, FL, MO, TX, CO, LA, IL

Responsible for managing day-to-day operations, including the supervision of field personnel. Business/Horticultural degree desired with a minimum of 2 years’ experience working in the green industry. Qualified applicants must have proven leadership abilities, strong customer relations and interpersonal skills. We offer an excellent salary, bonus and benefits packages, including 401(k) and company paid medical coverage.

For career opportunity and confidential consideration, send or fax resume, including geographic preferences and willingness to relocate to:
DeAngelo Brothers, Inc., Attention: Carl Faust, 100 North Conahan Drive, Hazleton, PA 18201. Phone: 1-800-360-9333. Fax: (570) 459-5363 or e-mail: cfaust@dbiservices.com. EOE/AAP M-F

Operations Manager

D&B Tree Service, with offices in Central & Eastern Massachusetts, is seeking an Operations Manager to help lead our team. Duties and Qualifications:
The candidate must have proven tree care industry experience with general tree care work and plant health care. Responsibilities include: Field Training, Production and Safety Management, and Overseeing Daily Operations. Candidate must be goal oriented and have a strong commitment to Safety and Teamwork. CDL License a must. Certified arborist preferred. Benefits package. Please submit resume to Bob Young: bob@dbtree.com or fax (617) 471-4777 Ext. 30.

Hawaii Needs Arborist

Foreman must have a minimum of 5 yrs’ climbing experience, be a certified tree worker (certified arborist preferred), & have a current driver’s license. Pay commensurate with experience. Benefits include medical, dental, vision. Must be hardworking & drug free. Owner is a hands-on, ISA certified arborist, the company is growing, the equipment is new and Hawaii is paradise. Send resume to: Tropical Tree Care Inc., PO Box 1257, Kailua-Kona, HI 96745, Fax (808) 331-8228.

Climber Wanted

Prefer 1 yr exp but can train. Year-round work on NC coast with a certified Arborist tree service. Valid driver’s license required. Fax resume (252) 808-3397 w/ salary requirements.

Arborist/Sales Western Maryland

Local tree and lawn care co. seeking individual to sell tree care services & PHC. Certified Arborist helpful. Full co. benefits include transportation, retirement, vacation, top salary & commission for right person. Sales experience preferred. All replies strictly confidential. E-mail Roger@antietamtree.com or fax (301) 791 3756.

Kramer Tree Specialists, West Chicago, IL

Has full-time positions open for Plant Health Care Technicians. Training & continuing education provided, valid drivers license required, CDL a plus. Company benefits include Health Insurance, Profit Sharing, 401(k) & Production Bonus weekly! Contact Lor@Kramertree.com or phone (630) 562-0160. Fax (630) 562-0871.

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ValleyCrest Landscape Maintenance’s Tree Care Services, formerly Arbor Care

Provides award-winning arborist services on a wide range of properties throughout the nation. Rather than focusing on isolated management techniques, our certified arborists approach the tree as an entire biological system.

We have full-time opportunities available for our following positions: Crew Leader/Foreman; CDL Driver; Production Specialists; Spray Technicians. Branches Include: Livermore, Sacramento, Santa Ana, Gardena, Ventura, San Fernando, San Jose, CA; Atlanta, GA. For consideration, e-mail resumes to: treecarejobs@valleycrest.com or fax to (818) 225-6895.

Tree Climber/Aerial Lift Operator

Pittsburg PA based co. for over 20 yrs. Year-round work, 5 yrs’ experience. Must know pruning w/o spikes. Medical, retirement benefits, paid holidays and vacation. Fax resume to (724) 942-0800 or call (724) 942-0722.

Bartlett Tree Experts

Continues to grow in the south with immediate openings for experienced tree climbers in the Savannah, Atlanta, Hilton Head, Tallahassee, Charlotte, Raleigh and Charleston offices. Benefits include paid vacation, holidays, medical, dental, 401(k), training and continuing education. Applicant must be reliable, customer-service and career oriented. CDL a plus. Fax or e-mail your resume to (770) 414-9762; sjohnston@bartlett.com; www.bartlett.com

We are a respected national company

That is looking to add a Territory Manager to the Mid-Atlantic Region of the US. The Territory Manager would be responsible for partnering with Arborist companies to sell our products in their area. Qualified candidates must have a minimum of 5 years of experience in the tree care industry. ISA certification and BS degree in Arboriculture or similar are a plus. We offer a competitive salary, commission, and full benefits with a 401(k) plan. If you are driven to make a difference in the industry with a company that values integrity, E-mail your resume to: jkust@yahoo.com

Ira Wickes/Arborists

Rockland County-based firm since 1929 seeks qualified individuals with experience. Arborists/Sales Reps, Office Staff, Crew Leaders, Climbers, Spray Techs (IPM, PHC, Lawn). Great benefit package includes 401(k) matching, advancement opportunities, EOE. Check us out on the Web at irawickes.com. E-mail your resume to info@irawickes.com; fax (845) 354-3475, or snail mail us at Ira Wickes/Arborists, 11 McNamara Road, Spring Valley, NY 10977.

Come to the Great Pacific Northwest in the capital city of Salem Oregon

Unbelievable skiing, hunting, fishing, camping. One hour to beach & Cascade mtns. Giant trees. Challenge trees. Safe easygoing work environment. Looking for Oakman (person) w/ eucman background. (born again treeman) or just an oakman that never had the privilege of being a eucman! Top wages for the industry. Med/Dental 4-10-hr day work week year round. (Except after storms). Elwood’s Tree Service Co. since 1981. Call (503) 390-2838, fax (503) 390-9648, e-mail ftreei@proaxis.com
ValleyCrest Landscape Maintenance’s Tree Care Services

Formerly Arbor Care, provides award-winning arborist services on a wide range of properties throughout the nation. Rather than focusing on isolated management techniques, our certified arborists approach the tree as an entire biological system.

We have full-time opportunities available for our following positions: Account Manager; Operations Manager; Business Developer/Estimator. Branches Include: Livermore, Sacramento, Santa Ana, Gardena, Ventura, San Fernando, San Jose, CA; Phoenix, AZ; Tampa, Sarasota, Venice, Orlando, FL; Atlanta, GA. For consideration, please e-mail resumes to: treecarejobs@valleycrest.com or fax to (818) 225/6895.

Limb Walker Tree Service in Roseburg, OR

Looking for motivated, career-minded individuals who are seeking employment in the tree care industry. Positions currently available for goal-oriented tree techs with a minimum of 5 yrs. exp. in pruning, high climbing & tree removal. Valid OR Class B driver’s license required or willing to obtain. Drug screen required. Unlimited opportunity for those who possess the desire to learn & a strong work ethic. E-mail resume to Jim@limbwalkertreeservice.com

Great Opportunities in SE Florida! All positions!

High-end commercial tree work year-round in the most affluent communities in the country. Professional environment. New equipment/latest technology. Ongoing training. Room for advancement. NOVO ARBOR is a fast growing company that values what you have to offer as you will value what we have to offer! Relocation assist. Tel: (561) 330-9785 Fax: (561) 330-2392. E-mail Admin@NovoArbor.com

Warm South Carolina

Fifty-eight year old company located in central South Carolina is seeking crew leaders and climbers. Three years’ experience, valid driver’s license and a passion for trees is a must. Company offers job stability, excellent pay, bonuses, sign-on bonus, relocation help, health insurance, holidays, vacation and a stress free opportunity. (803) 252-7664 or chris@soxandfreeman.com

Cagwin & Dorward Career Opportunities, San Francisco Bay Area

We are accepting applications for experienced, highly motivated people for the following positions in our Tree Care Department: Managers Climbers Groundsmen Spray Technicians Please call 1-800-891-7710 for applications, or online at www.cagwin.com.

Selling Arborist Wanted!

Seeking Consulting Sales Arborists who exceeds sales goals. Certified Arborist, degree or industry experience a must. Money motivated? Over 6-figure income potential. Contact D&B Tree (617) 471-4777 x 30 or www.dbtree.com

Sales Position/Consulting Arborist


EQUIPMENT FOR SALE

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Local Rentals, Bucket Trucks to 70 ft., Stump Grinders, Chippers, aerial lift parts & service. Rayco parts, OEM Stump’r Guard. We rent Rayco Hydra Stumpers/Forestry Mowers. www.alliedutilityequipment.com 1-800-303-0269.

Grand Slam Tree Equipment


Vermeer Stump Grinder

60TX Brand new 135 hrs. $35,000 or BO. Call 1-800-753-8733.

Your True Nature products

In addition to the poster, the book Advice from a Tree, books, journals, more posters, postcards, notepads, T-shirts and other Your True Nature products can be ordered at the TCI Web site, www.treecareindustry.org, or by calling 1-800-733-2622.
1992 Ford F700 forestry bucket truck
Excellent condition, Cummins diesel w/5 & 2 trans. Good truck, worked daily. Must sell $29,000 or best offer. Call OH (740) 380-1141 after 5 pm, ask for Scott.

Ropes, Ropes, Ropes
All types and brands of professional arborist climbing, lowering and rope accessories at warehouse prices. Call for current price list. Visa, MC, AK. Small Ad – Big Savings, since 1958. 1-800-873-3203.

PRODUCTS & SERVICES

ArborSoftWorx is the industry’s leading business management software and hardware that boosts sales with its DataSync Mobile Office feature; provides anytime-anywhere access to critical data; improves staff productivity; provides the highest level of depth and breadth in data capture and sound information for business decisions — all you demand in a management solution. Call today to learn more about the power and flexibility that ArborSoftWorx delivers. 1-800-49-ARBOR. www.ArborSoftWorx.com.

ArborGold Software – Complete job management! Phone message center, proposals with built-in landscape CAD designer, scheduling, invoicing and more. Posts to QuickBooks. Print estimates on site with new hand-held PCs and download to office. Call Tree Management Systems – 1-800-933-1955, see demo at www.turftree.com

BUSINESSES FOR SALE

Small Engine repair & sales center for sale
Serves the landscaping & golf courses in the area. Just minutes from Myrtle Beach & Coastal beaches. Second fastest growing county in NC. $600,000. Call (910) 443-1072 for info.

Holden Beach, one of the fastest growing counties in NC
Owner retiring after 38 yrs. Tree management & Landscaping contracts in place till 2010; w/25 acres of land f/wood waste grinding site. Too much equipment to list. $2.2 mil. Call (910) 443-1072.
Tree Care Company for sale
Beautiful Central Coast California

Well established tree care company, prime for major expansion locally and/or into 3 nearby cities. 15 years in business, only locally based Tree Company. 1300 documented long-term repeat clients and 60 commercial accounts. Fully computerized, large public service Web site and year-round local advertising. Very High-end clientele Includes: 5 trucks: TopKick 50’ Boom, 2 chippers, 1 Bandit 1290H, 2 stump grinders, full compliment of chain saws, cabling equipment, inventory and more; 7-man crew and office manager. We are deeply rooted in the community and have progressive gross increase of over $100,000 per year. We work 5 to 6 days per wk, 52 wks a year. No down time, No layoffs for over 12 years. Scheduling weeks in advance year round. Projected gross income for 2006 is $625,000. For additional information, please contact: (818) 986-9585.

N-Shore Lake Superior, MN

Tree Service Est. 20 years! Utility ROW Clearing, Year-round work: Parks, Resorts, Lot Clearing. Great Equip., Turnkey Oper., help w/ transition. $150k. Also Bldg. for lease/sale. Jerry (218) 349-1922 or djrohde@frontiernet.net

Already own or planning to start a tree care company?

The Owner/Arborist Program can show you how to start or convert an existing business and grow with a proven leader in the tree care industry. We will assist you with sales & marketing, financial mgmt., recruiting and equipment support. Our expertise can aid in your success. Our systems, coupled with your talent and determination, will give you an opportunity to control your destiny. Call D&B Tree (617) 471-4777 x30 or ownerarborist@dblee.com

With Gregson-Clark you get more than quality equipment. You get a relationship with a company that specializes in one thing – spraying equipment for green industry professionals. Our goal is to provide you with the best possible solution, whether it’s a new sprayer, technical support or parts.

Call today for our new color catalog.

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Spraying Equipment

Autumn Tree Care Experts, Inc. – one of Chicagoland’s leading arboricultural firms – is growing again! We seek an arborist with the drive, knowledge, and personality to nurture our existing and developing sales territories. ATCE is an EOE.

Competitive salary. Great benefits. Upbeat (sometimes quirky) work environment.

If interested, contact Dan by calling 847.728.1963, or send an email to dank@autumntree.com

we love trees.
do you?

Autumn Tree Care Experts, Inc.

www.autumntree.com

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TREE CARE INDUSTRY – FEBRUARY 2007
On Aug 3rd, about two dozen climbers played on a 14-foot trampoline hung 60 feet up in a majestic 5-foot in diameter cottonwood. This event, donated by the Minnesota Chapter of ISA, was auctioned off last year to benefit the Tree Research and Education Endowment Fund (TREE Fund) during its Gala Auction held in conjunction with the 2005 ISA conference in Nashville, Tennessee.

When Tobe Sherill won the bid for the climb, I wonder if he knew it would include watching an arborist cook his dinner while enjoying the ambience of the 60-foot high tree café? Guests who accompanied Tobe for the day were Anne Sherrill, Dwayne and Nancy Neustater, Scott Prophet, Bruce and Lita Smith, Dan Kraus, Mike Kraus, and Ken Palmer. Other guests included Glen Palokangas, plus Todd Sirbasku and his
wife, Jo, who stopped by for a climb. Tobe brought a film crew to document the day. Watch for the upcoming DVD.

I sincerely thank the Minnesota Society of Arboriculture (MSA) volunteers who installed the trampoline the previous week and executed an exceptional TREE Fun(d) Climb. Ralph Grieling, Greg Krogstad, Dave Nordgaard, John Sirbasku, Pierce Wasmund, and Gary Wiemier acquired permission, secured donations and spent two days rigging a helicopter cargo net fitted with a trampoline cover into a large old cottonwood at Fort Snelling State Park. For the day of the climb they assembled boat drivers, a bucket truck team, gear donors, a cadre of chefs, 20 pounds of fresh walleye, a zipline and a hydraulic-powered elevator.

Two visiting arborists, Michael Oxman from Seattle, Washington and Carl Rutherford from Mississippi, also helped with the rigging. Except for Carl and Oxman, who arrived in advance of the ISA conference, this core team of local friends has worked together through the MSA in the Twin Cities for years. Their dedication to the advancement of arboriculture is what made this a fun, safe, extraordinary recreational climb.

Many thanks to our two generous sponsors:

Randy Nulle at the Samson Arborist Rope Division out of Ferndale, Washington donated a ½ mile of rope. A featured item was the 500-foot spool of half inch Amsteel rope. This stuff is ridiculously strong and made for a super secure zipline.

Kris Kirk at CMI (Colorado Mountain Industries) graciously gave our climb over $1,000 in rigging gear. Rigging blocks, pulleys, slings, and 8’s allowed the versatility needed to rig a helicopter cargo net to a big old cottonwood. These two companies understand the importance of supporting the TREE Fund.

All of this gear was up for bidding at the MSA fall conference auction to benefit the TREE Fund. Used one time, of course. All for a good cause!

Securing a large net inside the canopy of a large cottonwood presented quite a challenge. Thank goodness John Sirbasku’s experience hanging the net in numerous trees made him a world expert in tree trampoline installations. A donated 5/8-inch Samson Stable Braid was used to lash the limbs of the tree together into a reinforcing network, creating a temporary cabling system to brace the limb structure. The stress from tensioning the cargo net and the zipline was effectively transferred to the entire limb structure, distributing the load more evenly.

Guests and volunteers spent the morning installing the zipline and the rest of the day climbing, riding the zipline and the winch, and laying around on the tramp. Tree stories, jokes and Ralph’s exceptional catering kept everyone smiling all day. The highlight of the day occurred when Ralph, his son, and his friend Joe served a six-course meal to everyone, including the seven lucky people up on the trampoline. All the food and a kitchen were elevated into the tree where pan-fried walleye was transformed into the main course and devoured by our hungry guests. I think everybody there would agree to chalk the day up to “a very good time!”

I encourage all ISA chapters and Tree Care Industry Association member firms to conduct your own (fun)draisers. A TREE Fund fundraising guide, including a ‘how-to’ recipe for a tree climb, will be available in 2007. For more information contact Lynn Day at the TREE Fund (ldaytreefund.org).
Congresswoman Nadia Velasquez (D-NY) meets with Jeff Lundberg, director of human resources with SavATree in Bedford Hills, N.Y. Lundberg delivered a check to the Congresswomen on behalf of the Voice for Trees political action committee.

“We discussed immigration strategies and potential changes in Washington,” says Lundberg.

The October 25 meeting took place two weeks before the elections. According to Lundberg, Velasquez noted that “she does not expect major changes in immigration policy, since there remains substantial opposition. Her position is small steps in the right direction.”

If you owned a gorgeous, ancient elm tree and wanted to know how to protect it from Dutch elm disease, you might check on the Web for answers. Now you, our members, through TCIA, will be there to provide them.

The Tree Care Industry Association recently launched a resource site for consumers – www.treecaretips.org – to provide reliable, high-quality information for tree owners on a variety of tree care topics such as storm damage, seasonal dangers, tree diseases and pests, pruning and mulching.

TCIA members will benefit from the interactivity of treecaretips.org with the TCIA Member Search. After consumers read tips on when to prune and how to arrange mulch rings, they can find a qualified tree care specialist by clicking on a button. The button brings them back to the TCIA Member Search where they can use our zip code search technology to find a nearby member. They will even be able to send a request for a quote through an e-mail link.

Future enhancements are already planned, including an e-commerce page for sales of “green” merchandise, a social network or forum for consumer questions, and a sign-up form for a free quarterly newsletter. There will be some limited opportunities for advertising on the site, but the main function will be consumer education.

As we continue to add content to the site, we always appreciate feedback from our members on how we can improve the site’s usefulness. If you have suggestions, or find any mistakes, or if you have pictures for us to consider using on the site, please e-mail webmaster@tcia.org.

When consumers have questions, TCIA and its members will be the ones giving the answers.
The ArborMAX insurance program is truly designed for the green industry. ArborMAX offers the most comprehensive coverages available at competitive premiums, coverages that are specifically tailored for the green industry professional. In addition, ArborMAX agents have years of tree care industry experience behind them and offer a knowledge and passion that other agents can’t match. For quality insurance programs, designed for the green industry, trust ArborMAX.

ArborMAX - insurance for the arborist professional.

Please circle 2 on Reader Service Card
TCIA Safety Awards for 2006

Each year, TCIA recognizes two categories of exemplary performance in the area of tree care safety. The Individual/Crew Performance Award recognizes members’ employees for proactive safety efforts or acts of heroism, and the Outstanding Company Contribution Award recognizes the company for extraordinary, proactive measures that benefit the company, the greater arborist community or the community in which the company works.

Listed below are the Safety Award recipients for 2006 operations:

**Individual/Crew Performance Awards**

Tony Bill, Dale Marx, Troy Brant, Todd Billings, Antonio Lopez and Rigoberto Perez of **S & S Tree Specialists** in South St. Paul, Minnesota, came to the aid of an injured co-worker. The victim cut his left arm severely with a chain saw when he lost his footing in a tree. The injured worker was able to descend on his own, but at that point his fellow workers took over to render first aid, summon an ambulance and to assess the causes for the accident.

Shane Vosberg, CTSP of **Swingle Lawn, Tree & Landscape Care** in Denver, Colorado, is recognized for spearheading several initiatives to help improve the safety climate, culture and record for the “Enhancement Services” wing of Swingle. Shortly after his arrival just over a year ago, Shane took the lead in assembling and completing Swingle’s safety manual. He developed a plan for the “Swingle Training Day,” an event at which the employees get hands-on training in nearly every facet of their day-to-day employment. Finally, Shane gets out in the field and in the trees, visiting with between five and eight crews per day.

Chris Croteau of **Urban Tree Service** in Rochester, New Hampshire, came to the assistance of a co-worker who severely lacerated his wrist with a chain saw. Chris used his aerial rescue and first aid training to lower the bucket operator to the ground with the lower boom controls, extricate the injured worker from the bucket, apply first aid and summon assistance. The injured worker had to be airlifted to Mass General Hospital due to the severity of the injury. Chris credited all the training he’d received for being able to act without a second thought in a very stressful situation.

Ted Homan and Jeremy Cason of **Wright Tree Service** were trimming trees near Sioux City, Iowa, when they noticed smoke coming from a nearby home. Ted notified the fire department, and then both men went to the house where they found an 84-year-old woman on the ground outside. They moved her to a safe location and rendered aid until EMTs arrived. The woman was later released from the hospital without injury.

**Outstanding Company Contribution Awards**

The F.A. Bartlett Tree Expert Company receives recognition on behalf of the work that Pat Flynn, their safety and training coordinator in the New York/Connecticut area, has done. Throughout the year, Pat organized and conducted a series of workshops in Connecticut and New York, open to all industry members, focusing on tree risk assessment. As a board member of the Connecticut Tree Preservation Association (CTPA), Pat organized and personally conducted tree risk assessment training throughout the region. His workshops reached hundreds of workers and other industry professionals.

The **Davey Tree Expert Company**, headquartered in Kent, Ohio, instituted the Davey Career Development program, “...an individualized, progressive road map in safety education and job skills development through on-the-job training, mentoring and documented, demonstrated proficiency toward mastery of one or more career paths.” The program lays out a very well-defined course of training and proficiency to ensure safety and professionalism among Davey’s 6,000 field employees.

**S & S Tree Specialists** in South St. Paul, Minnesota, held its eighth winter climbing class in 2006. Running from January through mid-April, the class ensures consistency of practice as well as safety among all the climbers in this 40-person company. New recruits are trained at the same time that their skills level is being evaluated. Veteran climbers have a chance to learn the latest tools and techniques while they contribute to the learning experience for newer employees.

**SavATree**, with headquarters in Bedford Hills, New York, instituted a monthly Safety Conference Call involving the company’s senior management as well as a representative from each of the company’s growing number of branch office locations. SavATree uses the call to review accidents, focusing on what happened, controls that were put in place to prevent a reoccurrence, and the effectiveness of the controls. This has resulted in the company’s insurance loss ratios being far below what their insurer’s actuaries estimated their losses to be for the year.

**Vine & Branch, Inc.**, of Carmel, Indiana, has continued a multiple-year campaign on hazard tree recognition and visual tree assessment. The company manned an information booth at three conferences, spoke at 10 different venues, and wrote and/or contributed to articles in four publications over the course of the year. The company is developing a visual tree assessment program and is finalizing a handbook for property owners and managers.

**Wright Tree Care** in Waukee, Iowa, provided volunteer manpower and equipment to clear or safely prune trees for the popular “Extreme Makeover: Home Edition” program on ABC. The challenge was the amount of arboriculture work to be done in proximity to so many other workers and potential hazards. There were more than 250 workers and 150 spectators at the site on a daily basis for one week. Wright donated 247 hours of equipment and labor. In addition to the pruning and removal work, they took specific measures to ensure safety. They coned and taped the work area and assigned a work zone safety monitor whose job was to make sure the work zone was large enough and that nobody entered the work space. This person coordinated with the project engineer about the activities that would be taking place each day. The engineer then coordinated other contractors outside Wright’s work zone. All work was completed without incident.
What is the best way to improve safety?

More chain saw training?

Better climbing skills?

CTSP Workshops:
February 22 & 23, 2007
Husqvarna Training Facility
Charlotte, NC

March 14 & 15, 2007
Holiday Inn Countryside
Countryside, IL
(close to Midway Airport)

March 20 & 21, 2007
Brunswick Hilton & Towers
East New Brunswick, NJ

November 6 & 7, 2007
Hilton Hotel
In conjunction with TCI EXPO
Hartford, CT

NO!

Change behavior!

More than 90% of all accidents in tree care are the result of unsafe behavior.

A Certified Treecare Safety Professional (CTSP) can help create a culture of safety in your company ... Sign up today.

TCIA

Call 1-800-733-2622 or e-mail peter@tcia.org

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Will '07 be your year for safety?

TCIA's new Certified Treecare Safety Professional program started strong in February and just kept rolling as industry interest grew. CTSP expected to finish 2006 with close to 225 enrolled students, more than 100 people who have attended one of the four CTSP workshops offered in 2006, and 70 people who have actually earned the CTSP credential.

TCIA is now accepting enrollments as well as applications for six Certified Treecare Safety Professional program workshops being scheduled for 2007. Check out www.tcia.org for specific dates and locations as they are scheduled.

How to enroll

Getting and maintaining the CTSP certification is essentially a four-step process.

First, one enrolls in CTSP. The candidate must meet at least one of three experience requirements outlined on the application.

After enrollment, the CTSP candidate receives a Study Guide containing 13 Critical Thinking Exercises and a Safety Program Checklist on CD. These 14 elements are treated like homework assignments. The candidate must complete them and submit them to TCIA for evaluation in order to become eligible to sit for the workshop and exam. As a rule of thumb, CTSP candidates should allow themselves at least three weeks to get through the course material. A maximum of 18 months from the date of enrollment are allowed to complete all the CTSP requirements.

The CTSP workshop/exam takes two full days. It is comprised of ½ days of learning in an interactive environment, followed by a two- to three-hour multiple-choice exam. Candidates who do not pass the exam on the first try are allowed two re-takes. With the first re-take they are required to attend the workshop again, but at a reduced registration. On the second and final re-take they have the option of skipping the workshop and just taking the exam.

Passing the exam means the candidate is now a CTSP! Safety professionals attaining CTSP status are provided with a certificate and wallet card bearing their certification number.

The final step in the process for the new CTSP is maintaining his or her credential. The CTSP must earn 30 CEU credits every three years through a wide variety of safety-related learning and other activities.

Zenith Cutter embraces “Until We’re All Safe”

Now THAT’s Partnership in the Transformation!

When TCIA set out to Transform the Industry, one of our top five Outcomes was to have “Associate members perceive themselves as partners with TCIA, building stronger markets between consumers, credentialed companies, and Associate members.”

TCIA recently launched the “Until We’re All Safe” campaign; a movement to get a wristband or helmet decal on every single member company’s employees and to reach the many, many arborists who receive no safety training; not to mention to get safety in the minds of students who are coming into the industry. The decals and wristbands are available in both English and Spanish.

TCIA was recently approached by Doug Long, chipper product manager for Zenith Cutter Company, an Associate member. Doug said that he would like to promote Until We’re All Safe to the thousands of active customers that they serve. “My plan would be to include a wristband with each order shipped from Zenith, and possibly include a brochure describing your program.” Doug went on to say that he was willing to support the program by purchasing the wrist bands. TCIA was absolutely delighted that what Doug saw was a way to be a partner to help TCIA provide these FREE to all of our members in order to take yet one more step toward keeping people alive.

Doug’s commitment to safety catches our attention first. Doug’s vision in seeing a partnership opportunity with TCIA is exactly what we were hoping for – that Associate members would help us to create stronger, safer tree care companies so that in the long term the industry would be transformed in the minds of future employees, consumers, the media and the government. All of this spells a successful future for tree care companies.

Thank you, Doug, to you and to Zenith Cutter Company!
We don’t like to brag, our accredited tree care companies do that for us.

“Accreditation taught us how to work as a team. As a small company, everyone pulled together to help us get accredited.”

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TCIA meets with OSHA head

A TCIA delegation met with OSHA Assistant Secretary Ed Foulke and Deputy Assistant Secretary Bryan Little in Washington December 8. Cynthia Mills, president & CEO; Mark Garvin, VP of public policy & communications; Peter Gerstenberger, senior advisor for safety, compliance, and standards; and Josh Ulman, TCIA lobbyist, continued the dialogue with OSHA regarding the need for a separate standard for arboriculture based on the existing ANSI Z133.1 standard for tree care work. While there have been no immediate promises made, we have not let up the pressure on the critical need for clarification in our industry to save lives; the recognition of our industry as valid in its own right; and the inappropriate use of other standards.

Since the logging standard was promulgated in the late ‘90s, TCIA has been in the untenable position of having to fight inappropriate citations and remains confused about which general industry standard to apply when. By virtue of our Alliance, TCIA was provided with a draft of an Arbor Occupations directive at the regional level. This was fortuitous as the issuance of an internal directive requires no review with industry. Obtaining a copy proved to be a critical opportunity for TCIA as there are attempts to define logging, the application of this standard to our industry, and continued confusion over the practice of arboriculture. This directive will probably be issued by March 2007, and it will probably not be exactly to our liking. We have continued to protest that a directive is not needed, as the logging standard does not apply to arboriculture. We are not hopeful that it will be retracted and also have some indications that this is the interim manner in which they are avoiding the promulgation of a standard.

TCIA also challenged OSHA on the issuance of more than $1 million in Susan Harwood grants this fall to academics for localized landscaping safety training materials and the failure to provide TCIA with funds to continue EHAP training. Our point – we don’t know many who have been killed by leaf blowers lately. TCIA has been targeted by OSHA as one of the top seven industries with the worst fatality records in the nation. Our question: “Aren’t the strategic plan and your policy & communications; Peter Gerstenberger, senior advisor for safety, compliance, and standards; and Josh Ulman, TCIA lobbyist, continued the dialogue with OSHA regarding the need for a separate standard for arboriculture based on the existing ANSI Z133.1 standard for tree care work. While there have been no immediate promises made, we have not let up the pressure on the critical need for clarification in our industry to save lives; the recognition of our industry as valid in its own right; and the inappropriate use of other standards.

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TCIA and PLANET host Legislative Day on the Hill

TCIA invites all its members to gather in Washington, D.C., July 15-17, 2007, for the 2007 Legislative Day on the Hill. To enhance the power of its efforts, TCIA has teamed with The Professional Landcare Network (PLANET) as hosts of the 2007 Legislative Day on the Hill. PLANET represents approximately 4,400 green industry service providers in the landscape service industry that specialize in lawn care, design/build/installation, interior plant care, and landscape management. Together, TCIA and PLANET will strengthen the impact its members have in raising awareness of crucial green industry issues to Washington lawmakers.

The event provides tree and landscape professionals with an opportunity to unite their efforts and their message as they visit with their congressional representatives on Capitol Hill to discuss issues that affect the industry. Attendees will receive an issues briefing before their Hill visits, and first-time participants receive special attention and assistance from veterans of the event. This year’s Legislative Day is free of cost to anyone who would like to attend.

Legislative Day on the Hill will be held at the L’Enfant Plaza Hotel in Washington, D.C. One of the most prestigious hotels in the city, the hotel is centrally located and is within walking distance to the Smithsonian Castle, the Air and Space Museum, the World War II Memorial and the Washington Mall. It is also convenient to four of the five Metro mass transit lines and is a 10-minute drive from Ronald Reagan National Airport and 45 minutes from Baltimore Washington International Airport.

For more information on the 2007 Legislative Day on the Hill, please visit www.tcia.org or call Mark Garvin at 1-800-733-2622.
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New parasite of emerald ash borer (EAB) found in China

The Emerald ash borer (EAB), a native insect of eastern Asia, has been one of the most significant new pest introductions in North America in recent memory. Since the first detection in Michigan in 2002, the beetle has killed millions of ash trees in parts of the United States and Canada. To date, control measures for limiting the spread of this pest have been to remove infested trees, cut ash-free buffer zones, and to limit the man-made movement of pathways that might spread the insect, such as firewood. Chemical treatments have showed promising results for individual trees.

Now, according to a recent report from the North American Plant Protection Organization, a survey of parts of China found several parasitoids of EAB. A larval endoparasitoid of EAB larvae, T. planipennis, produces 56-92 offspring from a single EAB host. The parasitoids develop from eggs to larvae within an EAB larva, which remains alive until its last instar. The wasp larvae then emerge from the dead larva and chew exit holes through the bark of the tree. These wasps may have four generations per year in northeastern China; adults live approximately two weeks in captivity at 25 C. This new parasitoid has the potential to be a significant biocontrol agent for EAB in North America.

Delayed winter causing problems

The Brooklyn Botanic Garden recently announced an unwelcome sight, cherry blossoms in the dead of winter. By early January, New York hadn’t experienced a winter chill, and cherry trees were almost full bloom January 2. “It’s very unusual. We have thousands and thousands of flowers on this tree,” said the garden’s Dr. Mark Tebbitt.

Project EverGreen Awards First Because Green Matters Scholarships

Project EverGreen has awarded its first Because Green Matters scholarships to Amy Hegwood and Tao Fan. Both will receive $2,500.00 awards to assist in preparing for careers in the green industry.

In announcing the winners, Den Gardner, executive director of Project EverGreen, said, “It was gratifying to see the interest in the initial year of our scholarship program and we feel that the overall high quality of the applicants is reflected in our 2006 winners. We are pleased to help support their desire to work in the green industry and to contribute to the role it plays in enhancing our environment and our economy.”

Gardner gave a brief resume of each winner, as follows:

Amy Hegwood is working toward an Environmental Horticulture degree at Gwinnet Technical College, Lawrenceville, Georgia. She has been active in providing horticultural therapy for special-needs children. Skilled in plant propagation, she has a career goal to work in a botanical garden or arboretum helping educate both children and adults about the need to preserve and protect green spaces. Tao Fan is a junior at Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. She was motivated to study landscape management after coming to this country from a crowded, polluted Chinese city. Her dedication and ability have won her the praise of her instructors, and a scholastic ranking in the top 5% of her class. Her career goal is “to become a landscape designer and give something back to the communities I live in.”

To qualify for a Because Green Matters scholarship, students must major or minor in a green industry related field such as horticulture, plant sciences, botany, agronomy, plant pathology, water management, etc. Eligibility, as determined by a committee made up of members of the Project EverGreen Board of Directors, extends to two and four year program students attending institutions that offer turf, landscape and golf management curriculums. Information on how to apply for scholarships to be awarded in 2007 can be obtained by accessing www.projectevergreen.com.

New edition of Trees & Ice Storms now available

Severe ice storms occur every year in the United States, and a couple of nasty ones hit in early January. Ice storms are responsible for dramatic damage. Tree species vary in their resistance to ice accumulation. Certain characteristics, such as weak branch junctures indicated by included bark, dead and decaying branches, a broad crown, and fine branching, increase a tree’s susceptibility to ice storm damage.

Planting a diverse urban forest that includes trees resistant to ice storms and performing regular tree maintenance to avoid or remove structural weaknesses will reduce damage caused by severe ice storms. Maintenance plans for urban trees should incorporate information on the ice storm susceptibility of trees in order to limit damage, reduce hazards resulting from ice damage, and restore urban tree populations following storms. Susceptibility ratings of species commonly planted in urban areas are presented in an updated booklet from the University of Illinois, entitled Trees & Ice Storms: The development of ice-storm resistant urban tree populations. The publication is available as a free download at http://web.extension.uiuc.edu/forestry/publications/pdf/urban_community_forestry/trees_and_ice_storms_2006.pdf
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**Reader Service No. * | Page No.**

1. American Arborist Supply ............................................... 10
2. ArborMAX Insurance Program ........................................... 71
3. ArborSoftWorx ............................................................... 27
4. ArborSystems ............................................................... Inside Back Cover
5. Autumn Tree Care Experts, Inc. ....................................... 67
6. Bailey’s ................................................................. 15
7. Bandit Industries, Inc. .................................................. 39
8. Baier’s ........................................................................ 15
9. Barko Hydraulics LLC .................................................. 19
   The F. A. Bartlett Tree Expert Company .......................... 60
   The F. A. Bartlett Tree Expert Company .......................... 66
10. Beaver Squeezer Grapple, LLC ...................................... 22
11. Becker Underwood ....................................................... Inside Front Cover
12. Bishop Company ............................................................ 13
13. Bishop Company ............................................................ 43
14. Border City Tool & Manufacturing Co. ......................... 27
15. Davey Tree Expert Co. ................................................. 66
16. DICA Marketing Co. ..................................................... 72
17. ECO Landscape Assn .................................................... 20
18. FAE USA, Inc. ............................................................. 35
19. Fanno Saw Works ........................................................ 52
20. Fecon, Inc. .................................................................. 37
21. G&A Equipment, Inc. .................................................... 59
22. Giana Equipment, Inc. .................................................... 59
23. Giffin Tree Service .......................................................... 28
24. Gioffre Brothers Cranes ................................................. 31
25. Gregson-Clark Spraying Equipment .............................. 67
26. Jarraff Industries, Inc. .................................................... 34
27. Leonard ................................................................. 11
28. Loftness ................................................................. 33
29. Mainka Enterprises, LLC .............................................. 33
30. Miller Machine Works ................................................. 36
31. Morbark, Inc. ............................................................. 40-41
32. Nelson Tree Service, Inc. ............................................. 58
33. New England Ropes, Inc. ............................................ 17
34. Opdyke, Inc. ............................................................. 21
35. Petro-Canada ............................................................. 23
36. Rainbow Tree Care Scientific ....................................... 49
37. Rapco Industries, Inc. .................................................. 30
38. Rayco Manufacturing, Inc. ........................................... 5
39. Rotochopper, Inc. ........................................................ 3
40. SavATree .................................................................. 61
41. Schodorf Truck Body & Equip. Co. .............................. 51
42. SherrillTree ............................................................... 7
43. Southco Industries, Inc. ................................................. 64
44. Stump Removal Inc./KAN-DU ...................................... 52
45. T.H. Glennon Co., Inc. ................................................. 14
46. TCIA Accreditation ...................................................... 75
47. TCIA Expo ................................................................. 55
48. TCIA Certified Treecare Safety Professional-CTSP ....... 73
49. TCIA Membership ..................................................... 29
50. Teupen America ........................................................ 1
51. Timberwolf Mfg. Corp. .............................................. 12
52. Tree Management Systems, Inc./Arbor Gold ............... 63
53. Vermeer Manufacturing Co. ......................................... Back Cover
54. Vitamin Institute .......................................................... 46
55. Weaver Leather, Inc. .................................................... 48
56. Western Tree Equipment & Repairs ............................. 63
57. Zenith Cutter Co. ........................................................ 53

* Please circle this number on the Reader’s Service Card for more information.
My older brother, Greg Ricketts, got me started in tree service, for which I am forever indebted. However, the way he started me left a little to be desired.

We started in firewood in Lake Tahoe, California, in 1973. He was in his early 20s and I am nine years younger, so he lacked experience and common sense, and I was dumb enough to do whatever he coerced me to do. Like the time he sent me up a big lodgepole pine with an axe to cut the branch that was holding up the big snag he had tried to fell but that had hung up. Or when he pinched our borrowed .039 chain saw and told me to pull it out while he cut from the other side (we had left it there while we went and borrowed another saw) and then sawed the hinge completely off and, since the bar never came free and the saw was crushed, yelled at me for not staying there and pulling harder and longer! All the while he constantly reminded me to be careful because, to quote him, “If you ever die out here, Dad and Mom are gonna kill me!”

It gets better. We finally figured out that firewood had its limits and we bought some manila ropes, a used saddle and spurs and our very own saws and started wrecking big pines in people’s yards.

One 80-foot Jeffrey pine was in a tiny backyard and all the limbs had to be lowered. Greg was in the tree and I was all the way out front across the street, with several neighbors watching. My brother put half a wrap on the tree and tied off a 12-inch diameter limb for lowering. I yelled up to him that I thought he should put another wrap on the tree but he answered that the bark was really rough and there was plenty of friction. So I braced my 130 pounds and he started cutting the 300 pound limb. All may have been fine had the branch tip not hung up in another and had it hinged downward. But all the weight came loose at once and jerked me so hard I flew across the street, up the driveway and into the middle of the closed garage door without so much as touching the ground (black boot marks and orange hardhat marks later showed my exact position and elevation). It felt like being shot out of a cannon holding onto the cannonball. Fortunately I then let go of the rope. All the neighbors were amazed as I brushed myself off and retrieved my hardhat that had bounced all the way back into the street. Greg was laughing of course and shouted down to me, “Should have put another wrap on for that one!”

Being young and flexible I was fine. The roof? The fence? The branch! Unbelievably it landed perfect and did no damage. I untied and pulled the 3/4-inch manila back up the tree to my brother and we went back to work – with an extra wrap, of course.

Lenny “Doc” Ricketts owns and operates Doc Ricketts Tree Service in Durango, California.
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