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Pulling on the Reins...

When you talk with arborists this time of year, they always sound breathless. The speed of the season is in full gear. The storm season started early this summer and has been widespread and intense. Thoughts of fall are in sight but not quite in reach. There are several weeks left to make that third quarter the best possible to make up for a tough first quarter. And there is so much planning left to do. How to close out the second half of the year and make the goals we dreamed of last year a reality, while starting the planning and budgeting process for the coming year.

In between, people have come and gone. Holes have appeared in our brilliant plans due to circumstances that have borne down upon us that, unless you’re psychic, no one could have predicted. Yet, in running a business, we still feel responsible for reaching all targets, stretching and succeeding no matter what.

With the speed of the news, technology, information, our children’s schedules, the volume of phone calls and e-mails, and customer interactions, our entire lives are now led at warp speed. We have moved away from the natural rhythms of life that being an agriculture society provided us – periods of planning for coming work, periods of intense work, and a time to rest. The piece that is missing is the time to rest. During slow times, we had opportunities to recognize where we were in our own lives; how we affect those around us; and moments to engage with the wisdom of others more purposefully. Now, we have to work at that; schedule it; plan for it.

In this atmosphere of speed, one of the hardest things I have had to do over the last year is learn to wait; practice patience; listen for – and to make time to listen for - the right moments for business decisions. I had holes in my staff that demanded filling. They demanded it financially, from a workload and a member service perspective. The vacancies created a sense of tension that grew with time and created an ever-growing sense of “fill it, fill it, fill it.” And yet, the voice that kept ringing in my gut trying to drown out the ever-growing power of the void was “wait, wait, wait, WAIT.”

One of the greatest temptations we have in this speedy business environment is to get it done and check it off the list. This sense of constant urgency can lead to some really big mistakes. First of all, because the void is filled, does not mean that you can check it off and walk away. You need to engage, set expectations, mentor, instruct, and yes, sometimes, correct. One of the hardest decisions I made over the last year was to drown out the other voice that said, “Fill it.”

Three time in a row, the patience of waiting brought better caliber team members with greater experience and a stronger desire to be part of the next phase of success serving this industry. You’ve heard it before, “Timing is everything.” It may not feel great that the sales goal for that quarter is not where you wanted it. It may not look good that the financial statement is not reflecting the growth that you set for the year. There may be some things that you can’t check off that list yet. However, the fallacy of assuming that because the void has been filled and the item checked off your to do list is going to achieve the goals you have set is HUGE.

I have never been so pleased that I waited for the right people. I have never been so thankful to have found people who really want to be with us and who are out-performing what we thought were great performances before.

So when you hear that inner voice telling you to let the reins go and “Fill it”; ignore the voice guiding you to make hiring mistakes that will leave you in a worse place than you are in the void, pull on those reins, learn to live in the discomfort, and wait.

The right people will show up at your doorstep, and when they take the reins, you’ll be amazed where they take you.

Pull on those reins … and wait.

Cynthia Mills, CAE
Publisher

TCI’s mission is to engage and enlighten readers with the latest industry news and information on regulations, standards, practices, safety, innovations, products and equipment. We strive to serve as the definitive resource for commercial, residential, municipal and utility arborists, as well as for others involved in the care and maintenance of trees. The official publication of the non-profit Tree Care Industry Association, we vow to sustain the same uncompromising standards of excellence as our members in the field, who adhere to the highest professional practices worldwide.
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Features

8 Sharpen Your Plant Health Care Diagnostic Skills
   By Dr. David Roberts

32 Foliage for Fall Colors in a Landscape
   Dr. Lakshmi Sridharan

42 TCIA Accreditation May Pay for Itself
   By David Rattigan

56 Do AEDs Belong in Tree Care “Workplaces”?
   By Ariana Ziminsky

70 Restoring Natural Ecosystems
   By Charlie Keppel and Mike Fitzpatrick

Departments

2 Outlook
   By Cynthia Mills

14 Washington in Review
   New CDL disqualification rules may go into effect in your state at the
   end of the month if they haven’t.

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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Departments

22 Giving Back
Arborist crews from TCIA member firms draw attention to professional arboriculture with service projects in Washington, D.C.

24 Member Forum
By Scott Jamieson
If we are to make a difference in this industry, we must care enough about each other to speak up and offer a safer alternative.

26 Management Exchange
By Joseph Redman, Leah Mins, and Michael Keeling
Employee stock ownership plans offer a different type of exit strategy.

38 Letters to the Editor

48 TCI EXPO
John Spence was so dynamic at WMC that he will be back as keynote speaker and lead a seminar at TCI EXPO in Columbus in November.

50 Business of Tree Care
By Lee Silber
Time is a precious resource: Learn to manage the clock and the calendar.

60 Classified Advertising

74 TCIA Reporter
Safety and training products, news, commentary and benefits of membership with the Tree Care Industry Association.

78 Tree News

79 Advertiser Listing

80 From the Field
By Matthew Lang
Dog days are just part of the job.

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Sharpen your Plant Health Care diagnostic Skills

By Dr. David Roberts
In the plant health care industry, much effort is expended in developing landscape designs, bringing new plants into use, and incorporating various maintenance practices into our regimen of services. Inevitably, plants will develop problems. As plant health care professionals, we need to be aware of the causes of these problems so we can make rapid and accurate decisions for problem management. Often, our reputation depends on our ability to solve plant problems. After all, the public and our clients believe we are all “plant doctors” and, because we are professionals in the plant industry, they also believe we must know everything there is to know about plants, their care, and their problems.

In a brief comparison with the medical fields, we would not respect our family doctor if she/he decided to arbitrarily place your family member on some drug or perform an operation without performing an accurate diagnosis of the problem. In fact, many of the malpractice suits brought against medical doctors are due to misdiagnosis of human health problems. Likewise, in the plant health care industry, we often think about reaching for that pesticide on the shelf before performing an accurate diagnosis. Also, we are under pressure from our clients to “spray something” for that quick fix. Sometimes, our clients seem to believe we have the capabilities of a supreme being to resolve their plant problems. I think most professionals would agree that diagnosis is the first and most important step in managing or controlling our plant problems.

Regrettably, plant health care professionals are often not adequately trained to perform diagnoses of plant problems. There is inadequate training available to sharpen our diagnostic skills relating to plant problems. One can obtain a college degree or technical degree in horticulture and related fields without encountering many educational opportunities for learning plant doctoring. In many college courses, only one lecture or portion of a lecture for an entire semester-long course may be devoted to plant problems. And most universities do not offer an entire course on plant problems or on the diagnosis of plant problems.

Following is a series of steps I use to approach the diagnosis of a plant problem. Because I have been diagnosing plant problems for more than 25 years, I automatically advance through these steps in a matter of seconds or within a few minutes. Learning and appreciating a series of steps can often lead to the most logical and correct answer. Once a diagnosis is made, the prescribed solution is often straightforward, whether it be application of a pesticide, pruning out the affected portion, or modifying the cultural conditions.

Sometimes, it may be useful to try to categorize the problem. In my teachings to students and professionals, I usually assign problems to one of four categories. Problems may involve a complex of issues derived from more than one of these categories:

- **Diseases**: caused by microscopic organisms such as fungi, bacteria, viruses, phytoplasmas and nematodes.

- **Insects/animals**: damage from this group usually involves chewing or...
Step 1: Identify plant

One of the most important things that we can do is identify the plant. This is obviously one of the first steps because we can drastically narrow the potential number of problems a plant may have. For example, we know that apples and pears (ornamentals included) contract fire blight, a bacterial disease, whereas evergreens do not. And, we know that white pine is very susceptible to winter desiccation while Austrian pine is more tolerant of winter problems.

Step 2: Collect information

Accuracy of diagnosis increases significantly as more information about the history of the plant and the problem is gathered. Unfortunately, gathering information can involve a lot of detective work. Unlike human patients in the medical field, a huge disadvantage for us is that plants do not talk about their problems and aches and pains to the arborists and landscapers.

Step 3: Collect samples

Sometimes, it may be necessary to collect samples for further analysis or for submitting to a lab for testing. Samples may include soil, roots, stems and leaves. Often it is wise to collect some healthy samples from the same plant or nearby plants for comparison. For the average diagnostician, the more samples the better.

Step 4: Compare with healthy

Many times it is beneficial to compare our affected plant with a healthy plant of the same species. I have received purple leaf plum samples from clients who cannot understand that the purple coloration is normal. I have also received samples of bristle cone pine that exhibit natural resin flecks on their needles similar in appearance to pine needle scale.

Step 5: Examine for insects/arthropods

Carefully scrutinize the plant patient for insects (six-legged critters, arthropods include eight-legged critters such as mites) and other arthropods. Critters in this category usually leave evidence of chewing or piercing, sucking injury, or their excrement. The critter may or may not be present. Please bear in mind that most insects we could encounter are beneficial rather than detrimental.

Step 6: Examine for signs and symptoms

For the average field diagnostician, symptoms and signs are some of the most valuable criteria for diagnosis. Symptoms may include spots, rots, cankers, wilting, dieback, necrosis (death), chlorosis (yellowing), etc. Signs include evidence of the actual presence of the causal organism, such as mold (powdery mildew), mushrooms (root rotting or heart rotting fungi) and “ooze” (fire blight bacteria). Because many experienced arborists and landscap-
ers rely upon symptoms and signs, they are often better at field diagnosis than scientists, who often rely upon laboratory testing equipment.

Step 7: Examine foliage

Now, staring at the top of the plant, look at the leaves for any symptoms. Almost invariably, any sick plant will show symptoms in the foliage. Problems with stems, roots or adverse site conditions, as well as many other problems, will ultimately result in foliage symptoms. Spots on the foliage may indicate a fungal or bacterial leaf spot. Blotches on the leaf may indicate anthracnose disease. Leaf margin or inter-veinal necrosis or chlorosis may indicate water imbalances in the plant, originating from drought, high wind, nutritional imbalances/deficiencies, or a vascular disease. Even though symptoms on the foliage are usually fairly obvious, it is important not to stop at this step, but to follow through with the entire diagnostic procedure.

Step 8: Examine stems

Stems include tree trunks, branches, twigs and actual stems on herbaceous plants. Look for any abnormalities. One of my favorite tools is a pocket knife, which can be used to check for any abnormality within the stem. For example, Dutch elm disease and verticillium wilt can often be confirmed by looking for the vascular discoloration within stem tissue.

Step 9: Examine roots

Roots of herbaceous plants should be white and flexible if healthy. If they are dark and mushy, a root rotting pathogen...
may be involved in the decline of the plant. Roots of woody plants may exhibit new white rootlets but in general may be dark and woody. A sloughing of the cortex (“bark”) leaving a white string (stele) when a root is pulled between two fingers probably indicates a root rot. Root rots, whether on herbaceous or woody plants, may be caused by a variety of factors, including a plant disease organism, excess moisture, excess fertilizer, etc.

Step 10: Perform soil pH and soluble salts

When I diagnose problems on a routine basis, two valuable instruments are the pH meter the solubridge. While performing these two tests is not exhaustive in evaluating soil problems, we can determine in many cases whether road salt, over-fertilization, animal urine or other abnormal soil conditions exist. These tests can be performed with these instruments on the tailgate of a pickup.

Step 11: Check references

Although there is no substitute for experience, references can be valuable sources of information for diagnosis. Books, periodicals, journals and extension publications are highly recommended as components in our personal library. Pictures may be very useful for comparison of symptoms when diagnosing plant problems. In reality, there can be a virtual infinite number of causes of plant problems; references often provide the most common causes on specific species.

Step 12: Use all tools

Be sure to use all tools at your disposal. In addition to a pocket knife, a solubridge and a pH meter, other beneficial tools include a magnifying device (e.g. hand lens, dissecting microscope), camera, soil probe (for collecting samples; for determining soil profile, compaction problems), saws, pruners, etc.

If we are still uncertain of our diagnosis after following these steps, we have many avenues to obtain assistance, including university professors, extension agents, plant diagnosticians/diagnostic labs, private consultants, other professionals and plant society organizations.

Remember, plant diagnostics is not easy, and it is not uncommon to have as many answers as there are experts.

Dr. David Roberts is a MSU extension specialist and district horticulture agent at Michigan State University. He was director of MSU’s Plant and Pest Diagnostic Clinic for 14 years. In 2001, he began research on the ash decline in southeast Michigan. His research led to discovery of the emerald ash borer as the source of the problem.

In cooperation with the Michigan Green Industry Association, Dr. Roberts will host a three-hour, hands-on educational session, “Plant Diagnostics: Case Studies and Timely Updates,” October 27 at the Bingham Center, Bingham Farms, Mich. Actual samples will be used by participants to view symptoms of various diseases and insect, cultural and environmental problems. Case studies will follow steps and diagnostic procedures to determine an accurate diagnosis and the proper management procedures. Contact MGIA, at (248) 646-4992 or via www.landscape.org.
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New CDL disqualification rules may go into effect in your state at the end of the month if they haven’t already done so.

September 30 is the deadline for states to implement the commercial driver’s license (CDL) disqualification rules that were issued by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration in 2002. The new rules require states to disqualify drivers for offenses committed in any type of vehicle, including personal cars and pickups.

In some cases, drivers could lose their CDLs forever.

Now is the time to make sure your drivers are aware of the types of convictions that could result in a loss of driving privileges.

The following offenses — in any type of vehicle — could result in the disqualification of your CDL for one year after one conviction or up to life after two convictions:

- Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- Refusing an alcohol test
- Leaving the scene of an accident
- Using a vehicle to commit a felony

Other major offenses include driving a commercial motor vehicle (CMV) with an invalid license and causing a fatality through the negligent operation of a CMV.

Being convicted of two or more of the serious traffic violations below in any type of vehicle within a three-year period could result in CDL disqualification for 60-120 days if the state revokes, cancels or suspends your driving privileges:

- Speeding by 15 mph or more
- Reckless driving
- Making improper or erratic lane changes
- Tailgating
- Violating a traffic control law in connection with a fatal accident
- Driving a covered CMV without a CDL or the proper endorsements

As under the “old” rules, CMV drivers can be DQ’ed for violating out-of-service orders or committing railroad-highway grade crossing violations.

Under the new rules, states will be prohibited from masking, deferring judgment, or allowing a driver to enter a diversion program that would prevent a conviction from appearing on the driver’s record, no matter which state the offense occurred in.

Check with your state to determine when the rules were or will be implemented. Note that the disqualification rules applicable to commercial drivers other than CDL-holders were not changed.

Peter Gerstenberger is senior advisor for safety, compliance & standards for the Tree Care Industry Association.
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-E70. 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.

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Change in leadership at BASF Agricultural Products

After almost 30 years with BASF, William C. Wisdom, group vice president, Agricultural Products Regional Business Unit, North America, has elected to retire at the end of September 2005. Effective October 1, Markus Heldt, group vice president, Agricultural Products, Regional Business Unit, Latin America, will succeed Wisdom. Wisdom has held the group vice president position since 2002.

Markus Heldt has more than 25 years of business experience in the pharmaceutical and agrochemical industry. He worked for different companies before joining BASF.

Bayer recalling Allectus* Granular Products

Bayer Environmental Science in July issued a recall of Allectus™ G and Allectus™ GC granular products due to visible defects in the packaging. The company asserts that the recall pertains strictly to a packaging issue and is not a product issue in terms of efficacy or performance. There is no known health or safety risk associated with the packaging problem. Bayer is currently communicating to its customers the steps for the proper collection and return of the product.

A solvent, benzyl alcohol, in the granular formulation of Allectus is permeating and delaminating the packaging. This is causing the ink on the printed label to smudge and become illegible. There have been no reported cases of ruptured bags or other packaging issues. In addition to the recall, Bayer is placing an immediate stop-sale of Allectus G and Allectus GC until the packaging problem is rectified. Approximately 3,000 bags of Allectus granular products are estimated to be affected by the voluntary recall.

End user customers can ask their distributors for Allectus™ SC or Allectus™ SC GC to use as a replacement product, or they can simply get a refund for the returned granular product. Customers can also contact the customer service hotline at 800-331-2867.

Two named to new positions at Bayer Environmental

Scott Welge has been named fungicide business manager for the Chipco Professional Products group of Bayer Environmental Science. In this position, he will also serve as the Bayer golf industry lead.

Jennifer Remsberg was named communications manager for the Chipco Professional Products group. She was previously a lawn care sales rep for Bayer covering the central Midwest, and also served as a turf and ornamental marketing manager for Bayer Professional Care in Kansas City. In addition, she has 12 years of experience in the advertising business.

Dow AgroSciences hires product and sales reps

Dow AgroSciences LLC named Susan Leisure Carney as a new product communications manager for the vegetation management division. Previously she was a sales representative for Dow in southeast and southwest Florida for six years.

Travis W. Rogers has joined Dow’s vegetation management team as a senior sales representative for North Carolina and South Carolina. He replaces Tom Wharton, who is no longer with the company.

Rick Miller is the new senior sales representative for central California.

Anthony Grieco has joined the turf and ornamental team as the sales representative for Indiana, Kentucky, Illinois and Western Michigan. He replaces Tom Linnen, who has taken another position within the company.

Bartlett Tree Experts continues acquisitions

Earlier this year, Bartlett Tree Experts announced the acquisition of one water management company and six tree care companies. Continuing this growth trend, Bartlett has purchased the tree care operations of Fredericksburg Tree Care in Virginia, Ambrose Laboratories in New York, Richard Synnestvedt-The Care of Trees in Pennsylvania, King’s Consulting in Indiana, and Honey Brothers in the United Kingdom.

Susan Leisure Carney

Rick Miller

Jennifer Remsberg

Scott Welge

Jennifer Remsberg

Anthony Grieco

Anthony Grieco
at TCI EXPO, “world’s largest tree care trade show.” You’ll find everything you need Wednesday, Nov. 9 through Friday, Nov. 11 at the Columbus Convention Center, Columbus, Ohio. Hundreds of vendors are packing the floor with the best deals of the year, and they don’t want to bring anything home! Call us toll-free at 1-800-733-2622, or visit online at www.treecareindustry.org.

TCI EXPO is hosted by the Tree Care Industry Association (formerly the NAA). Don’t forget our seminars where you’ll earn CEUs and learn from the best brains in the green industry.

Bag great deals...
**Bandit offers new whole tree chipper**

A 20-inch-diameter capacity, drum-style, self-propelled whole-tree chipper has been added to Bandit’s line of mobile chippers. The 2090 Track Bandit features a large 20-inch x 24-inch chipper opening and an extremely powerful hydraulic feed system with the ability to pull whole trees into the chipper while crushing limbs and tops. The top feed wheel is 27 inches in diameter and 32 inches long, with a bottom wheel 10 5/8 inches in diameter and 32 inches long. Equipped with a Model 75 knuckle-boom style loader and continuous rotation grapple, a Caterpillar 325 undercarriage moves this high production chipper over rough terrain. Engine options are available from 250 hp to 330 hp. A hydraulic swivel discharge allows chips to be discharged in almost any direction. The 2090 is a great land clearing and sight preparation unit because it allows you to take the chipper to the trees, eliminating the need to forward or skid material. It is one of three self-propelled whole tree chippers offered by Bandit. Contact Bandit at 1-800-952-0178 or sales@banditchippers.com.

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**Vermeer adds blower to horizontal grinder**

Vermeer Manufacturing Company now has a blower system for its HG6000tx horizontal grinder that broadcasts material across the ground or blows it into the back of chip-hauling trailers – eliminating the need for operators to re-handle piles of processed material. The blower, which is designed for use in clean wood applications, features a 140-degree rotation and tilt adjustment via remote control. It features a heavy-duty impeller assembly with replaceable wear plates and convenient service access. The blower may be especially valuable in forestry applications where contractors are performing forest cleanup and maintenance to improve fire lanes, and thinning to prevent fires. The blower effectively loads chip-hauling trailers from the rear, which requires less access room on size-restricted job sites. When not needed the blower swings out of the way under the discharge conveyor allowing the conveyor to discharge directly onto the ground. Contact Vermeer via www.vermeer.com.

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**New Lift from Man & Material Lift Engineering**

Man & Material Lift Engineering (MMLE), manufacturer of a broad range of standard and special purpose aerial work platforms, has introduced its most recent product – the A45I insulated articulated boom, manufactured with the electrical, tree trimming and power and utility industry in mind. With up-and-over heights of over 25 feet, this articulated lift provides key features such as 45-foot platform heights, platform dimensions of 24 inches x 48 inches, 4-wheel drive and dual fuel. Other standard features include sealed battery, 6-foot fiberglass boom, non-conductive hydraulic hoses, fiber-optic control cable and 43KVA insulation. MMLE is a custom and specialty purpose manufacture of aerial work platforms in Cudahy, Wisc. Contact MMLE at (414) 486 1760 or sales@manlifengineering.com.

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**Morbark enters stump grinder market**

Morbark Inc. has entered the stump grinder market. The first models, G52SP and D52SP, are now available. These grinders were designed from Morbark’s experience in wood processing and with its computer generated failure analysis (CAE) tests. This powerful software analyzes key stress points and ensures the machine structure is optimized – all before they are even built. With a top speed of 3.2 mph, Models G52SP and D52SP offer a significantly higher travel speed than other grinders in their class. Morbark’s cutter wheel and tooth design grinds stumps faster due to a patent-pending boom design that creates a 52-inch cutting arc, which is 25 percent wider than anything in its class. The hexagon shaped cutter wheel offers less resistance and friction through the stump. Six multi-tipped cutting tools, fastened with one bolt each, provide the grinding performance of 24 teeth with the quickest, easiest cutter change in the industry. These units also have the largest chip retention space – up to eight cubic feet – in their class, meaning more continuous grinding and less repositioning. The stationary engine design creates a low center of gravity and superior stability to minimize rollovers and engine oil starvation. Steering on wet turf, loose gravel and uneven terrain is optimized with hydraulic equalization valves and an articulating front axle. Outer dual wheels are easily removed without tools, allowing the grinder to pass through a standard 36-inch gate. Contact Morbark at 1-800-831-0042, inquire@morbark.com, or via www.morbark.com.

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New England Ropes Unveils Ultra-Vee

New England Ropes has added its newest product, Ultra Vee, to its Braided Safety Blue series of 16-strand climbing ropes. Braided Safety Blue, the original 16-strand climbing line, named for its trademark blue core yarns, and Hi-Vee, a version of Braided Safety Blue with high visibility cover yarns, have long been the arborist industry standards in the 16-strand category. The Ultra-Vee is a version of Braided Safety Blue with safety-green cover yarns (often referred to as “fluorescent green” or “lime green”). Using this new color in a climbing line with its improved visibility characteristics raises the bar for safety in the arborist market. All three colors are now available for increased variety and the flexibility of color-coding when using multiple ropes in a safety system. Contact New England Ropes market manager, Bill Shakespeare, at (508) 730-4524 or visit www.neropes.com.

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New chain saw from RedMax

RedMax’s new G3200EZ is a lightweight, rear-handle chain saw for general pruning operations. The 7.7 pound G3200EZ is powered by RedMax’s 31.8 cc, two-cycle engine that develops 1.8 hp. It features RedMax’s Super e-START that reduces the pulling force needed to start the engine to one-third that of previous starting systems, and Super e-Tensioner for tensioning the blade without any tools. The G3200EZ is equipped with a 14-inch bar and an anti-vibration system, and carries a one year commercial warranty. Contact RedMax, Komatsu Zenoah America Inc. at 1-800-291-8251, ext 214; or visit www.redmax.com.

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Samson’s newest lightweight climbing line - Velocity HOT!

Samson has developed an innovative new product, Velocity HOT, a new variation of its popular Velocity launched just one year ago. The original Velocity was designed to meet the arborist industry’s need for a lightweight climbing line. The same line is now available in a high-visibility red, orange and white color combination. Research shows that this color combination is one of the easiest to spot in a tree. The original line (now named Velocity COOL) and its new counterpart, Velocity HOT, are easy to use, easy to splice and feel broken-in right out of the bag thanks to Samson’s “Sure Grip” technology. Samson representatives say Sure Grip technology gives the rope a truly broken-in feel and bridges the gap from brand new to the point where the rope is physically broken-in. Last year, several of the top climbers used Velocity at the International Tree Climbing Championships, even though it had just been released to the market the week before. As a matter of fact, Velocity was used in both the 2004 Men’s and Women’s Foot Locking Championships to set a new world record in each class. Contact Samson at (360) 384-4669 or via www.samosonrope.com.

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Industry Almanac

Events & Seminars

**September 8-10, 2005**
Lake States Logging Congress
Marquette, MI
Contact: (715) 282-5828; www.timberpa.com

**September 14, 2005**
Midland Park, NJ
Contact: Matt Simons (609) 625-6021; www.njarboristssisa.com

**September 15-16, 2005**
Michigan Forestry & Park Assoc. Arboriculture Conf.
Midland Center for the Arts, Midland, MI
Contact: www.mlpa-isa.org; mlpa@acd.net; (517) 337-4999

**September 17, 2005**
Michigan Tree Climbing Championship & Kids Climb
Emerson Park, Midland, MI
Contact: www.mlpa-isa.org; mlpa@acd.net; (517) 337-4999

**September 22-23, 2005**
Multi-State Plant Materials Conference
Oklahoma State University
Holiday Inn, Stillwater, OK
Contact: Mike Schnelle (405) 744-7361, mike.schnelle@okstate.edu

**September 22, 2005**
Organic Options in Tree Care workshop
The Connecticut Tree Protective Association
Burlington, CT
Contact: Info – Rose Hiskes (860) 683-4977; Registration – Rita Smith (203) 484-2512

**September 23-28, 2005**
ISA Pacific Northwest Annual Conference
Victoria, BC
Contact: ISA (503) 874-8263, or Brian Fisher (250) 755-4722; brian.fisher@bchydro.com

**September 23, 2005**
Southwest Ohio Urban Forestry Seminar
Ohio Chapter ISA & ODNR Division of Forestry
Winton Centre, Cincinnati, OH
Contact: (216) 544-4737; ohiochapterisa.org

**September 29, 2005**
2005 MGIA Snow Management Conference and Expo
Northville Hills Golf Club, Northville, MI
Contact: MGIA at (248) 646-4992; www.landscape.org

**September 29-Oct. 1, 2005**
ISA/RMC Annual Conference and Workshop
University Park Hilton, Fort Collins, CO
Contact: ISA Office (303) 756-1815

**October 6-8, 2005**
California Urban Forests Council’s Annual Meeting
Embassy Suites, Lompoc, CA
Contact: Cindy McCall (805)736-8733, cindy_mccall@hotmail.com

**October 6, 2005**
Solving Ornamental Plant Problems (not caused by pathogens and insects)
MGIA Office, Bingham Farms, MI
Contact: MGIA at (248) 646-4992; www.landscape.org

**October 10, 2005**
Compliance 2005!
Cannon Equipment, Shelby Twp., MI
Contact: MGIA at (248) 646-4992; www.landscape.org

**October 13-14, 2005**
Tenn. Urban Forestry Council 14th Annual Conference
Germantown Center, Germantown TN
Contact: Jen Smith (615) 352-8985; tufc@comcast.net

**October 14, 2005**
2005 Perennial Plant Conference
Scott Arboretum of Swarthmore College
Swarthmore, PA
Contact: (610) 388-1000 Ext. 507; www.longwoodgardens.org

**October 14-16, 2005**
International Lawn, Garden & Power Equipment Expo
Louisville, KY
Contact: 1-800-558-8767 or (812) 949-9200; expo.mow.org

**October 15, 2005**
Tennessee Urban Forestry Council 7th Annual Tree Climbing Conference
Memphis Botanic Garden, Memphis, TN
Contact: Jennifer Smith (615) 352-8985; tfuc@comast.net

**Oct. 18-19, 2005**
Illinois Arborist Association/ISA 23rd Annual Conference & Tradeshow
Holiday Inn, Tinley Park, IL
Contact: April Toney (877) 617-8887; iaa@wi.rr.com

**October 20-21, 2005**
Autopsy & Dissection Lab with Dr. Alex Shigo
Portsmouth, NH
Contact: Kathy Brickley; Northeast Shade Tree (603) 436-4804; 1-800-841-2498.

**October 21-22, 2005**
Plant Biology Workshop
Frogmore, SC
Contact: Don Marx 1-888-290-2640; dmarn@planthealthcare.com

**October 21-23, 2005**
NJ Shade Tree Fed. 80th Annual Meeting
Hilton Philadelphia/Cherry Hill, Cherry Hills, NJ
Contact: Bill Potter (732) 246-3210; njshadetreefederation@worldnet.att.net

**October 27, 2005**
Plant Diagnostics: Case Studies and Timely Updates
Bingham Center, Bingham Farms, MI
Contact: MGIA, (248) 646-4992; www.landscape.org

**November 9, 2005**
Tree Care Workshop
Oklahoma State University, Stillwater
Contact: Mike Schnelle (405) 744-7361, mike.schnelle@okstate.edu

**November 9-11, 2005**
TCI EXPO
Tree Care Industry Association
Columbus Convention Center, Columbus, OH
Contact: Diane Morgan 1-800-733-2622, Ext. 106; morgan@treecareindustry.org; or www.tcia.org

**November 15-17, 2005**
Empire State Green Industry Show
(formerly NYSTA Turf & Grounds Expo)
Rochester Riverside Convention Center, Rochester, NY
Contact: Jill Cyr, (518) 783-1229; 1-800-873-9973; nysta@nysta.org; www.nysta.org

**November 15-17, 2005**
Penn State Golf Turf Conference
Nittany Lion Inn, State College, PA
Contact: (814) 238-2402; busufc@paturf.org; www.paturf.org

**December 4-7, 2005**
2005 ASCA Annual Conference
Palm Springs, CA
Contact: Angela Corio, ASCA (301) 947-0483

**Dec. 6-8, 2005**
Ohio Turfgrass Conference & Show
Greater Columbus Convention Center, Columbus, OH
Contact: 1-888-683-3445; info@ohioturfgrass.org; www.ohioturfgrass.org

**December 7, 2005**
ISA Cert. Exam & General Membership Meeting
Frelinghuysen Arboretum, Morris town, NJ
Contact: Matt Simons (609) 625-6021; www.NJArboristsISA.com
December 8-9, 2005
Autopsy & Dissection Lab with Dr. Alex Shigo
Portsmouth, NH
Contact: Kathy Brickley, Northeast Shade Tree (603) 436-4804; 1-800-841-2498.

January 26, 2006
Advanced Landscape Plant IPM PHC Short Course
University of Maryland, College Park, MD
Contact: Debbie Wilhoit, (301) 405-3913; debrar@umd.edu; www.raupplab.umd.edu/Conferences/AdvLandscape

February 12-16
2006 Winter Management Conference
Tree Care Industry Association
St. Kitts, West Indies
Contact: Deb Cyr 1-800-733-2622, Ext. 106; cyr@treecareindustry.org; or www.tcia.org

February 21-24, 2006
2006 ASCA Consulting Academy, Atlanta, GA
Contact: Angela Corio, ASCA (303) 947-0483

January 8-10, 2006
WESTERN 2006 Annual Meeting & Trade Show
Western Nursery & Landscape Association
Overland Park Convention Center, Overland Park, KS
Contact: 1-816-233-1481; info@wnla.org; www.wnla.org

January 9-11, 2006
2006 GLTE Expo & MFPA Winter Conference
Deloss Place, Grand Rapids, MI
Contact: mfpa@acd.net or call (571) 337-4999

January 10-12, 2006
Eastern PA Turf Conference and Trade Show
Valley Forge Convention Center, King of Prussia, PA
Contact: (814) 238-2402; busofc@paturf.org; www.paturf.org

January 11, 2006
ISA Cet. Arborist, Util. Spec. Tree Wkr, Muni. exams
During the ISA Winter Conference
Deloss Place, Grand Rapids MI
Contact: (571) 337-4999; mfpa@acd.net; or (217) 355-9411; cert@ise-arbor.com; www.isa-arbor.com

January 11-13, 2006
7TH Annual CSRA Ornamental Tree & Turf Seminar
Julian Smith Casino, Augusta GA
Contact: (706) 854-0926; www.empiretree.com

January 25-27, 2006
Iowa Nursery & Landscape Assoc. Conv.& Trade Show
Polk County Convention Complex, Des Moines, IA
Contact: (816) 233-1481; info@iowanla.org

January 26, 2006
Northeast PA Turf Conference and Trade Show
The Woodlands Inn & Resort, Wilkes-Barre, PA
Contact: (814) 238-2402; busofc@paturf.org; www.paturf.org

Jan. 29-31, 2006
41st Annual Shade Tree Symposium
Penn-Del Chapter of ISA
Lancaster Host Resort, Lancaster, PA
Contact: E. Wertz (215) 795-0411; www.penndelisa.org

January 31-February 2, 2006
New England Grows!
Boston Convention & Exhibition Ctr, Boston MA
Contact: Mary Simard (508) 653.3009; www.NEGrows.org

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Day of service in D.C. - renewal & remembrance

By Peter Gerstenberger

On July 18, highly professional arborist crews from TCIA member firms in the greater Washington, D.C., area distinguished themselves and drew attention to professional arboriculture in service projects at Arlington National Cemetery and Historic Congressional Cemetery.

The simultaneous events were part of Professional Landcare Network’s (PLANET’s) 10th annual Renewal & Remembrance, an environmental enhancement project held in conjunction with its Legislative Day on the Hill. TCIA partnered with PLANET and the American Nursery & Landscape Association (ANLA) in the conference for the first time this year and was invited to organize crews for the service project.

Most people are familiar with Arlington, the most well known national military cemetery in the U.S. and one of the most popular sightseeing destinations in Washington, D.C.

Historic Congressional Cemetery has a distinguished history. In 1816, the cemetery set aside 100 burial sites for the interment of members of Congress. Other sites were donated to or purchased by the government, eventually totaling 924. Generally, those sites were used for the interment of officials who died in office. Other dignitaries lie in private plots scattered throughout the cemetery.

In 1835, a receiving vault was built to hold remains until either the grave site could be prepared or transportation arranged to another city. The bodies of Presidents William Henry Harrison, John Quincy Adams, and Zachary Taylor and First Ladies Dolly Madison and Louisa Adams were held here pending removal to their home states.

Journals and newspaper articles of the 19th century hold accounts of funeral processions from the Capitol, which conclude at the Public Vault.

In all, 38 arborist volunteers provided an estimated $24,000 worth of services at the two cemetery sites in the span of five hours.

Crews from Arborcare, Inc., R-TEC Treecare and Wood Acres Tree Service fertilized numerous trees throughout the historic congressional site. The Wood Acres technician treated two large hollies for scale. R-TEC provided a highly qualified consultant to tour the historic congressional site and help prioritize future tree care to its caretakers.

Crews from Davey Tree Expert’s northern Virginia office and two crews from R-TEC worked steadily in the blazing heat at Historic Congressional to prune a three-block stretch of trees overhanging a perimeter fence and to remove a large, hazardous pin oak looming over monuments at Historic Congressional.

In all, 38 arborist volunteers provided an estimated $24,000 worth of services at the two cemetery sites in the span of five hours.

Peter Gerstenberger is senior advisor for safety, compliance & standards for the Tree Care Industry Association.
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The quiet of my holiday weekend at home was broken by the buzz of a chain saw just a few doors down. I knew that sound, someone was getting tree work. As I peered down the block I was disappointed to see it was not one of our trucks working at my neighbor’s house. Nope, a renegade crew. No logos on the improvised chipper truck and the chipper sure looked like one of those they carry at the local rental yard.

I looked closely to see if I recognized any of the four crew members – I didn’t. None of the crew members had hard hats, hearing protection or eye protection. One man did have safety glasses on but I suspect he was wearing them as sunglasses – they were mirrored and looked really cool.

As I went back to work on my garden I thought about why my neighbor hadn’t hired us to do that work. Had we even looked at it for him or were we just thought of as too expensive and exclusive for his small property? Could it be that he was looking for some guys to do the work as cheaply as possible and for cash? I know my neighbor a little bit and the latter is most likely why he had these guys on his property.

“Well, his misfortune,” I thought to myself. “I hope those guys screw up his trees.” As I pulled more weeds I thought about the total lack of safety just a few doors away.

“Doesn’t this homeowner realize the risk? I can guarantee you this renegade crew is not carrying insurance. I would be surprised if they were carrying driver’s licenses! Oh well, this will teach him” I laughed to myself.

Something was eating at me and it wasn’t mosquitoes as I tried to go back to work. Then it hit me. I had made a promise to myself that I would not turn my head to unsafe tree work – even if it wasn’t one of our teams. A few months ago another neighbor a few blocks away had hired another renegade tree crew to do some work on a Sunday. As I drove by I saw in horror a small boy, no more than 12, picking up branches and hauling them to the chipper while someone was still dropping branches from above. My son was going to be playing baseball, while this little boy might be killed. The image of the young boy helping his family earn a living while risking his life still sticks with me today. I should not have kept on driving, shaking my head in disbelief and praying that the child did not get hurt while helping his family make some money on a Sunday. I should have stopped and offered to help.

This memory shook me out of my holiday mode and the self-righteousness that often builds in tree people who think we know best and practice our trade with perfection. I couldn’t continue with my day and let these four guys risk their lives without saying something. I had to try. I went to my car and pulled out my PPE. In the garage I found an older helmet with outdated logos on it, but still in good shape.
I walked down the block with my safety gear in hand. I wondered what they would say to me and what my escape path would be should they get violent. I haven’t practiced Tae Kwon Do in a few years, but I am still pretty fast.

I stood in my neighbor’s driveway watching the scene while holding out two hard hats and four pairs of safety glasses, almost like a street vendor looking to sell his wares. When I caught one of their eyes I said “good morning.” They spoke good English, smiled and also said good morning. I noticed they were looking directly at the hard hats in my hands.

“Can I offer you some safety protection today? Hard hats and safety glasses?” I asked. One man asked me how much I wanted for them. I told him it was a great deal: free today if he would give them back when finished. He looked surprised but not that puzzled. Another man walked up and said thanks, but “we have all that stuff in the truck.”

“It won’t do you much good there and I would sure hate to see you lose an eye during this holiday weekend,” I replied.

They smiled, said thanks, but insisted that they were OK.

They wouldn’t take my stuff but I had accomplished what I had set out to do. I tried and I made the effort to impact their day to make it safer. You can bet they all talked about that interaction later. Maybe I was written off as some kooky guy with a bunch of safety glasses and a couple of hard hats, but maybe somewhere in their heads an idea stuck. Maybe one of them will think twice about putting on PPE.”

There are many miles ahead but it all starts with the belief that we don’t have to accept unsafe behaviors and accidents as the normal part of doing business. Tree care can be accomplished without people having to get hurt. We can have a zero-injury culture but we first have to believe that it is not only right but that it is possible. It all begins with the belief that it is possible. I believe that it is possible.

Scott Jamieson is president & CEO of The Care of Trees.

“She wouldn’t take my stuff but I had accomplished what I had set out to do. I tried and I made the effort to impact this crew’s day to make it safer. You can bet they all talked about that interaction later. Maybe I was written off as some kooky guy with a bunch of safety glasses and a couple of hard hats, but maybe somewhere in their heads an idea stuck. Maybe one of them will think twice about putting on PPE.”

For me, I learned a lesson that if I am going to make any difference around safety in my company or in our industry I can’t do it by wishing or complaining. I must become – as all the leaders in this industry must become – articulate advocates of safety all the time. We must care enough about each other to make that approach and offer a safer alternative.

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Here is our message to current owners of successful tree care companies who now need to exit their business: “Your company is your life. You’ve spent late nights at the office, worried about sales, did your best to find the right people, and now you realize you can’t go on forever. There are no family members to follow in your footsteps and you don’t really want to sell to a larger corporation, but what are your options? Should you sell your business to another company and hope for the best, or just close up shop and pocket the liquidation value of the company? What about the employees and the business itself? It’s a hard decision, but you have options.”

Let us suggest an option that is growing more and more popular – an ESOP, or employee stock ownership plan. An ESOP is a tax-qualified, deferred compensation benefit plan that, under U.S. tax and labor laws, makes the employees of a company a beneficial owner of stock in that company. ESOPs are unique, as ESOPs are the only tax qualified deferred compensation plan, or a so-called ERISA plan, required by U.S. law to invest primarily in the securities of the sponsoring employer.

Background

ESOPs date back to the early 1950s when Dr. Louis Kelso, a lawyer by training and widely considered to be the father of ESOPs, developed the idea from his belief that the capitalist system should create more owners and therefore be stronger and more permanent. During the next several years, Kelso helped to establish ESOPs in a number of companies. It was not until the 1970s, when he attracted the help of former Senator Russell Long of Louisiana, did the idea of an ESOP really begin to take shape. Senator Long, a senior member and then chairman of the Senate Committee on Finance, began to champion the cause of ESOPs on Capitol Hill.

In 1974, Congress passed the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA), which provided the first specific framework for ESOPs as a qualified plan under the Internal Revenue Code. The law standardized the rules for retirement plans in general and also provided exemptions for ESOPs, recognized that ESOPs may borrow money to finance stock acquisitions, and required that ESOPs be designed to invest primarily in employer stock. In the U.S. today, there are approximately 11,500 ESOPs in place, covering over 10 million employee owners.

ESOPs are established for many reasons:

- a motivational tool for employees
- compensation or an employee benefit
- succession plan that permits the long-time owners to cash out without destroying the very company that was a lifetime of work
- finance expansion
- make an acquisition
- spin off a division
- take a company private.

Since an ESOP can borrow money, either from an existing owner or from a bank, it is unique among ERISA plans.
How it works

Where does the money come from for the ESOP to pay the exiting owner? Here’s the basic idea: The owner sells a percentage of his or her company to an ESOP, which is legally a trust holding the shares for the benefit of the employees. Either the ESOP can borrow money directly from a third party lender, such as a bank, or the company can borrow money, and, in turn, lend it to the ESOP to purchase the departing owner’s shares.

Usually the company borrows the money, as the lender’s collateral is limited if lending to an ESOP. In some instances, the transaction is “seller financed,” with the selling shareholder taking a note from the company and/or ESOP for the price of the shares. In the case of borrowed money buying the shares, the shares are held in a suspense account in the ESOP trust, and released to the employee’s individual accounts as the stock acquisition loan is paid off. The company repays the loan by making contributions to the ESOP, which in turn pays the loan. When the loan is paid off, the employees will own the percentage of the company represented by the number of shares transferred in the sale of the stock to the ESOP.

Over time, employees become vested and can cash out when they retire, die, become disabled, and/or terminated. Distribution schedules are set up differently in each company.

Tax benefits

There are a number of tax incentives Congress has enacted to encourage exiting owners to sell stock to an ESOP. As with all tax qualified employee benefit plans, contributions to ESOPs are tax deductible to the sponsoring corporation, within certain limits.

The employer may deduct contributions to the ESOP that are used to repay not only the interest on the loan, but the principal as well. This makes the ESOP an attractive form of debt financing from a cash flow perspective. Each year the company can deduct contributions of amounts up to 25 percent of covered payroll, plus interest, making both principal and interest deductible.

Under certain circumstances, dividends on ESOP stock may be deductible if used to pay ESOP debt or if passed through to employees in cash. Most attractive, the seller of stock to an ESOP may defer paying capital gains tax on the sale proceeds if the ESOP holds at least 30 percent of the corporate stock after the close of the sale, and if the proceeds are reinvested in stocks or bonds of operating U.S. corporations. If the seller to the ESOP sells the securities acquired with the ESOP sale proceeds, then the basis of the stock sold to the ESOP determines the capital gains tax that the seller then owes. But, if the seller’s estate gains title to the replacement securities acquired with the ESOP sale proceeds, then the heirs get the stepped-up basis and no capital gains tax is ever paid on the original capital gain.

Please note these benefits are for corporations that are so-called “C” corporations, and the deferred cap gain is only for privately held C corporations.

Many tree care companies are “S” corporations whose stock and ESOP are not eligible for all of the C corporation ESOP tax benefits. But many believe the S corporation ESOP company has an even better tax benefit – the ESOP share of the S corporation’s income has no current federal tax imposed, and any tax is paid by the
Value of employee ownership

Why is an ESOP a valuable employee benefit? First and foremost, it makes employees beneficial owners in the company. It is an effective recruitment and retention tool, and research has proven over and over that employee ownership builds successful, competitive companies, and creates equitable wealth for employees. Studies have shown that employee-owned companies pay better benefits, have twice the retirement income, and pay higher wages than their non-ESOP counterparts. Giving employees a significant stake in the company can improve employee attitudes towards the company and employees often feel their opinions are more valued and useful. According to a study by The ESOP Association, 75 percent of its members reported that motivation and productivity increased as a result of the ESOP. The same study also indicated that ESOP implementation resulted in more information sharing, communications, and involvement in the decision-making process for employees.

In a survey conducted by the Employee Ownership Foundation in 2004, an overwhelming percentage of companies, 88 percent, declared that creating employee ownership through an ESOP was a good business decision that has helped the company, while another two-thirds indicated that the ESOP improved overall productivity.

Consider this

All good plans have at least several provisions that can make a business owner hesitate. In the case of an ESOP, there has to be a clear understanding with the outgoing owner that once more than 50 percent of the company shares are purchased, the company no longer belongs primarily to him or her, but to the ESOP trust, which is to be managed for the benefit of the employees. But, please note, the law governing ESOPs has no mandate about who is the ESOP trustee, nor does the law govern who may be on the Board of an ESOP company. Thus, many sellers to an ESOP still play a major role, even in a 50 percent plus ESOP company, in guiding the company’s business direction. (Issues of corporate actions impacting the value of the stock in an ESOP do take on less significance in a less that 50 percent ESOP.) A company also needs sufficient profits to
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83 GMC 7000: 366 gas engine, 5 spd, 28,000 lb GVW, with 65 ft HI-RANGER 6TDI-65PBI bucket, 2 man basket, joystick controls, 16 ft steel flatbed, $14,500.

97 VOLVO WG64: CAT 3306, 300 hp, 8 speed +lo, 58,000 lb GVW, with 7 ton EFFER 150-4S knuckleboom, 18 ft flatbed, $39,500.

98 FORD F800: Cummins, 230 hp, 6 spd, 33 GVW, 14½ ton TEREX TC2963 crane, 113 ft hook ht, cap alert / shutdown, vanch, 18 ft wood flat, $52,500.

2001 INT 4800 4X4: 210 hp, Allison 4 spd auto, 2 spd transfer, AWD, 8074 lb GVW, 42 ft ALTEC L42A bucket, joystick controls, 12½ ft utility body, $54,500.

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97 VOLVO WG64: CAT 3006, 300 hp, 8 speed +lo, 58,000 lb GVW, with 20 ft steel flatbed / dump, $39,500.

98 FORD F900: 7.8L diesel, 13 spd, 48,000 lb GVW, with 12½ ton JLG 1250BT crane, 77 ft hook ht, 20 ft steel flatbed, $29,500.

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Why is an ESOP a valuable employee benefit? First and foremost, it makes employees beneficial owners in the company. It is an effective recruitment and retention tool, and research has proven over and over that employee ownership builds successful, competitive companies, and creates equitable wealth for employees.

make the ESOP feasible, and most feel there should be at least 20 employees to have a payroll sufficient to support ESOP financing.

On the other hand, years of experience in the real world of ESOPs has proven that openness, inclusiveness and employee participation coupled with employee ownership through an ESOP make ownership the key to building a company that will “knock the socks off” a company’s competition.

And, there are other issues to consider: Setting up an ESOP is a buy-sell transaction governed by a special set of laws under ERISA. To dot all the “i’s” and cross all the “t’s” to establish an ESOP, and to operate the ESOP, will require buying more time from professionals than setting up similar, but less complex, ERISA plans.

Finally, any private company setting up an ESOP has to anticipate the company will have to convert an employee’s ESOP stock to cash if he or she retires, becomes disabled, and/or is terminated from employment for whatever reason. This “repurchase obligation” can become very large for the ESOP, because most ESOP companies are very successful with strong share value growth.

But, for thousands of companies, especially privately-owned companies, the ESOP is the perfect solution to cashing out the retiring owner, while saving jobs and the company.

Joseph Redman is executive vice president of Lewis Tree Service. Leah Mins is materials manager of Toll Company, and Michael Keeling is president of The ESOP Association. For more information about ESOPs and employee ownership, visit The ESOP Association’s Web site at www.esopassociation.org.

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Dr. Lakshmi Sridharan

Fall is the most wonderful season of the year when the foliage of trees, shrubs and vines paints the landscape. Across many areas of the United States there is a spectacular display of autumn colors. However, in the Northeast corridor, Southeast along the Appalachian Mountain chain, and in much of the Midwest, nature puts forth the most striking display of vibrant colors. As arborists, you can enhance a landscape’s beauty by keeping foliage coloring in mind when deciding on plantings.

Deciduous broad-leaved trees (oaks, maples, beeches, sweetgums, yellow-poplars, dogwoods, hickories) and others that shed their leaves in the autumn display the most spectacular show in the autumn. Photo courtesy of Lakshmi Sridharan.

From September to December, depending upon weather conditions, one can enjoy fall colors of foliage across the nation. Each plant species has its own unique foliage color that varies from year to year.

Role of pigments in the leaves

Why do leaves change color in autumn? Pigments in the leaf, length of night, and weather have their own impact on the dramatic change of colors in the foliage. The green pigment chlorophyll is the predominant pigment in a leaf. Chlorophyll is the
photosynthetic center of a leaf. Chlorophyll absorbs light energy from sun, and converts light energy into chemical energy for synthesis of carbohydrates (starch, sugar) from carbon dioxide and water. Plants use carbohydrates to carry out all other physiological activities such as synthesis of proteins, lipids, nucleic acids, etc., respiration, reproduction, etc. Plants in temperate zones store sugar in their cells during dormant periods. In addition to chlorophyll, a leaf has additional pigments, carotenoids (produce yellow, orange, and brown colors) and anthocyanins (produce red, blue, or violet) that are not as predominant as chlorophyll. Unlike chlorophyll, carotenoids and anthocyanins are water-soluble. Both chlorophyll and carotenoids are present in the chloroplasts of leaf cells throughout the growing season, whereas anthocyanins (with a few exceptions) are produced in the autumn in response to bright light and excess plant sugars within leaf cells.

During the growing season, as plants continuously produce chlorophyll to replace the broken down chlorophyll, the leaves appear green. As the seasons change and the length of daylight changes with them, the biochemical activities of plants are affected dramatically. As the warmer day length shortens and the cooler night length increases in the autumn, chlorophyll production slows, then stops. Eventually all the chlorophyll is destroyed. This leads to the unmasking of carotenoids and anthocyanins that are present in the leaf and then display of various colors in the foliage.

Fall color is characteristic of particular species. Maples of different species have foliage of different colors even during the growing season. In autumn, red maple turns brilliant scarlet; sugar maple, orange-red; and black maple, glowing yellow. Striped maple becomes almost colorless. Oaks turn red, brown, or russet; hickories, golden bronze; aspen and yellow-poplar, golden yellow; dogwood, purplish red; beech, light tan; and sourwood and blackgum; black tupelo, crimson.

Not all trees change colors at the same time. Sourwood in southern forests can become colorful in late summer (late August), while all other species elsewhere are still vigorously green. The process continues well into October, at which time these trees are dark to bright red with flat sprays of small green fruits providing a colorful contrast. Oaks put on their colors in late autumn long after other species have already shed their leaves. Genetic differences in species determine the timing of color changes in foliage.

Weather conditions prior to and during the breakdown of chlorophyll have a tremendous effect on the amount and brilliance of foliage colors. Temperature and moisture are the main influences.

Weather on fall foliage colors

Weather conditions prior to and during the breakdown of chlorophyll have a tremendous effect on the amount and brilliance of foliage colors. Temperature and moisture are the main influences.

During warm, sunny days and cool, crisp but not freezing nights, leaves produce an abundance of sugars; cool nights prevent the downward movement of sugars out of the leaf. When such conditions continue for weeks, the leaf produces anthocyanin pigments (reds, purples, and crimson), hence is the most spectacular display of vivid colors under these conditions. However, the amount of carotenoids remains more or less the same all through the year, and therefore the yellow and gold colors remain fairly constant from year to year.

Soil moisture levels that vary from year to year are another important factor in autumn colors. Fluctuations in weather conditions and soil moisture are responsible for color variations from year to year. High temperatures in fall lower the intensity of colors. A warm wet spring, favorable summer weather, and warm sunny fall days
with cool nights produce the most brilliant colors. A late spring or a severe summer drought can delay the onset of fall color by a few weeks.

**Trees for color**

American mountain ash (*Sorbus Americana*, maximum height 30 feet, zones 3-8) have a spectacular display of yellow foliage.

Quaking aspen (*Populus tremuloides*, zones 1-6) have golden-yellow fall foliage. Aspen is the dominant fall foliage tree of western North America. Aspens are found from Newfoundland and Alaska in the North as far south as central Mexico. Canada and the northern United States have more aspens than anywhere else in North America. The foliage of aspens shimmers or “quakes” when there is a breeze, hence the name. Aspen are 20 to 50 feet tall with a spread of 10-30 feet.

American beech (*Fagus grandiflora*, zones 3-9) are natives of eastern North America. They have golden-bronze fall foliage. These trees grow to a height of 50 to 80 feet and a width of 40 to 80 feet. They have smooth, silvery-gray bark, an added attraction for growing these gorgeous trees. Beech trees display striking foliage not only in fall, but in spring and summer, as well. Even in winter, they retain their leaves, which are tan in winter. The edible fruit of this fine fall foliage tree ripens in fall and has an oily-sweet flavor.

European beech (*Fagus sylvatica*, zones 4-7) are native to the British Isles, continental Europe and western Asia. Their horizontal branching pattern provide a landscape with four-season interest. The fall foliage of European beech is similar to that of American beech.

“Tricolor” beech trees (*Fagus sylvatica “Roseomarginata,”* hardy to zone 4,) bear exquisite variegated foliage throughout the growing season. “Tricolor” has cream, rose, and purple leaves. The purple leaves are bordered by rose and light pink. Unlike American or European beech, “Tricolor” is smaller (30 feet by 30 feet) and prefers shade to sun.

Dogwoods produce spectacular blooms in spring and colorful foliage in autumn. Japanese, or “kousa” dogwood (*Cornus kousa*, 15 feet tall and 30 feet wide, zones 5-8,) have white, star-shaped blooms late in spring. “Satomi” kousa dogwood...
**Cornus kousa Satomi** bears deep pink blossoms in spring. Fall foliage is purplish-red. The red berries attract birds in winter.

American flowering dogwood tree (**Cornus florida**, zones 5-9)

“Cherokee Chief” flowering dogwoods (**Cornus florida Cherokee Chief**) have an interesting horizontal branching pattern, and grow to a height of 20 to 25 feet and a spread of 12 to 15 feet. The tree produces red blooms in spring, and foliage of reddish-bronze in autumn.

The river birch (**Betula nigra**, zones 4-9), indigenous in the eastern United States, grows to a height of 40 to 70 feet with a spread of 25 to 35 feet. Fall foliage color is yellow. River birch tolerate summer heat better than paper birch trees.

The paper birch (**Betula papyrifera**, zones 2-6) has a lovely “paper” white bark. Its fall foliage color is yellow. The weeping birch (**Betula pendula “Youngii,”** zones 3-9, 6- to 12 feet tall) is a dwarf variety that has a white, shedding bark, yellow fall foliage, and an interesting form with a downwardly growing weeping branches. The attractive, non-white yellow birch (**Betula alleghaniensis**, zones 4-7), with a height of 60 to 80 feet and a spread of about 30 feet, has yellow fall foliage. Yellow birch derive their common name not from their foliage but from their golden yellow bark.

Oaks acquire their fall colors later in autumn than maples. Long after maples are bare, oaks still retain their colorful foliage. Foliage of pin oaks (**Quercus palustris**, zones 4-8) becomes deep red in fall. Pin oaks are huge, often reaching a height of 70 feet with an almost equal spread. White oaks (**Quercus alba**, zones 3-9) have light-colored bark. Foliage is reddish-brown in autumn. White oaks often reach 80 feet tall and 80 feet wide. Northern red oaks (**Quercus rubra**, zones 4-8) grow to 75 feet with a similar spread. They bear dark red fall foliage, hence the species name rubra. Sawtooth oaks (**Quercus acutissima**, zones 5-9) turn yellow in the autumn and, eventually, golden brown. Mature trees are about 40 to 50 feet, with a spread greater than that.

Maples are known for their beautiful foliage. The “Bloodgood” Japanese maple (**Acer palmatum “Bloodgood,”** 20 feet by 20 feet), “Crimson Queen” Japanese maple (**Acer palmatum dissectum**, 10 feet by 10 feet) and Red Japanese maple (**Acer palmatum dissectum**, 10 feet by 10 feet) and Red Japanese
Maple (Acer palmatum Atropurpureum, 30 feet by 20 feet) display reddish-purple leaves all summer. During fall the leaves get brighter red. Japanese maples grow in zones 5-8. Acer palmatum dissectum is graceful with pleasing weeping branches and dissected leaves. Cut leaf green Japanese maples (Acer palmatum dissectum “Filigree”) are compact, and 4 to 6 feet tall with a spread of 6 to 9 feet; the dissected leaves are green in summer, turning golden in fall.

Shrubs for fall colors

A landscape with shrubs and vines in addition to trees will look more colorful and interesting. “Rudy Haag” Burning Bush, Sumac, Fothergilla, “Tor” Spirea, and “Blackhaw” Viburnum, “Heavenly Bamboo” Nandina, and many more shrubs are available for enhancing colors in the landscape.

Burning bush (Euonymus alatus, zones 4-8) “Rudy Haag” has exceptional qualities to grow anywhere, as it is drought tolerant, and compact (3 to 5 feet tall and 3 to 5 feet wide). While it can grow in shade, it has spectacular vivid red colors when grown in sunny locations with sufficient watering.

The colorful lanceolate serrate leaves of varieties of sumac such as “staghorn” sumac (Rhus typhina, zones 4-8, 18 to 35 feet tall and 5 to 9 feet wide) and the smooth sumac (Rhus glabra, zones 2-10, 10 feet tall) provide fall colors ranging from red or maroon to gold.

Fothergilla (Fothergilla major, zones 4-8, 6 to 10 feet tall and 5 to 9 feet wide) has white fragrant flowers in spring. The fall foliage colors are yellow, orange, and scarlet.

The shrub “Tor” spirea (Spiraea betulifolia “Tor,” zones 4-5, 2 to 3 feet tall and wide) has dark green foliage in summer that changes to purple to reddish-bronze to crimson in fall. Bluish-black berries are attractive in fall.

Oak leaf hydrangea (Hydrangea quercifolia, native to southeastern United States, zone 5, 4 to 6 feet tall and wide) is a gorgeous plant with huge inflorescences bearing white flowers in summer that turn pinkish-brown in fall. Its oak leaf-like foliage turns purple, orange and red in the fall.

Nandina dometica (zones 6-10, 4 to 8 feet tall and 2 to 4 feet wide), popularly known as heavenly bamboo, is not a true bamboo. The leaves and berries are orange to reddish in autumn.

Red chokeberry (Aronia arbutifolia, 6 to 10 feet tall and 3 to 5 feet wide) has white flowers in early spring. The glossy red berries of summer turn deeper, almost to purple in autumn providing interesting fall color.

Viking black chokeberry (Aronia melanocarpa “Viking,” 3 to 5 feet tall and 3 to 5 feet wide) bears white flowers in May with dark green foliage. The foliage turns dark red in autumn. The blackish-purple berries attract birds into the landscape.

Vines for fall colors

Virginia creeper (Parthenocissus quinquefolia, zones 3-9), native in the eastern U.S. shows brilliant colors in fall, ranging from red to burgundy.

Autumn is the season when many of your clients look proudly on their landscapes. It is also the season they notice fall colors in their neighborhoods. This month may be a good time to discuss planting a combination of trees and shrubs to enhance their landscape next year.

Lakshmi Sridharan is a scientist with a Ph.D. in molecular biology, botany and microbiology. She is author of A Practical Guide to Growing Roses Successfully, and can be reached via www.lakshmi-sridharan.com.

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Letters

Call back for beech bark disease article

Regarding the article, “A Lesson in Biodiversity: Beech Bark Disease Strays South” (June 2005 TCI magazine), I would just like to say that in my phone interview with the author, the Asian longhorn beetle came up as as one of the newer introduced pests that is a cause for concern for those of us in the northeast and midwest where it has been found. I did not say, nor did I imply, that it is a pest I have had any personal experience with. Thanks.

Dave Ropes
Tree Specialists Inc.
Holliston, Mass.

An unusual tree

I’ve been planning to send this picture to you since January 2005. After getting out of the service at the end of WWII, I joined the Davey Tree Expert Company. I had worked in tree work for a year and a half before going into service, so it wasn’t long before I got my first crew. The picture enclosed was sent by me to the Davey Bulletin (reproduced above and at right) in 1946, I believe.

I believe that the tree in this picture would be classified as an unusual tree. You might say “a tree trimmers nightmare.”

Noah J Green
Noah J. Green Tree Service
Savannah, Ga.

Two Trunks Unite To Form Freak Tree

The picture of this unusual formation was sent by Noah Green from the Daily News published in Greensboro, N. C., from if we join that the tree is a tall tree which stands on top of Schoolhouse Mountain on the west side of Highway 123 in Caldwell County, N. C. At the base, the two trunks are 7 feet 7 inches apart. At a point 3 feet up from the base, each trunk is over 7 feet in circumference. The union is roughly 30 feet above the ground. The height of the entire tree from ground to top is about 100 feet, and the tree appears to have been killed at one time. How the tree grew to be a “Siamese” is known only to Mother Nature herself. However, there is a legend told concerning it and the Indians, according to the clipping. At the close of the war between the Iroquois and Cherokee Indians, it is said the Indians wanted to show they had made peace, and finding the two tall trees, tied the tops of them together as if in friendly handshake. Thus, as the legend goes, the tree grew into one.

The age of the tree cannot be determined. A Baptist minister, who is the best he can deduce from the tree as he has been a resident of that section for many years, says he recollects the times when, as a lad, he cut hickory fields of corn and picked blackberries near the “Tree’s Fork,” and its appearance is very much now as it was then.

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Randy Owen didn’t enter the Tree Care Industry Association’s Accreditation Program to save money on his insurance. But he did.

Not too long after his company became the first in the nation to achieve TCIA Accreditation, Owen, president of Owen Tree Service, Inc. in Attica, Mich., reviewed a potential change of policy with his insurance broker. He was thrilled with the result.

Owen says he’s paying 26 percent less on his general liability and automobile insurance (plus an excess line) than his company did last year.

That’s not an an apples-to-apples comparison, says Karen Larson, who is not just Owen’s agent but also the agent endorsed by both the Michigan Forestry & Park Association and the Michigan Green Industry Association. Some of the coverage options are different from Owen’s previous policy, but even if the two policies were more closely matched, he’d have recognized savings of 10 to 17 percent, says Larson, whose Larson’s Insurance Solutions Agency, Inc. has offices in both Coldwater and Livonia, Mich.

And, Owen Tree Service is not the only tree care company to see insurance savings that can be linked to TCIA Accreditation. Erich Schneider, president of Schneider Tree Care in Greenville, S.C., says his premium has decreased for four straight years, and gives some credit for recent improvement to the accreditation process.

When his insurer – which has expertise in logging but not commercial tree care – came to do an audit of his company, Schneider had the answers to questions about best business practices, safety programs and other risk reducers.

“I could answer all of those to better than his satisfaction, because of the accreditation process,” says Schneider, whose insurance “modifier” incrementally went from a 1.0 five years ago to 0.79 this year. “It’s gotten lower every year because we follow the right procedures, and because we set the bar higher.”

The shift in premiums is not surprising to Michael J. Rook, vice president at Summit Insurance Services, Inc., of Las Vegas, Nev., with offices in East Granby, Conn. Summit’s ArborMAX Insurance program specifically caters to tree and landscape companies. Rook has been underwriting the tree care industry for 13 years, and is a supporter of the movement to set measurable standards in the industry. Summit’s ArborMAX program is the underwriter for Owen Tree Service’s policy.

Other companies may also begin seeing substantial savings in their insurance premiums once they’ve gained TCIA Accreditation, say those in the tree care and insurance industries.

To gain TCIA Accreditation, a program that went into effect in 2004, a tree care company puts policies, procedures and best business practices in place that adhere to the top standards in the industry. In doing so, it not only makes for a better-run business, but also makes for a safer business, protecting its employees and protecting itself from unintended consequences, such as accidents at a job site or on the road.

While there is no automatic insurance credit at this time, some insurers see that day coming for TCIA Accredited companies. For now, a tree care company searching for the best deal on insurance might find that being accredited makes it a more attractive potential client.

Another supporter of credentialing programs is Bob Glass, underwriting and sales
Lack of Liability Coverage Can Be a Liability

By David Rattigan

When you’re running a tree care company, how do you know whether you have the right insurance? One safe way is to work with a broker or agent who is familiar with the industry, advises Michael J. Rook, vice president at Summit Insurance Services, Inc., of East Granby, Conn. Summit’s ArborMAX Insurance program specifically caters to tree and landscape companies.

“Those are the only agents who know the coverages and exposures (that tree care companies) face every day,” he says. “We’re not a Joe Blow agency that doesn’t know a tree care account from a manufacturing account. We’re in tune with the industry, and know about coverages that another agent will have no clue about. (The agent) needs to know the (tree care) business.”

The Hartford is another underwriter with a long history with the industry.

“Arborists should insist on working with agents and insurers who know the specific needs of their industry,” says Bob Glass, underwriting and sales manager/specialty programs at The Hartford. “In particular they should look for a financially strong insurer that offers a good industry program, with a long track record insuring arborists. That insurer is much more likely to be there when you have a claim or want to renew your policy.”

“The Hartford is another underwriter with a long history with the industry. “Arborists should insist on working with agents and insurers who know the specific needs of their industry,” says Bob Glass, underwriting and sales manager/specialty programs at The Hartford. “In particular they should look for a financially strong insurer that offers a good industry program, with a long track record insuring arborists. That insurer is much more likely to be there when you have a claim or want to renew your policy.”

“An arborist insurance program should include business property and liability, but also industry-specific features such as workmanship error coverage, in case they cut down the wrong tree by mistake; herbicide and pesticide coverage, to protect the arborist if the chemicals damage plants, animals or people; and automobile pollution coverage (protection if accident ruptures a tank of pesticide and results in the pollution of sewers, waterways or groundwater). A program that automatically covers additional insured simplifies things, and provides ‘peace of mind.’ ”

In general terms, a good policy will cover general liability, property damage to a third party and workmanship error. Here’s a quick explanation of each:

**General liability:** Covers bodily injury to others. If a branch falls and strikes a pedestrian walking past, you’re covered. If the mailman trips over debris you left in his path, you’re covered.

**Property damage to a third party:** If a tree limb falls on the neighbor’s roof, pool or car, you’re covered.

**Workmanship error:** You were certain that you were supposed to cut down the big oak tree, but you were wrong. When you cut down the wrong tree, or too many trees, or the neighbor’s trees, you’re covered when the aggrieved party sues.

According to Rook, some companies will buy from agents who “don’t know the tree care business from a plumbing contractors’ business. So they’ll give you a general policy, with no frills and no special coverages,” Rook says, such as coverage for a company that owns a crane. In those cases, down the road the business owner may find himself paying off a claim himself because the company has no coverage in that area.

“Some people don’t have workmanship error (coverage),” Rook says. “They wouldn’t know it until a claim came in, and they’ve got a lawsuit, and they learn the insurance company failed to cover the claim.

In a letter to the editor in the July 2005 issue of Tree Care Industry magazine, business consultant/author Scott Cullen of Greenwich, Conn., pointed out a potential consequence that may arise for consulting arborists, or those who refer to sales or business-building calls as “consulting” calls. That change in terminology may put a company into a whole new category.

“Tree care companies typically carry General Liability (GL) insurance to cover their operations,” Cullen wrote. “Professional consultants typically carry Professional Liability (PL) or Errors & Omissions (E&O) insurance to cover consulting opinions.” A general liability policy may or may not include coverage that covers consulting opinions.

By adding consulting to the services a company offers, or by re-naming its sales calls or customer retention calls as “consulting,” a company has created another activity—one that could open it up to other potential liabilities.

Cullen continues, “Say that a tree care company decides that it seems desirable to call its marketing visits ‘consultations.’ A company arborist visits a prospective or current customer just to ‘consult.’ The arborist suggests that the trees seem healthy and safe and that the company will check back next season. No work is proposed or performed. Soon afterward one of the customer’s trees fails and the failure results in extensive property damage or serious bodily injury. The tree care company is sued. The company might be very surprised to learn that its GL policy does not cover either the value of the loss or the defense. The GL policy does not cover ‘consulting.’ ”

For that reason, Cullen recommends that a company that consults should educate itself about what its insurance needs are. His advice for consulting arborists?

“Talk to your insurance agent, talk to other insurance agents, and it probably doesn’t hurt to talk to a lawyer,” he says.

Karen Larson, an agent and president of Larson’s Insurance Solutions Agency in Michigan, says that there are other things a tree care company owner might consider when purchasing a policy. Some policies don’t provide, or charge quite a bit extra for, blanket additional insurance to cover the entities for whom a tree care company does business—its clients. Some carriers won’t cover consulting, an important but sometimes uninsured area. Some policies don’t have an herbicide/pesticide endorsement, which protects the insured from the liability of unintended consequences.

How important are those coverages? Any may prove important to cover the needs of a tree care company.

“Every single guy out there wants it, every single guy needs it, but some guys don’t know they don’t have it,” Larson says.
be a good company to insure.

“At all times, we’re looking for applicants that we can say are a better-than-average risk,” Rook explains. “To be accredited, a company will have all of those things in place, plus a business plan. (All of those) make a tree care company look more appealing to an insurance company.”

In Owen’s case, he already would have benefited from what insurers see as a “great loss history” (based on the number of claims for a company of its size), and coupled that with the proof of safety practices and procedures at his 60-plus employee company that comes as part of the TCIA Accreditation process.

“He has already made the work environment safe for the public and his employees,” says Larson, who notes that the business could document that it had been surveyed and “meets the standards acceptable for TCIA.”

Owen has looked at TCIA Accreditation as a way of making his company more attractive to both potential employees and customers, by adopting best business practices and receiving an endorsement for its focus on safety. “Hopefully, it helps with the value of the company,” Owen says.

The lowering of his insurance premium is acknowledged that the underwriter recognizes that he’s reduced his risk in several areas. “It’s helping their odds, is what it is,” Owen says.

Erich Schneider, a recent appointee to TCIA’s board of directors, is a big supporter of the program. “I’ll do everything I can to promote the Accreditation process,” he says. “I think it’s imperative for our industry to regulate ourselves beyond the status quo. We need to go forward with excellence and establish ourselves as a real industry, not the lowest common denominator. It has been presented to me that it was people who couldn’t do anything else who ended up in tree care. They couldn’t be doctors, or lawyers, so they ended up in tree care. Accreditation will help to change that.”

Insurance can be a big part of a tree care company’s overall budget, because of the mobility and physical nature of the industry. With rates on the rise for the past five years or so, it’s not surprising that companies will seek to lessen the bite of their insurance bills.

“A lot of (insurance) companies have elected not to write insurance for tree and landscaping companies, and the ones that still insure them are pretty selective about who they insure,” Rook says. “If you choose to insure a bad business, there will be more claims, you’ll pay out more losses, and from an insurance standpoint it will be less profitable.

“Worker’s compensation is one thing,” Rook adds, “but you’re also talking about general liability insurance, automobile...
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insurance, and property insurance. It is expensive, and companies that go through Accreditation and have safety programs in effect and controls in place to mitigate those losses will get better consideration and be afforded better rates and premiums than someone who doesn’t have those things in place.”

Depending on a wide range of variables (including the state, type of equipment, value of property, and more) a tree care company with a $200,000 payroll and eight to 10 vehicles is likely to pay an annual premium of $25,000 – excluding worker’s compensation insurance, which may be the same amount or much more – for auto, property, general liability and equipment coverage, Rook says, making a broad estimate.

Dave Springer, president of the programs division for the National Insurance Programs (NIP) Group of Woodbridge, N.J., says that providing an automatic credit for accredited tree care companies is something his firm is considering. The next step in that direction may come in the next few years, once underwriters are able to create a statistical link between TCIA Accreditation and a strong loss history.

“From what I can tell, if quantifiable documentation can show that an accredited organization performs better to some measure, absolutely we’d use that information in our underwriting,” says Springer, a proponent of Accreditation for both its safety and business components.

Like many in the insurance business, Springer supports the move to Accreditation, because the emphasis on better business practices and safety will increase a tree care company’s worth as a potential insurance client. “A link can definitely be seen” between good business and safety practices and reduced insurance risks, Springer says. “What I lack right now is quantifiable information.”

Mark Shipp, senior vice president of Ogilvy Hill Insurance, Santa Barbara, Calif., agrees that because Accreditation will help a business be better run, it makes it a better risk. “Those companies are ultimately your best accounts,” says Shipp, former six-year member of the TCIA board of directors. “And those are the ones who’ll receive favorable treatment by underwriters on a discretionary basis.”

Within the industry, professional tree care companies are in competition not just with the weekend handyman with a chain saw, pickup truck and (likely) no insurance, but also with other professionals. Not surprisingly, some have been quicker than others to embrace TCIA Accreditation, which establishes programs and procedures that can require extra time and effort, such as pre-inspection of a job site, employee safety training, defensive driving courses, and reviewing an applicant’s motor vehicle history.

“Whether you have three employees or 30 or 50, you should do the same things,” says Rook.

Insurance is a cyclical business, says Springer, and at this time the commercial market is “soft.” Competition is fierce, he says, driving down the price of policies 3 or 4 percent. While this might be a good time for a tree care company to review its insurance options, Springer recommends that a company with a good loss history is well-advised to compare policies and coverages every three years. “As a general practice, for any commercial exposure, a good agent should be able to do that for you,” he says.

Rook advises tree care company presidents or managers to let their insurer know about the TCIA Accreditation when their policy comes up for renewal, and to educate their insurer about what it means to be accredited. “As an underwriter, we look at Accreditation as another piece of the puzzle,” he says, “another positive variable.”

David Rattigan is a freelance writer living in Peabody, Mass.
From coverages such as pesticide and herbicide application to workmanship errors, our experience and knowledge of the arborist industry enables us to offer you the tailored, comprehensive coverage you need. To find out more, contact your local Hartford Agent or visit mb.thehartford.com/treecare.
John Spence spoke for only one hour at the Winter Management Conference this past spring and was so dynamic that attendees requested – no, demanded – that he be brought back for a longer time period. One hour was simply not enough.

TCIA responded. Spence will deliver the keynote address to open TCI EXPO in Columbus, Ohio, on Wednesday, Nov. 9. He will also lead an all-day pre-EXPO workshop Tuesday, Nov. 8, on strategic business planning.

Based on more than five years of research and benchmark studies of the best practices at top corporations around the world, this intensive full-day workshop exposes senior managers to the most innovative ideas, tools and methods for dramatically improving business success.

Workshop attendees will:
► Use a custom workbook full of clear examples.
► Take “Effectiveness Audits” to compare their firm against key success factors of benchmark companies.
► Complete a “Personal Action Plan” to implement ASAP.
► Understand the fundamentals of business plan creation.
► Begin the development of an actual plan in the session.

TCIA encourages participation from managers in all departments of your business to integrate strategic vision into operations. Respected and trusted as a knowledgeable advisor, Spence is the author of “Excellence by Design: Leadership” and has delivered workshops, speeches and consulting to more than 280 organizations worldwide.

Spence will then kickoff EXPO with his presentation, Excellence by Design, Wednesday, at 8 a.m.

This presentation is described as a powerful, insightful and potentially life-changing look at what it takes to achieve excellence in business and life. With real-life examples, Spence lays out, step-by-step, what an individual or organization must do to achieve uncommon success. This highly motivational presentation is grounded in research and common sense. Complex issues are presented in a simple, straightforward manner.

To register to attend TCI EXPO, call 1-800-733-2622 or e-mail info@tcia.org. For more information about TCI EXPO, visit: www.tcia.org.
Assignment: TCI EXPO seminars

Seminars begin the day before the trade show on Tuesday, Nov. 8 through Friday, Nov. 11 at the Greater Columbus Convention Center in Columbus, Ohio.

“The best way to have a good idea is to have a lot of ideas.”
—Linus Pauling, Two time Nobel Prize winner

Trees may grow seasonally, but tree care companies and their employees’ careers should grow year-round. The intensive, professional and business growth seminars and panel discussions at TCI EXPO can help. They’re designed for real-world arborists and tree care service company owners and managers.

View the TCI EXPO seminar program at www.tcia.org or call (800) 733-2622 to request a TCI EXPO program brochure.

Register for TCI EXPO - “World’s Largest Tree Care Trade Show” - More vendor exhibits than ever before!
We all have the same amount of time. It is the people who are able to get the important things done in less time who get ahead.

It is that simple; if you can't manage your time, you can't manage your career, business and, maybe more importantly, your life. Where you are and where you will be in five years is the result of the choices you make. One of our most basic choices is how we spend our time. That is why the following 10 time-saving tips are so important. These basic time-management principles will help you get a handle on your time and your life.

1. Where does the time go? A look at what wastes our precious time.

We like to blame others for everything, including wasting our time. However, nobody can waste your time without your permission. Take control of the time-wasters in your life – most of which we are responsible for. For instance, if people want to meet you for lunch you can suggest doing a virtual meeting via e-mail or talking on the phone. If they insist on a face-to-face meeting, make them come to you and save the commute. If you ever really took the time (pun intended) to see where your time goes, you would be shocked. Pay attention for one day and ask yourself for every task you take on, “Is this the best use of my time? Is this bringing me closer to, or taking me further away from, my goals? What should I be doing right now?” If you can cut one hour of wasted time a week (and this should not be hard), you gain 52 hours of FREE time at the end of the year. Imagine if you can cut out an hour a day of wasted time!

2. There’s no time like the present. Don’t just do it, do it now.

Almost everyone procrastinates. Yet, winners do what they say they will do when they say they will do it. How? Most simply force themselves to “just do it.” Others use one or more of the following techniques. Try leaving a project in progress, or something you have been putting off, out where you can see it and begin working on it whenever you feel the whim to do so. This could mean leaving a file on the desktop of your computer or a file out on your actual desktop. It only takes one excuse or impediment to hold us back (finding something and then getting it out to work on it are two too many obstacles.) Now that it is out where you can see it, try starting at the easiest possible place. This may not be step one, but it can be something so simple you can’t come up with a good excuse not to do it. If you need more motivation, set up a reward for beginning the task or any step of the task. Other procrastination busters include working on something when the mood is right and your muse is into it, too. Try combining something you don’t like to do with something you enjoy. Take your paperwork to the park, a bar or home with you and do it while you watch TV. Lastly, tell someone what your intentions are and make them hold you accountable and no matter what, give yourself a deadline to shoot for.

3. Time flies when you are having fun. How to get things done and still have fun.

Life is made up of mostly maintenance tasks – things we must do no matter what. When we are done with these, then we can have fun. What if we made the mundane stuff more fun? Try competing with yourself or a co-worker to see who can finish first or to beat your time from the previous day. Have fun prizes set up if you are able to get everything done quickly. Get others involved and just the act of hanging out with people you like and pooling your resources can make a dull task more desirable. What if you traded tasks with others? Maybe they like paperwork and you enjoy more manual labor. By doing more of what you enjoy and do well, you get it done faster and better.

4. There isn’t time for everything. Figure out what matters most.

I’m sure you have heard of the 80/20 rule. It goes something like this: “80 percent of your success comes from 20 percent of your efforts.” The secret is to figure out what the most important things are and focus your time and energy there. It’s not as complicated or convoluted as it seems. If your home were burning to the ground, what are the five things you would take with you if you could? Of all the things you have to do during the day, what are the top five tasks that make the most difference? If you could eliminate 10 tasks from your life, what would they be? If you had more time, what would you spend it
on? Look at the people you spend time with; who are the top five people in your life? (These are the people you love and who love you, make you feel good about yourself and encourage you and most of all, you feel like time with them is time well spent.) There simply isn’t enough time for everything – or everyone, for that matter. We must choose what to focus on at work, who to spend our time on and what matters most in our lives. If you are tempted to add more things to your busy schedule, you have to use the one-in, one-out rule. To add something you must give up something.

5. Timing is everything. There is a right time for everything.

One of the secrets to time management is to do things when others aren’t. Leave early or late to avoid traffic, go to lunch when others aren’t so your wait time is less, run errands at a time when people are also doing them and finally, find a time to focus without distractions. You also have to match the task to the time. If you are like most people, the morning is a key time to get things done. Don’t fritter away this productive time on unproductive tasks. Instead, end the day with easy-to-complete tasks so you can finish with a flourish.

6. Take the time to plan. One minute of planning saves hours of time.

The most basic time-saving tools are the calendar, clock and a things-to-do list. The calendar is used to block out time to work on key projects and to stay on top of deadlines and key dates. The best calendar is one you will use. It is best to have one calendar, if possible, so nothing has to be transferred from one to another. Keep the calendar with you or out where you can see it. The clock is also an obvious time-management tool, but most people don’t realize how important it is. Get a BIG clock and put it where you will see it. Be more aware of time and how you are spending it. Create a custom clock and use red numbers to indicate your key times. Put a fake clock on your door that says, “Be back in ...” or “Do not disturb until ...” so you can get some work done. The things-to-do-list is also a key component in managing your time. The key is to not let your day get away from you and the best way to do that is to plan what YOU want to get done.

7. Two at a time and other time-saving tips. How to get more done in less time.

Multitasking got a bad rap a few years back. I think it is a great time-saving tool. If you can combine and conquer (do two things at once) you have more time left to do what you want. Sure, people have taken multitasking to extremes – driving, drinking coffee, talking on the phone and applying makeup all at the same time. But what if you met with someone to brain-
Left-brain/Right-brain Quiz

Adapted from “Organizing From The Right Side Of The Brain” by Lee Silver

We use both hemispheres of our brains at different times in different situations, though many people favor one hemisphere over the other. This is a test (and only a test) to determine which “style” you prefer and what hemisphere of the brain dominates your thinking.

Relax. There is no pass or fail, there are no wrong answers. Just choose the one that comes closest to describing you:

1. When meeting someone I. usually show up early or on time. b. I am usually running a teeny bit late.
2. When it comes to paper a. I like to file it. b. I prefer to pile it.
3. I prefer to a. work on one task at a time. b. I like to juggle several things at once.
4. At the beginning of the workday I. make a list of things to do and plan my day around my list. b. I shuffle through the piles of papers on my desk before I finally decide what to do first.
5. When reading a magazine I will a. start at page one and read in sequential order. b. jump in wherever looks most interesting.
6. When learning how to use a new piece of equipment, a. I read the instruction manual before beginning. b. What manual?
7. When someone gives me directions, I. a. write them out (with street names). b. draw a map with landmarks and visual references.
8. When I saw something I want to buy, a. I save up until I have the money. b. I charge it. You only live once, baby.
9. When I’m telling a story to a friend, a. I cut to the chase, yada, yada, yada. b. I’m very animated and I am likely to get sidetracked.
10. When faced with an unpleasant task, a. I do it a little at a time, step by step. b. I either jump in and get it over with or put it off and hope it goes away.
11. When it comes to projects, a. I am known for my stick-to-tiveness. b. I always intend to finish them, but never get around to it.
12. My work space looks like a. the top of an aircraft carrier (nothing lying around). b. Disneyland (neat stuff and office toys jumbled in with the piles of work).

Total number of “a” answers: __________
Total number of “b” answers: __________

If you have 8 or more “a” answers, you can consider yourself left-brain dominant. With 8 or more “b” answers, you’re a right-brainer. Otherwise, you’re probably “whole-brained” or at least partially lateralized. To find out what this means, read the descriptions below. No matter what your predisposition, it’ll help you live your life and do your work painlessly and effectively.

Left-brainers

The left hemisphere of your brain is the timekeeper (linear awareness), logical (just the facts, please), analytical (good with relationships, abstractions), linear (prefers a sequential, step-by-step approach), critical (judgmental), verbal (language and speech and spelling), compartmentalized (likes to do things one at a time, keeps home and work separate). It’s also the memory center (names but not faces). People who are left-brained are usually good at researching and retaining information, fact-gathering, math, tidiness, and written instructions. They are responsible, good at organizing, obsessive, compulsive, dislike change, are easily overloaded, can be seen as dull, into conformity, controlling, and may be insensitive at times. They can be strong finishers; focused; perfectionists; detail oriented; goal oriented; list makers; orderly; stable; punctual; decisive; cautious; successful and productive. They are also amazing.

Right-brainers

Right-brainers can do as much as their left-brain counterparts (maybe more) but prefer to do it in their own unique way. With a little savoir faire. Despite the negative bias against right-brainers as unproductive, undisciplined dreamers, they can get things done and have some fun doing it. The right brain is artistic (can draw and paint), intuitive (perceptive and receptive to hunches), rhythmic (can see and feel patterns), fun (spontaneous, with a keen sense of humor), visual (non-verbal), spatial (it’s the part that works jigsaw puzzles), non-judgmental (sees and accepts different points of view), imaginative (creative and makes odd associations), metaphorical (uses imagery), emotional (people oriented and empathetic), holistic (sees the big picture), divergent (deals well with more than one thing at a time), sexual (just thought you’d like to know that), non-linear (likes to jump around rather than follow a step-by-step approach), illogical, irrational and persuasive, too. This is also the site of the unconscious mind (where dreams reside). Right-brainers may be unpredictable, impatient, slapdash and flighty. They load their routines, lack follow-through, abhor structure and rules, take a wait-and-see approach more often than not, juggle several tasks at once, and deal well with change. Organizing comes natural to them (stop laughing) but not organizing that anybody else might recognize as such. They want to have fun and are free-wheeling rather than focused. They are daydreamers and their thoughts tend to wander and wander—often they are oblivious to time. They are very visual but lose things easily and frequently. Most see tidiness as a waste of time. Right-brainers are independent, impulsive, free-spirited, easygoing, dramatic and actually like to have drama and chaos in their lives. They are also wonderful.

Whole-brainers

If you had an equal amount of “a” and “b” answers congratulations, you are “fully lateralized.” Or put another way you are a whole-brainer. You will recognize some of yourself in the descriptions of both right- and left-brainers.

storm ideas while going for a walk—with your dog. What if you put a basket of easy-to-do tasks by the phone or next to the computer so while you wait on hold or for the printer to warm up you get another quick thing done. (Send a thank you card, pay a bill, or complete some paperwork.) Finally, use the time spent commuting to listen to books on tape. It makes the drive go by faster and depending on what you listen to, you can learn Spanish or a new skill.
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8. If you've got the time. Learn how to say “No.”

Just because the phone rings does not mean it must be answered. Just because you own a truck does not mean you have to help everyone move. You don’t have to accept every party invitation. And no, the customer isn’t always right. When you say “No” to helping someone else reach their goals you are saying “yes” to yourself.

One thing I did that was a big help was to make a things-NOT-to-do list. These were all the things I hated doing, shouldn’t be doing and didn’t want to do again. I started my list with helping people move and went on from there. I also made a “Joy” list. These are things I want to do but don’t seem to have the time. Now I realize that if I say “no” to something I don’t want to do I have more time for things I truly want to do.

9. Time is money. There is no such thing as “free time.”

One of the most important things I have learned the last few years is that time equals life. What do I mean? We all have a certain amount of time we have to live (I know, it’s not something we like to think about) and when we spend it we are using up a piece of our life. If you hate your job then you are using up your life on something that gives you little or no return on your investment of time. When you purchase something you pay for it with your life. If you make $50 an hour (work with me here) and you purchased a product for $250, you spent five hours of your life to pay for it. And if you hate your job, then this really stinks. Imagine with big ticket items how much of your life you spent to acquire them. The point is, some of us have chosen a life of goods and that is not the good life. When it is all said and done we will look back on how we lived our lives, not what we owned, and wish we had more time. Spend your time wisely because there is no “free” time.

10. This is the time of your life. How to be in the moment and not let life pass you by.

Some people say they will be happy as soon as ... they own a home or buy a bigger one, get married or get divorced, make more money and/or get out of debt, get in shape or reach a certain ideal weight. My advice is, don’t wait to be happy. The time to be happy is now, regardless of what you have or don’t have, what you’ve done or haven’t done. Our lives go by so fast and they go by even faster when are wishing and waiting for something better. These are the times of your life. Live like there is no tomorrow.

This article was part of a presentation by Lee Silber at TCI EXPO Spring 2005. Organizing from the Right Side of the Brain: Creative Ways to Get Organized, a book by Lee Silber, is published by St. Martin’s Press.
To get this contract, you’ll need impeccable credentials.

Don’t miss TCI EXPO seminar, “Improve Your Business with TCIA Accreditation!”
Thursday, November 10, 2005 • Columbus Convention Center

Retired Concert Pianist Loves Nature
She’s well off and well travelled and she’s all business when it comes to running her household. The children are grown with families of their own, and she and her husband look forward to visits from their six energetic grandchildren.

They’re retired, and while he golfes, she enjoys music, quilting, knitting, basketry and, most of all, gardening. The grounds surrounding their estate contain an orchard, extensive lawns, a pond, a scenic meadow, a groomed hedge, vegetable and flower gardens, and a woodland garden sheltered by century-old trees. She loves the calm, protected areas of the property and values the natural character and beauty of the forests and land for their elegant and comfortable accommodation. Her next project is to have selected areas of the grounds floodlit during the evening.

Cleanliness Next to Godliness
The demands of the property are significant. She used to employ a full-time groundskeeper that arranged all the contracting, but his health has forced him to retire and his son has moved away. She made a false start with a service recommended by a neighbor. She was quiet and well dressed when he visited, but when his men came to work, three days after the promised time, they were slovenly. Their truck leaked oil on her drive, they left lunch wrappers behind and bits of twigs and brush on the pathways. When she called to ask them to come back, a young woman was curt with her. When she received a separate bill for the cleanup, she promptly fired them.

Does Her Homework
Later in life, she has studied interior design, fashion merchandising and, luckily, the Internet at a local technical college. She uses the Internet to research services in her area that can help with the maintenance. She wants to employ a well-established company that has a good reputation. One that will treat her fairly and whose employees take pride in their work. She wants a company she can trust.

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Do AEDs Belong in Tree Care “Workplaces”?

By Ariana Zora Ziminsky

For the longest time, life-saving defibrillators were something we saw only in the hospital or in the movies. Cinematic antics around defibrillators usually involved trained emergency medical technicians (EMTs), doctors, and a whole lot of panic and up-tempo background music.

Fast forward to today, and the term “AED” – an abbreviation for automated external defibrillator – has become part of the vernacular, making its way into news headlines and weaving its own web of laws and regulations.

In the past few years, the portable AED has become an extension of the First Aid kit for many offices and public areas. A defibrillation device such as an AED is hailed as the only type of machine that can save a person’s life during sudden cardiac arrest (SCA), when the heart stops beating altogether or goes into a chaotic, abnormal rhythm called ventricular fibrillation. SCA can be caused by a heart attack (defined as death of muscle tissue from loss of blood supply), asphyxiation or electrocution. In fact, OSHA states that “A heart rhythm in ventricular fibrillation may only be restored to normal by an electric shock.” (OSHA Pamphlet 3185)

And there’s good reason for all the hullabaloo: AEDs have a high rate of success. Sixty percent of SCA victims treated with immediate defibrillation have a survival rate of one year or more. In contrast, victims who are forced to wait for an ambulance to arrive before being treated have only a 5 to 7 percent rate of survival, according to the same OSHA publication. With such astounding odds, it seems at first glance that having an AED in the workplace is a simple decision: Get one. It makes sense, when a relatively small investment (averaging about $2,000 for a unit, plus annual maintenance and training) can potentially save a life in a large office or public area with a high amount of visitors.

Additionally, training to use and AED is easy and offered regularly as part of the Red Cross’s CPR and First Aid courses – often times at no extra charge. (In worst-case scenarios where no AED-trained personnel are available to operate the machine in an emergency, an AED can still be easily used by anyone who can get the device, turn it on, and follow the simple instructions.)

This works well for offices and public areas with high foot traffic, but what happens when the office shrinks to, perhaps, two or three people; and goes on the road, rarely staying at the same job site for more than a day or two at a time? For thousands of small tree care crews that drive to different work sites each day, the cost-to-benefit ratio of having an AED in their work truck is drastically different than it would be if the crew members worked in a traditional office all day long.

Understanding the pros and cons of purchasing and maintaining an AED for work trucks can help put perspective on how tree care companies can best serve the overall safety needs of their employees.

When do you need an AED?

As previous stated, an AED is designed to be a lifesaver for victims of sudden cardiac arrest. SCA occurs when someone’s heart rate becomes suddenly chaotic and irregular (ventricular fibrillation) or stops completely. Either situation stops the pumping of the blood to the body, and can result in death within minutes. As a result, SCA victims collapse and lose consciousness – usually with no warning.

SCA differs from a heart attack – defined as death of muscle tissue from loss of blood supply – in which there is typically a history of heart disease. Heart attack victims typically have a history of heart disease and various risk factors (high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and being overweight) that contribute to the heart attack. Sudden cardiac arrest, on the other hand, can strike anyone at any time without warning. Additionally, SCA can be caused by electrocution – a clear hazard for those clearing power lines.

Laura Kittery of All Season Tree Service in Stoughton, Mass., explains how this fact alone helped contribute to her company’s purchase of an AED: “First of all, no one can predict who is at risk and who is not. Most of us know someone personally or at least have heard of someone dying very young from a heart attack: 29 years old, 33 years, 42 years old – you can’t tell who is at risk or not. Secondly, electrical hazards know no age barrier and we know these events can cause heart attacks.”

“If sudden cardiac arrest results from electrocution, an AED may be used to defibrillate the heart,” according to Greta Petrilla, program communication and marketing manager for the American Red Cross. “Defibrillation administered within four minutes after collapse is most successful.”

The AED saves lives by delivering an electronic shock to the heart in order to restore the heart’s natural rhythm and thus, the flow of blood to the body. An internal computer in the AED interprets the SCA
TCI Mag 9.05_v5.qxp 9/2/2005 2:01 PM Page 57

Red Cross recommends training in CPR

With visual and audio guides, the American Red Cross walks you through lifesaving procedure step by step, making it easy to learn even for those with minimal or no training.

The importance of a defibrillator during SCA cannot be overstated. Each second following sudden cardiac arrest is critical, according to OSHA. “With each minute of delay in defibrillation, nearly 10 percent fewer survive, so that at 10 minutes, survival is dismal.”

Likewise, “treatment of witnessed ventricular fibrillation with immediate defibrillation can result in greater than 90 percent survival,” according to OSHA.

Cost, maintenance and training

AEDs range in price from about $1,200 to $3,000 for a unit. Although this price has come down significantly in recent years, it still can add up to a significant chunk of change if you need to purchase many units for many work trucks. Additionally, there is annual maintenance to take into the equation. Although maintenance costs vary with each device, typically you will need to replace batteries and electrode pads on a regular basis. Batteries – which you should always have two of – will likely be the highest price maintenance item. Lead acid batteries cost about $150 each and need to be replaced every two years. Lithium batteries can last longer – up to five years – but may cost up to $300 each.

Electrode pads are less expensive, but also need to be maintained. They cost approximately $20 per pair, and at least two sets should be kept with each AED. Used pads are discarded and need to be replaced right away, and unused pads need to be replaced every two years since they dry out over time.

Training for AEDs can easily be part of your annual safety training regiment. Although AEDs are designed to walk you through lifesaving procedure step by step, with visual and audio guides, the American Red Cross recommends training in CPR and AED usage.

Since OSHA requires tree crew workers to be CPR trained, it’s simple enough to roll the AED training in with the annual recertification – at minimal or no extra cost. In fact, in order to attain AED certification, you must also be certified in CPR.

“There are times when the AED will prompt you to do CPR,” notes Petrilla. In other words, in a cardiac emergency, an AED might not be the only tool you would need. The Red Cross describes the AED as the most important part of a four-step “Chain of Survival” for sudden cardiac arrest victims. The four steps to saving a life, as outlined by the Red Cross, are:

1. Early activation of the Emergency Medical Services by calling 911 or your local emergency number;
2. Providing early CPR to the victim;
3. Providing early defibrillation (with an AED);
4. Early advanced life support, which includes care by paramedics and transport to the hospital.

Outfitting your trucks with AEDs

As a tree care worker or company owner, it’s easy to know that safety is always a top priority. The challenge arises in balancing your budget with your company’s safety training and safety equipment needs. Factoring an AED into the equation brings up a whole new set of issues.

In a perfect world, each crew truck would have its own well-maintained AED machine and all workers would be trained to use the device. In reality, tree care companies are faced with a dilemma: Is it best to spend thousands of dollars on the AEDs, maintenance and training when statistics show a relatively low number of sudden cardiac arrest cases for on-the-job tree care workers; or is there a greater benefit to spending those dollars on other safety measures that deal with more common dangers to workers in the field?

Several tree care companies who responded to a recent TCIA survey tilted the scales heavily toward the latter. It’s most effective, they concurred, to use those dollars to help prevent and deal with more common accidents than it is to spend a large amount of money outfitting each truck with an AED that will likely go unused for years.

Several tree care company owners and officers have explained that there has never been a need for an AED on one of their work sites, hence it would be difficult to justify the expense now.

“In 24 years of business, the occasion for needing an AED has never arisen,” explains Anne Baldwin of Baldwin Tree Care in El Cajon, Calif. “We struggle with maintaining chaps, safety vests and First Aid kits in working condition as it is,” she continues. “… The problem with outfitting such sophisticated equipment on tree trucks is obvious: Cost vs. demonstrated need. Safe and protected space is hard to find on chipper trucks.”

Mark J. Foster, safety director at Lucas Tree Expert Company headquartered in Portland, Maine, points out that “AEDs are portable, but if money was tight, I would rather put $2,000 dollars into water coolers and diluted sports drinks to help ward off heat-related injuries, which happen more frequently and can be as life threatening (as sudden cardiac arrest) if untreated.”

He elaborates, “If I had $2,000 dollars per two-man bucket crew to spend on safety, along with the approximately $800
annually for batteries, protective covers, inspection and maintenance time (that goes into AEDs) ... I would commit those resources to do the greatest good. I believe the company’s work experience shows that by preventing struck-bys, temperature-related injuries, and promoting traffic safety, I could keep more workers safer and prevent more loss and suffering than by purchasing AEDs."

Similarly, Joe Engberg, field safety and education manager for The Care of Trees in Wheeling, Ill., has also weighed the costs and benefits of outfitting all their trucks with AEDs, which they currently do not have. Once again, the high cost of purchasing several dozen AEDs and maintaining them all simply outweighs the benefits of having the device.

“We have never had a situation for which an AED would be applicable at any job site or at any of our facilities,” explains Engberg, elaborating that “the cost of AEDs has dropped from the $3,500 range into the $1,000 range for sturdy models. At this price we would probably be looking at an initial investment of approximately $200,000 to provide AEDs at each of our facilities and on enough vehicles to ensure their presence on each job site. This does not include training for our employees and maintenance of the equipment.”

What to look for in an AED

If you feel that an AED is right for your company, there are several things to look for before you make you purchase.

AEDs are basically computers, and among AEDs on the market today, there is a wide range of features and prices. Similar to desktop computers, AEDs are being improved all the time, with manufacturers adding more features and lowering the prices as technology allows. Additionally, it is possible to special-order an AED that offers instructions in a language other than English.

All AEDs have certain standards that they must adhere to before they can be federally approved: For starters, they all need to follow military standard for shock and vibration – called 810F Method 516.5 – which requires they withstand a reasonable amount of being dropped and shaken about. Additionally, all AEDs are designed to be at least “splashproof,” with different models having varying degrees of being waterproof.

“AEDs are meant to be portable,” says Alan Baek of American AED. “People carry them around, (and) in rescue situations, people tend to run with them” and might not be so gentle with the device. AEDs thus are built to withstand harsh handling, and should hold up well in work trucks out in the field.

As with computers, the more you spend, the more features and durability you will get – a higher-priced model might feature a higher level of waterproof protection, for example.

One notable feature that varies among AEDs is the amount of energy the defibrillator outputs. Newer AEDs have a feature called “escalating energy.” Escalating energy varies the amount of energy in the shock of defibrillation (from 100 to 200 joules), taking into account the weight and size of the victim. AEDs that use non-escalating energy generally output 150 joules of energy. Either model can save a life, but as with all technology, newer is usually better.

If you are ready to buy and don’t know where to go, the Red Cross can recommend AED distributors and manufacturers to consider.

Decision time?

It’s up to each tree care company to make the decision as to whether an AED is right for their office and work trucks. As tree care company owners, you need to factor in overall safety, relative work hazards, and budgetary concerns to determine if an AED would truly be a life-saver for you co-workers – and possibly yourself.

Ariana Zora Ziminsky is a freelance writer and former assistant editor of Tree Care Industry magazine.
“THE BLADE OF CHOICE BY TREE CARE PROFESSIONALS”

“I’ve used Zenith knives for over 3 years and they are consistent performers. They are as good if not better than any other knives we have used.”
Eddie Anderson—A&G Tree Service, Leitchfield, KY

“Everything about our chipper knife purchases has been great. Zenith knives are a far superior product; they last longer and cost less. The customer service people have been most helpful also.”
Chris Vanderhoof—Paul Bunyan Tree Service, Roslyn Heights, NY

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<td>16” Drum</td>
<td>KCH30002</td>
<td>Single Edge 16” x 3” x 3/8”</td>
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- Maintain records of use of pesticides and herbicides (State and Federal Regulations).
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- Recommend budgetary needs for programs, including personnel and equipment.
- Perform contract management duties, i.e.: draft, write and coordinate contracts.
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**Knowledge:**

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- Knowledge of methods, tools, and equipment involved in the PHC industry.
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Charlie Keppel:

One of the challenges with the implementation side of ecological restoration is trying to get arborists who like to climb to get down in the mud and thorns to cut underbrush. It takes a lot of education, with clients, neighbors, and our crews as to the importance of doing proper restoration.

There is a lot that goes into a proper ecological restoration – before you start the chain saws and start cutting brush.

First, we need to find a site that was originally a defined, recognizable ecosystem. We look for woodlands, savannas, wetlands, prairies and riparian (creek or a stream bed) ecosystems. Each of these will be restored in a different manner. In the Midwest, many oak savannas have been degraded by a plant called buckthorn. We have a lot of challenges with it. It does not allow the oak savannas to regenerate because light isn’t getting to the ground. There is no vegetation at the ground layer, so when it rains all the water is going to go across and silt down the tree. It doesn’t percolate in as it would with a natural ecosystem.

On the Northeast coast the vine form of honeysuckle has taken over whole ecosystems, causing the same problem – air and light are not getting down to the ground for native plant regeneration.

What are the long-term goals? In some cases it could be habitat restoration for endangered species or other wildlife, or to improve or buffer a watershed. The area might still be used for active or passive recreation or for a nature preserve.

Phasing in the work

If we have a 100 acre site to restore, we inventory the entire site, assess the site and put together a plan. But we don’t want to necessarily implement the plan all at once. One of the more effective ways of working with the neighbors and the community is to phase the restoration in over three to five years. When done over five years, we might start in the middle first, or in a less visible area, since when work first begins on the site it looks really bare. Then, as we work our way out to where neighbors can see the work underway, they will be able to see restored areas that have more diversity, more flowering and, and it becomes much more visually appealing. When the restoration work reaches the outer areas where the neighbors are, we can educate them by showing them the interior area.

Another criteria is the off-site impact. If you are working on a riparian habitat, it is very important to make sure that neighbors and the people downstream or upstream understand what you are doing.

Remember the people

The other important thing is to have destinations for people when you do a restoration. Our goal as restoration ecologists is to restore the bio-diversity, improve the environment, help the water quality and help the wildlife, but we have to keep in mind who is paying the bill. We need to make sure that we educate those people.

We need to allow destinations for them so they don’t go into the environmentally sensitive areas. This isn’t a new thing about restoration and working with nature. Jens Jensen created counsel rings so that people could come out and commune with nature and hold educational classes. Just because people can’t get around on a trail doesn’t mean they don’t have a desire to do so. Some of our best clients are people in their
seventies or eighties. They really have a passion for the land but they can’t necessarily get out in it. This way they can see it without having to get too far away from a paved trail.

One of our local environmental groups is a group called Chicago Wilderness. I get teased about that when I go to our East Coast and West Coast offices because people think that in a metropolitan area there is no wilderness. There are many areas that are still in native habitat or a recreated native habitat.

If you look hard in your cities, you can find parks that have been let go since the 1920s and 1930s. Those are your potential areas for bringing in ecological restorations. Some may be abandoned areas you could actually create from scratch. We have done that in the Chicago area, creating prairies and wetlands. You have to look and have a vision for the future and get to know the politics of the area.

People who have a small yard and love to look out on nature will pay more because they like the view. When you are working with developers or villages, see if they can edit their engineering plans to cluster the houses and preserve open space both for homeowners and for habitat improvement.

Starting the work

Doing the initial inventory is important. In addition to identifying the native woodland plants, the initial inventory allows you to see what you have for native grasses and invasive grasses. When you put together your plan, as arborists keep in mind that you are not only controlling woody plants but you are looking for any endangered species during the restoration.

Planning your implementation is critical to the success of any restoration project. We chip up the brush and we make sure that we stay away from the root systems of the desirable plants. We do the work when it is dry or we put plywood down to work on. If you can’t get your trucks in the area, drag the brush out rather than damage the land by bringing trucks in.

Another technique for working in an area equipment can’t reach is to cut and burn the brush. Make sure that you get an EPA permit, check village ordinances and communicate with the fire department, of course, but it is an effective way to get rid of the brush.

We have been very successful with tractor-mounted brush cutters. We can do one to three acres a day with this kind of machine. Education, again, is very important at this time, since an overgrown property can really look like a disaster area after you are done. Education beforehand with whomever you are working is key to let them know that the results are short term. In just a few months some of the vegetation will start to come up through the chips (if chips aren’t too thick). A layer of chips more than 2 inches can suffocate native plants. In areas where you burned brush, plant some native plant material so you don’t have a scar.

If you are working on a large scale project and you have the space, you can girdle the trees. You have to make sure that when you use the chain saw that you don’t go too deep with it and then take the bark off. This creates a very good wildlife treat so the hawks and such can use that to perch on. Woodpeckers can get into the insects that are in there. You can’t really do it in the backyard of someone’s place if all they have is a half an acre because they don’t like seeing the dead trees.

One thing we run into that is a challenge is, once we have taken all of the invasives down, keeping them from growing back. You can cut down a buckthorn and it comes back, growing sometimes 5 to 6 feet in a year, and it gets really thick. It is important to treat the stumps with an approved herbicide, or to grind the stumps, after you are done.

Grinding stumps out with a walk behind machine is an option for backyards. This way, when we come in and put new grasses in it is a nice area to look at. I prefer treating stumps with an herbicide so we are less disruptive of the environment, but some people like it to look nice right away.

My preferred way of treating stumps on a large scale is wearing a backpack sprayer. We dab it on the stumps. I have seen some of the larger scale projects use boom sprayers where they just herbicide the entire area. I recognize that in really degraded areas this may be an option, but I like to give Mother Nature a chance to do her best.

If you are going to reduce flooding and improve water quality in your rivers and
In the past when they built subdivisions they put it in storm water runoff and drainage ditches and they wanted to get the water off site as fast as possible. Now we are finding that doing that causes flooding downstream. With improved percolation and retention, we improve the water quality and reduced the amount of water going off the site.

**Mike Fitzpatrick:**

Sounds like a lot of work to take on an endeavor of all these natural areas. So how do we keep this going and maintain this for a period of time? If you don’t plan beforehand, you are not going to have a successful project. Planning equals success. It takes a team of dedicated passionate people coming together, planning the stages and implementing the stages, and then performing the ongoing care.

One of the tools for success is the inventory, where you inventory not only the trees, the ground layer, the shrubs and the animals, but you also have to inventory the hydrology and the soils and the water quality. You have to have the data in order to manipulate the site.

One of the first steps of ongoing care is what I feel is the forgotten portion of restoration – the re-introduction of the shrub layer, your herbaceous and the ground layer. A lot of people don’t do that, they just continue to cut brush. But this shrub layer provides for the diversity of the flora and the animals.

Leaving snags provides diversity for the wildlife and it provides habitat for the wildlife. Without the habitat, the dead trees and snags, we would not have the bluebird, which is a rare species. It used to be very prevalent in the Midwest, but is sort of a rare species now. Reintroducing the shrub and ground layer promotes regeneration of what you want to grow there. In the Midwest, oak regeneration is not happening now. It is because the flora and fauna isn’t promoting that. You have to have the reintroduction of such items.

The next step in restoration is control. After removing invasive species, you have to keep them from coming back. We control those, usually, in two ways: herbicides and controlled/prescribed burning.

Herbicides are not great for the water quality of our sites and you have to be very careful. We apply herbicides with a sponge tip applicator so that we can pinpoint exactly where we are going to apply the material. The prescribed burning top-kills the invasive species and keeps them at bay. It also puts the nutrients back into the ground and supplies the nutrients back into the soil from the burning.

All of this takes time. Usually, it takes three to five years to restore a site. Patience is really the key to educate the public. You have to have patience and you have to be diligent in order to have the diversity.

The biggest key with ongoing care is to educate the people who are doing the work, the people who are going to be taking care of the land. Educate the groups – the boy scouts, girl scouts, school groups – that we have, and volunteers in the neighborhood. We get these volunteers to come out on the weekends and help cut brush and collect seeds. They distribute and plant the shrubs.
and herbaceous layer of the plants. These kids really are the teachers, they are the stewards of the land of tomorrow.

You have to provide access and a place to go for those providing the ongoing maintenance. You have to provide access for these people to go in and do the work that they need to do. We often install a chip path, not only for the community to use in the future, but for the people to come in and have an area where they can work from to control some of these different things.

Interpretive signs are another way to educate people and to celebrate successes. You have to get people involved, and the only way to get them involved is to educate them. Once they begin to become educated they start to get interested and to educate them further they become even more interested and then you have the commitment to the site. You will have people wanting to work on the land and watch over the site. That is the key to success. If you don’t have these things then you will not have success.

There is something called the PCM method in tree preservation from the Arbor Day Foundation? PCM stands for Planning, Construction, Maintenance. I want to relate the PCM of tree preservation to restoration as well.

Planning is the key. The goals of the restoration are increasing the biodiversity and sustainability – making sure it is going to last forever – and to have the management units that you can manage. A community group in a neighborhood isn’t going to manage a 100-acre site. They will be able to manage 10 to 20 acres possibly.

Construction is basically the implementation. The cutting, removal and control of the invasive species and the re-vegetation are all construction.

The maintenance portion of PCM is basically having patience and the diligence and having the people educated and passionate about keeping this natural area going.

There are a lot of funding sources out there for implementation of restoration projects. Grant money from the state and federal government to do this type of thing is out there. They like to work around water areas, riparian areas, because water quality in today’s world is really degraded. You can also find a lot of money for back-yard restorations or large scale municipal areas.

Charlie Keppel is vice president of Midwest Sales for The Care of Trees. Mike Fitzpatrick is The Care of Trees’ Restoration and Tree Preservation and Land Restoration manager.
Rallying for tree care in Washington, D.C.

Before air conditioning was invented, diplomats posted to Washington were given extra “hardship” pay to endure the broiling summer months.

Brushing aside the 100-degree heat and 80-percent humidity, TCIA’s ambassadors stormed the nation’s capital last month as tree care representatives at the first joint green industry legislative conference.

More than 30 TCIA members, representing 17 states, brought their business concerns to their elected representatives. Before meeting with their representatives, senators and staff, attendees were treated to in-depth briefings from lobbyists and elected officials.

TCIA secured the head of OSHA, Jonathan Snare, and Charles Horan, director of enforcement and compliance with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, as speakers. Members had an opportunity personally over breakfast or during the question-and-answer sessions to ask pointed questions about tree care industry concerns. The answers weren’t all satisfactory, but there is little doubt that OSHA and DOT are fully aware of our industry’s issues.

Member giveaway: Sample Business Plan

This month’s free member giveaway – our new Business Planning Management Guide – is our first addition to last month’s free member give-away, Business Management Guides CD 2.0.

The new guide is divided into four parts: Part 1: Intro to Business Plans; Part 2: Strategic Business Planning Workbook; Part 3: Sample Tree Care Company Business Plan; and Part 4: Advanced Business Plan Writing.

Part 3, the Sample Tree Care Company Business Plan, was included with the August Reporter as a printed copy. The management guide is updated in its entirety on our Web site.

Business planning is one of the most important things you can do for your business. This is why the Accreditation Council included business plans as a requirement for obtaining TCIA Accreditation.

Like many tree care company owners, you are busy and have probably put off writing a plan for your business. However, the benefits you can gain by writing a business plan are sure to offset the time you will invest. In addition, you will have completed an important step toward being accredited.

Here’s how one owner described his experience writing a plan:

“When I began thinking about the concept of a business plan I never realized the impact it would have on me. Initially, the goal was to develop a plan for the purpose of Accreditation and a line of credit from my bank. But after 25 years of owning and operating this business, I have just begun to see the light and what I have been missing all of the past years. Perhaps I was never ready to accomplish this task and had to encounter problems from an abundance of mistakes (which will probably continue to happen through life’s journey).

“However, during extensive hours of research and development of this business plan, I have learned more about my company than ever before. In addition to the benefit from the Accreditation process and the improved standing at my bank, the most important goal will be the projected success I will achieve for years down the road (and I’m confident I will achieve success).”

— Bill Spiewak, owner, Bill’s Tree Care, Santa Barbara, Calif.
In addition to TCIA focused sessions, the three-day conference featured briefings on pest management, health care for small businesses, estate taxes, invasives, and immigration. One of the country’s most-known Republican strategists, Mary Matalin, shared her views over lunch on power politics and the next election.

After the briefings on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings, representatives from tree care, nursery and landscape – almost 300 in all – went to legislative offices for meetings with their elected officials and their staffs.

Peter Sortwell, president of Arborwell in Castro Valley, Calif., went to three different offices. “It was fascinating and extremely educational,” he says. “It was time well spent. I would do it again in a heartbeat.”

Sortwell had six or seven company owners in his group. They met with congressional staff to discuss their issues, some of which received a better hearing than others. “My workforce is 100 percent Hispanic,” notes Sortwell, “so the immigration issue is near and dear to my heart. California congressmen are well aware of the state of the labor force there. But there were some very strong opinions with regard to health care for small businesses and repeal of the estate tax.”

The joint delegation pushed for two items in particular – Association Health Plans that would make health insurance more affordable for small business and an exemption from the DOT’s Hours of Service rules for utility service vehicles. Both measures passed within two weeks of the visits.

This was Sortwell’s first time as a lobbyist. He thought people were very polite, for the most part, and knowledgeable on the issues. “I will be back the next time TCIA has a conference, and I would encourage everyone in our association to come. It will be worth their while.”

As part of a wider green industry delegation, Sortwell saw the relationships other industry sectors have already made in Washington. “On my first visit to Anna Eshoo, a Democratic representative from Palo Alto, we were all waiting for the meeting when the president of Monrovia Nurseries joined us,” Sortwell recalls. “Monrovia is the largest nursery in the world. When he walked in, everyone in the office knew him – from the receptionist to the aides behind the desk. They all sat up at attention. It was a good lesson. People who make a point to be known and have contact with their congressmen can really have an impact.”

That type of recognition doesn’t happen in one meeting. Developing a relationship takes time, care and feeding in the same way a landscape takes nurturing. Sortwell, for one, will be back. “I’m trying to address the issues that affect my company,” he says. “I’m not just sitting in my office complaining about what the government is doing to me.”

Richard Almstead, president of Almstead Tree & Shrub Care Company in New Rochelle, N.Y., was part of a large green industry delegation from his state. A former Pelham town councilman himself, this isn’t his first time dealing with government. He found few differences between state and federal government.

“We went to five offices,” Almstead says. “We were lucky to meet with three congressmen personally. I was impressed that they knew about the issues we were there to talk about.”

“TCIA members who weren’t there need to understand that the more people who show up to defend our interests the stronger we will be,” stresses Almstead. “If we don’t show up, the people who don’t have our interests in mind will write the laws. I’m not saying that we changed the industry but congressmen sat there for half an hour and had the courtesy to listen to us. If you don’t get involved, you can’t complain.”

Ron Keith, CEO of Shawnee Mission Tree Service in Shawnee, Kan., wasn’t sure about coming to the conference. He waited until the last minute, then decided to give it a try. “In running a small company, I never had any threats or issues that involved the government,” says Keith. “As I have gotten bigger, the government has everything to do with my business.”

Keith went to Capitol Hill with others from Kansas, including his company president, Jeff Stokes, and a colleague in property management. “We met some assistants, some congressmen and senators. We found them to be very knowledgeable and very helpful. I have never been involved in the political side of my business, but it gave me some confidence in our government that they are on top of these issues.”

In growing his business from small to medium, Keith realizes that the government can have a very real impact on his business. “We let them know what was going on in our business back in Kansas,” says Keith. “This was an important first step in educating them and in learning myself to support my industry. It was hard for me to go, since I have never been involved in politics. I can say now that being there is mandatory. Having a voice is very important to our industry.”
Not so long ago Internet marketers followed the “build-it-and-they-will-come” philosophy of using keywords embedded within the pages of their Web sites. The principle was simple; put as many keywords into as many pages as possible to register hits with the search engines on the World Wide Web. The higher the keyword relevancy, the more likely Web pages would show up as options for surfers to click on. The more work you did to include the right keywords, the more successful your Web site. This is the way to attract more visitors, isn’t it?

Bob Rouse, director of TCIA Accreditation, has discovered that it’s not so simple anymore. And tree care companies need to understand this strategy for their Web sites, too.

With the advent of contextual targeting, pay-per-click, search engine marketing and optimization on the Web, many marketers are finding that in order to increase the likelihood of their Web sites popping up front and center when Internet users search, another tool is necessary. It’s called money. Search engine marketing (SEM) is being redefined.

Paying for premium placement within search engines may make some Web site marketers feel like the rules have been changed in the middle of the game. After all, the Internet was perceived as the Great Equalizer – a wonderfully democratic new world where companies that made the best use of technology, graphics and marketing strategy could win regardless of their size. Search engine “rankings” under this Samson can beat Goliath model were the spoils that went to the most diligent and clever Web masters regardless, in large part, of spending.

Alas, all that is changing. According to research conducted by SEMPO (Search Engine Marketing Professional Organization), a non-profit whose mission is to increase awareness and promote the value of Search Engine Marketing worldwide, search engine paid placements topped $3 billion in 2004. Furthermore, survey respondents indicated that they plan to increase SEM spending by 41 percent for 2005.

“It’s becoming a ‘pay-to-play’ game these days in the search engine space,” says Rouse. He has been diverting a portion of the Accreditation department’s marketing budget into SEM to test the results. In a series of tests on the largest search engines, where marketers bid for text string keywords, Bob has honed his skills at maximizing the number of times the Tree Care Industry becomes the go-to for consumers searching for tree care solutions. From January through May of this year, he has succeeded in increasing the number of TCIA impressions through searches by 40 times (in May alone, TCIA garnered more than 400,000 impressions).

Web surfers searching on TCIA’s keywords are presented with the chance to find an accredited commercial tree care company in their area. When they click on TCIA’s message, they are redirected to the TCIA Accreditation Web page and also to the TCIA Member Search program.

Is search engine marketing of this type paying off? According to Rouse it is. He promises that these efforts will continue to grow because of the powerful branding benefit to TCIA Accreditation, TCIA accredited companies and TCIA member companies.

“We are dedicated to making TCIA Accreditation the de facto standard by which consumers measure commercial tree care companies.”

Exactly which engines and search strings does this search engine marketer bid on and how much does he bid?

“That’s top secret,” says a smiling Rouse.

For more information on SEM, visit:
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- www.google.com/services/
- http://searchmarketing.yahoo.com
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Brian Garnick is director of marketing for TCIA.
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Example: If a member company purchases $2,000 in software products directly from ArborSoftWorx, the software company will send TCIA a credit of $50 to be deposited into your membership account. An additional $50 will offset costs for future development of TCIA safety and training programs. Credits accumulate throughout the 12 months of membership and, when you receive your annual renewal statement, the total credits will be subtracted from your membership dues. Thanks to the support of ArborSoftWorx, your company can reduce its annual dues while helping offset the expenses involved with keeping the industry safe.

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TCIA also welcomes new Affinity Partners Insight Direct – provider of leading business management automation solutions for small to medium sized companies in the service industry, and Standard Capital Corporation – a national provider of equipment leasing and financing services customized to fit your company’s needs. Insight Direct and Standard Capital Corporation will be profiled in upcoming issues of Reporter. To learn more about how your company can benefit from these and other TCIA affinity programs, please call 1-800-733-2622.

Awar of Merit nominees?

Many very special people have chosen arboriculture as their life’s work. Some very dedicated professionals devote their most precious commodity, their time, to advance this industry. Then there are a very select few who do even more. They are the leaders, the visionaries, who literally move the entire industry through the force of their vision and dedication. The TCIA Award of Merit honors such people.

The Award of Merit is the highest honor paid by the Tree Care Industry Association to an individual or company that has positively impacted the field of arboriculture. The roster of past winners includes some of the most distinguished names in the field.

We often hear about dedication, leadership, volunteerism, and how important those things are to bringing this industry to the forefront of government and the public. Do you know such a person? Nominations for this year’s Award of Merit are open until Sept. 15.
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* Please circle this number on the Reader’s Service Card for more information, or ... fill out the form online! Go to www.treecareindustry.org, click “Publications,” then “Tree Care Industry magazine” and “Contact TCI Advertisers.”
Back in September or October of 2004, I was helping a friend with a job that included doing some clearance and deadwood pruning at a residential property. On the first tree of the day, I had my Big Shot out when along comes this Chesapeake Bay retriever.

The dog was friendly, and I petted it a few times. Once I felt that the dog was not a threat to me, I went back to what I was doing. I took my shot and when I turned around to place some throw line into an empty throw line bag I found that the dog had disappeared along with my $12 bag.

About 20 minutes later the dog’s owner (a neighbor) was nice enough to return it and apologized for his kleptomaniac dog. The owner told us about how the dog stole newspapers from people in the neighborhood, a blanket, and just all kinds of things. My only concern was for my $12 throw-line bag.

* * *

Two weeks later my vehicle was in the shop being inspected, so my friend was kind enough to pick me up at the mechanic’s garage. He dropped me off at a job site, which was just around the corner from his house, so that he could go get his rig. I put my gear, along with my lunch and Camelbak water pouch, off to the side on the ground. Once my friend returned with his rig, I went up the tree.

The job for the day was the removal of a dead sugar maple that was behind a house. While I was moving about in the tree my friend had to get something from his rig. I just happened to look toward where my things were and noticed that a dog had appeared on the site. The dog (which looked like a Siberian husky) was behind my friend and had his face in my lunch. I called to my friend who then turned around and shooed the dog off.

The dog, in that short time, had eaten my sandwich and the pasta salad that came with the sandwich. The pickle, however, was left behind only slightly mangled. I guess Siberian huskies don’t care too much for deli pickles!

Matthew Lang is former president of HL Tree Turf & Landscape, Inc. in the New York City area. He is currently a subcontractor in the same area.
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SUPERthrive™ unique extra life—TRANSPLANTING, MAINTENANCE, SALVAGING. ”IMPOSSIBLES” MADE EASY. 1800 60 to 75 year-old trees dug from grounds of 20th Century Fox Studios, stock-piled in weather for 2 years, replanted along streets of Century City. Landscape architect and contractor reported “not one sick or dead tree at any time.” Only SUPERthrive™ could have done this—or even approached it.

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