

# TREE CARE INDUSTRY

M A G A Z I N E

The Official Publication of the Tree Care Industry Association, Volume VII, Number 6 - June 2006

## The Fundamentals & Fine Points of Footlocking

Regular Self	3 1 9 <sup>9</sup>
Plus Self	3 3 9 <sup>9</sup>
Super	3 5 9 <sup>9</sup>

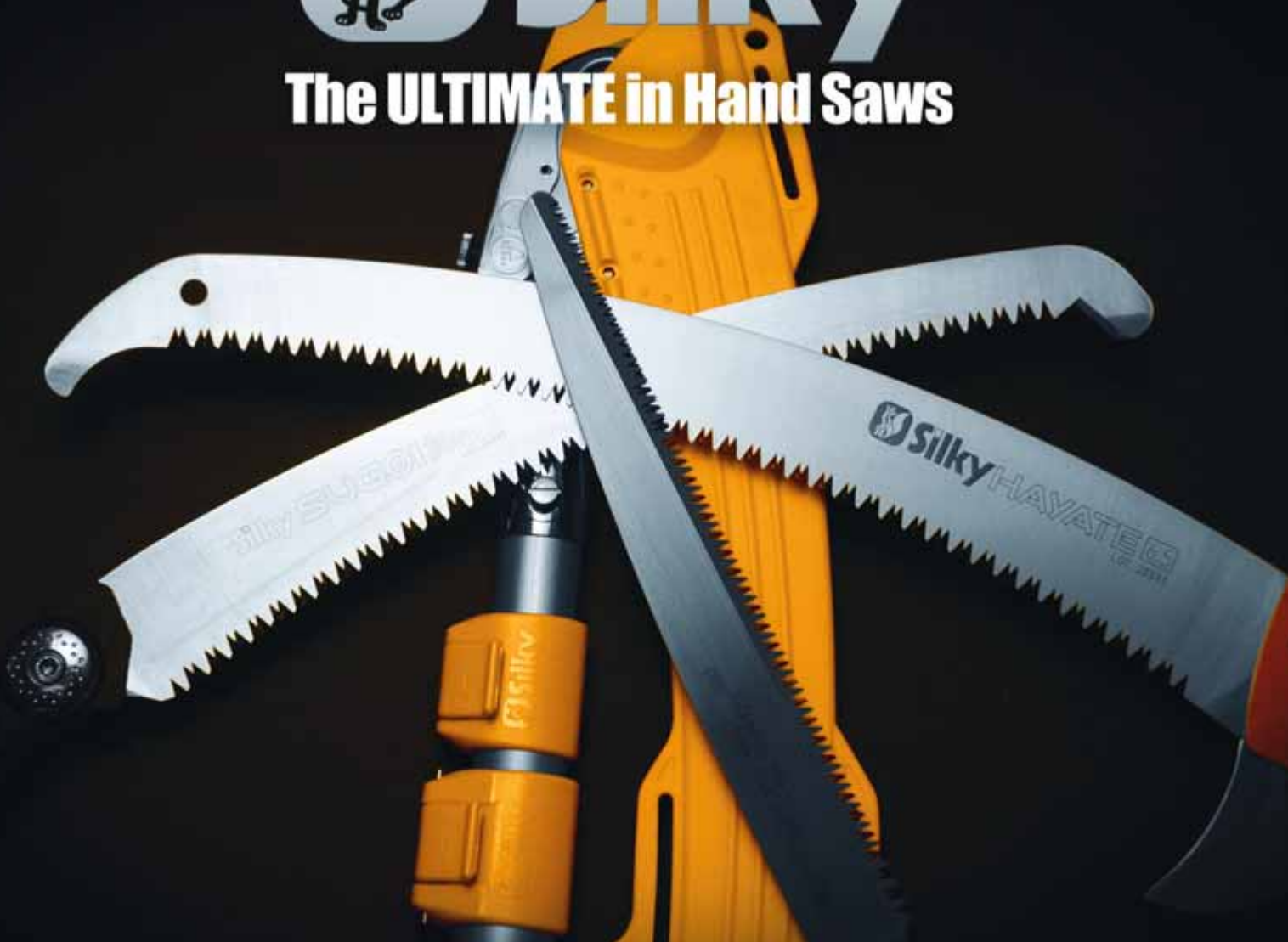
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# In Search of Others...

**E**veryone who has never made a mistake that you wish with all your being you could take back or correct, please raise your hand. TCI magazine has 27,500 readers – all of whom have made at least one mistake in their lives.

Just think, if each of us has made only one mistake in business or life, and we are willing to share what we have learned, that is a minimum of 27,500 lessons. Therein lies the beauty of our community. I don't know about you, but I'm willing to confess that my list of mistakes I'd like to keep from repeating is considerably higher than one. There are a few more on the list that I've watched others make that I'm quite

happy to learn from, too.

My career has been a blessed opportunity to learn from the best of the best by working with boards made up of top professionals all over the world. My career brings me into contact with people just like you on a regular basis. I cannot tell you how much I value the interactions because of what you teach me. It astounds me when I meet people who voluntarily make the choice to remain cut off from the best adult learning tool – contact with other professionals who have been doing what they're trying to do for years and who can help them navigate through while making fewer mistakes.

A lot of times, we are convinced that we cannot spare the time to read the book, search the Web, go to the seminar, schedule networking lunches with peers, take the trip to the professional conference, or just take a day to think with others. We also think and reinforce to our people that we can't afford the time for them to do it either – that it's a cost instead of an investment.

The time that I think I cannot spare invariably leads to a link to a person that I would never have met who can solve my problem or provide a winning breakthrough for our TCIA team. Ideas are generated that you would never have made the connections for had you not stopped long enough to let your brain have the time to put two and two together.

Further, if you don't set the example for the people around you that you *expect* them to take advantage of professional opportunities along the way, you'll reinforce the idea that staying cut off is the way to advancement. Productivity is all about working smart – and that rarely occurs in isolation.

One of the luxuries of my job is having had the advantage of watching more than 150 board meetings. This is a window into group process. In observing very smart and passionate people, one of the outcomes I have seen repeatedly is that not only does the organization entrusted to them benefit from the "group think," but every single individual within that group learns and grows more than they ever would have believed possible at the beginning of their board service.

This is a life lesson that an executive director told me when I was coming onto my own profession's board the first time. She said that no matter how much I gave, how dedicated I was, or how much I cared, the experience of serving would provide more to me than I would ever be able to give. At the conclusion of that service, I found that she was more than right. Yet, it wasn't just the service; it was the interaction with a lot of really smart people on a regular basis. I watch that learning process with TCIA's board members all the time. It is one of the most consistent things that they say when they leave the board: how much they have grown professionally themselves; how much they have taken back to their own companies that made them better; and how much the depth of friendships mean to them. The bottom line to all of this is that it's the interaction that has enriched their lives and given them a way to stretch their limitations.

You don't have to serve on a board to gain that. You *do* have to connect with other professionals, and you do have to make an effort. Remember, too, that arborists are not the only people you can learn from. Being insular in your profession and/or your approach to life will not stretch you; it will simply reinforce what you have already learned or come to believe. Challenge yourself. Spend some time with leaders who work in a completely different profession and industry. Don't be afraid of that. You have every bit as much to offer them as they do to you. When you see someone you are nervous about talking to, just remember, they have their list of mistakes that is just as long as yours, if not longer. That's *exactly* what makes them interesting to talk with and where you can learn the most.

The mistakes are what you should be dying to learn about – and you must go in search of others to learn about them.

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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## JUNE

### Features

- 8** **The Fundamentals & Fine Points of Footlocking**  
*By Daniel Murphy*
- 32** **The Chips are Flying Over the Soaring Costs of Fuel**  
*By Rick Howland*
- 44** **Pruning Lilac for Flowers and Shape**  
*By William Warren*
- 50** **Rigging Excellence**  
*Excellence in Arboriculture winner*



**On the cover:**  
Daniel Murphy displays his footlocking technique. Photo by John Grier.

8

### Departments

- 2** **Outlook**  
*By Cynthia Mills*  
You can learn a lot from the mistakes of others.
- 20** **Industry Almanac**  
Important regional and national meetings and activities.
- 23** **Cutting Edge**  
New products and services, and news in the tree care industry.

*(Continued on page 6)*



**Chipper fuel savings**

32

# Before



# After



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## Departments

26

### Business of Tree Care

*By Janet Aird*

TCIA Accreditation opens the door for consulting arborists or anyone looking to expand their consulting business.

42

### Washington in Review

*By Peter Gerstenberger*

Financial pressure on cooperative extension programs may curb the free partnerships that some arborists have come to depend on.

54

### TCIA

Tom Golon, new chairman of the TCIA's Board of Directors, turned a degree in automotive engineering into a career in tree care.

58

### Classified Advertising

Your source for jobs, equipment and supplies.

70

### Safety Corner

Skid steer loaders and grapples must be used with care for safe operation.

74

### TCIA Reporter

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

79

### Advertiser Listing

80

### From the Field

*By Erin Carlock*

A tree care company owner's daughter sees shared lessons in summertime tree work and classroom learning and teaching.



## Keeping Score

26



## Safety Corner

70



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# The Fundamentals & Fine Points of Footlocking

By Daniel Murphy

**F**ootlocking is an incredibly fast and efficient way to ascend into a tree. With its speed and efficiency, it has replaced the sluggishly difficult body thrusting as the main method of ascension for many progressive arborists. By relying primarily on the strength of the leg muscles, it uses energy efficiently – especially when done with good form.

This article will discuss how to footlock, expound on the dos and don'ts, and examine associated techniques and equipment. My intent is to give novices enough information to learn the basic technique, use it safely, and help others improve their performance.

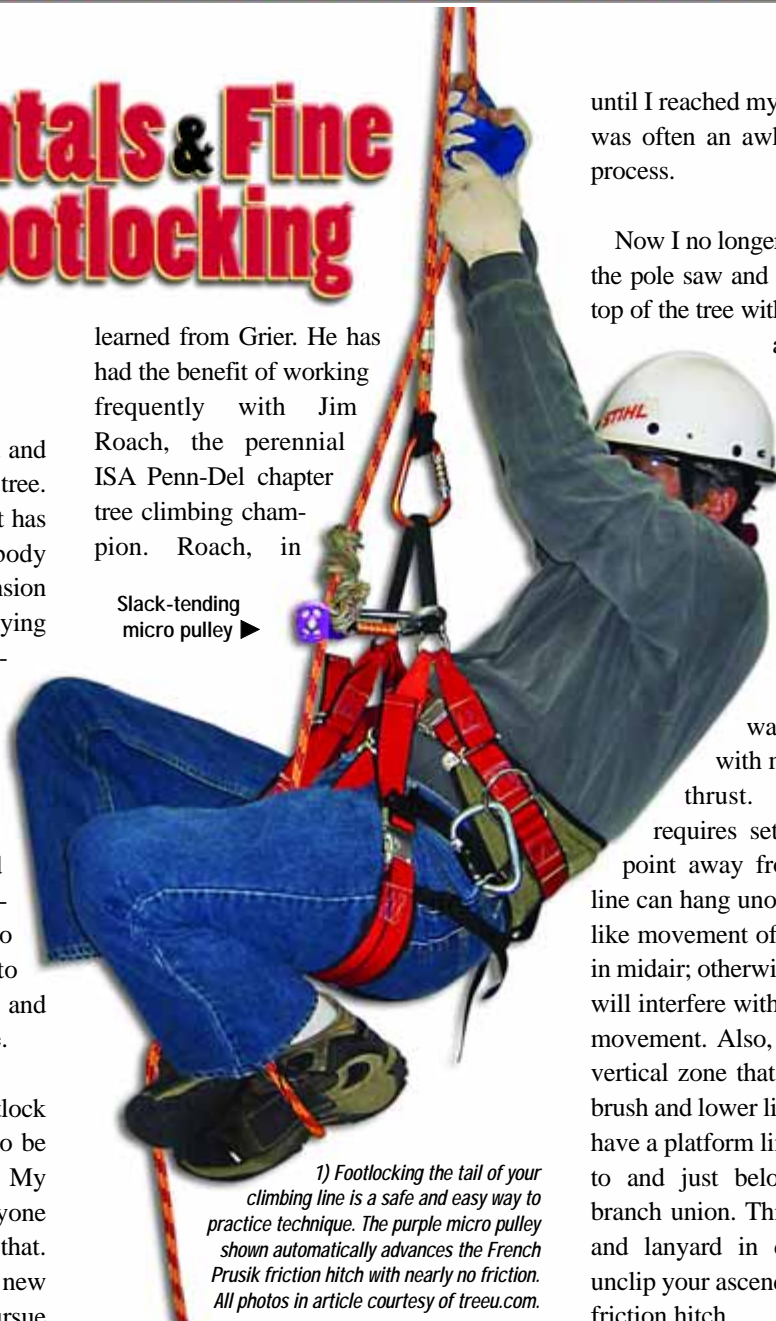
The first person I ever watched footlock was Mark Chisholm, who happened to be the world record holder at that time. My jaw dropped. I had never seen anyone move up into and around a tree like that. That revelation opened up a whole new world of potential, and I vowed to pursue the latest and greatest in progressive climbing techniques and equipment.

The vast majority of climbers today have yet to adopt footlocking. You have to see someone footlock to really understand what a marvelous technique it is. The world record for the 15 meter (approximately 49 feet) is under 14 seconds. I doubt I could run 50 feet up a set of stairs in less than 14 seconds. I have seen my climbing mentor, John Grier, set a throw line, footlock up and be tied into a big oak at 85 feet in less than five minutes from the time the truck door shut.

Most of what I know about footlocking I

learned from Grier. He has had the benefit of working frequently with Jim Roach, the perennial ISA Penn-Del chapter tree climbing champion. Roach, in

Slack-tending micro pulley ▶



1) Footlocking the tail of your climbing line is a safe and easy way to practice technique. The purple micro pulley shown automatically advances the French Prusik friction hitch with nearly no friction. All photos in article courtesy of treeu.com.

turn, has credited Chisholm, a two-time international tree climbing champion, with helping him refine his technique. So I am standing on the shoulders of some giants here in order to bring you this information.

Footlocking is primarily used for initial ascent into a tree on pruning and other non-removal jobs. Footlocking is not possible or necessary when wearing spikes on removals. In my early climbing days to access a tree, I would tie in with a lanyard at the top of a ladder, use a pole saw to set my line over a reachable branch union (crotch), and then body thrust up and slowly advance my line to higher branch unions

until I reached my desired tie-in point. This was often an awkward, slow and tedious process.

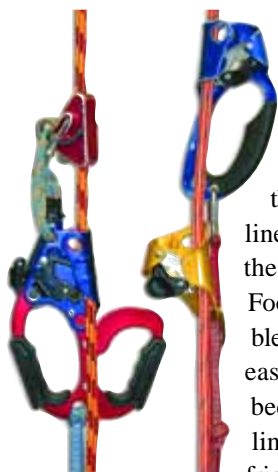
Now I no longer need to fool around with the pole saw and ladder. I set a rope at the top of the tree with a throw line, clip on my ascenders, and footlock up to the top of the tree.

## A detailed look

When body thrusting, I like to have my climbing line set in a tie-in point that draws my body toward the trunk of the tree. That way I can push off the trunk with my legs to assist the body thrust. Footlocking, however, requires setting the line in a tie-in point away from the trunk where the line can hang unobstructed. The inchworm like movement of footlocking is best done in midair; otherwise, banging into the trunk will interfere with the necessary fluidity of movement. Also, the line is best set in a vertical zone that is as free as possible of brush and lower limbs. Finally, it is good to have a platform limb or branch union close to and just below the ascending line's branch union. This offers a place to stand and lanyard in comfortably before you unclip your ascenders and get tied in with a friction hitch.

So footlocking is greatly facilitated by having the ability to accurately set an ascending line in a desirable branch union. Good throw line technique is somewhat of a pre-requisite for footlocking. Throw line technique is a subject for another article, and hopefully it will suffice to say for now that I can accurately set a throw line up to 90 feet, using the Big Shot sling shot, a 12-ounce throw bag and the 1.75 mm Zing-it throw line.

Once a throw line is set in a good branch union, you have the option to footlock up either a single line or double(d) line. There are pros and cons to each. If the throw line



2) Two ascender rigs with single line backups.

Therefore there is less of a tendency for the line to slip.

Most experienced climbers prefer to use a single line. A doubled line is twice as heavy, which means a lot more effort, especially on long ascents where you might be tailing 50 to 75 feet of rope. That extra weight makes a big difference because the climber must use abdominals and legs to lift the weight of the rope with every bite.

There is also no need to isolate the line when using a single line. One end of the ascent line can simply be tied off to the base of the tree with some form of choked hitch, often a running bowline. Also, in high branch unions where both ends of the rope won't reach the ground, it's easy to tie a running bowline in the tail of the ascent line, going around the throw line, as the ascent line is being pulled into the tree. Then, simply run the knot up to the branch union leaving a single line tied off at the branch union



3) When the branch union is too high for both ends of the rope to reach the ground, tie a running bowline around the throw line and run the knot up to the branch union for single line ascent.

is isolated, you can pull up an ascent line and clip in double ascenders, back them up on both lines and footlock the doubled line. Footlocking a double line tends to be easier for novices because the two lines give more friction at the boot. This provides a better grip and

Once you have chosen single or double(d) line, you need to use either handled ascenders with a tether clipped to your saddle or a Prusik cord to secure yourself to the line in case of a slip. Handled ascenders are mechanical one-way rope grabbing devices that can be advanced easily or moved up a rope with negligible friction. As their name implies they have a handle for gripping. They are attached to the climber's saddle using a tether strap or cord that must be rated for life support. A backup system is needed! More on that later ...

A Prusik cord is a loop of soft lay cordage with a slightly smaller diameter than the host line. The loop is usually made by tying both ends of a length of cord together with a double fisherman's knot, also called a double-barrel knot. This cord is then used to tether the climber to the ascent line with either a three-wrap Prusik, a Klemheist or another suitable friction hitch. Prusik cords can be used when footlocking with either single or double(d) line.

Although the Prusik cord is still used, in my opinion it is inferior to ascenders for several reasons. It takes a little longer to tie and untie the knots. The Prusik cord is designed as a fail-safe mechanism that is only there to keep you from falling should you lose your grip on the rope. The knots tend to lock up when loaded, therefore you must always support your own weight to prevent the knot from seizing. This makes it more difficult to use your hands to move around or through brush or lower limbs, as well as precluding the opportunity to sit back for a break. The handles also give a better grip than the rope, which makes a big difference.

Safety must be paramount when incorporating the footlock technique into your climbing system. Industry safety guidelines, called the ANSI Z133.1 standard, contain specifications for all life support equipment used in tree care, including the Prusik cords, tether straps, ascenders and carabineers used in footlocking techniques. ANSI Z133 has been developed to protect us in all phases of tree work and especially as we incorporate new climbing gear and techniques. These guidelines should give comfort to those whom may be reluctant to try new climbing gear and related techniques because of safety concerns.

Conversely, it would be foolish to begin using new gear, friction hitches, or cordage without fully understanding and implementing industry safety standards.

One very important safety concern when footlocking with a Prusik cord is to keep your hands under the Prusik knot or Klemheist. Never place either hand above the knot while gripping the rope. If your hand is above the knot and slips down the rope, you'll grab the knot, which could cause an uncontrolled descent. Also when using a Prusik on a double(d) line, don't advance the knot too close to the limb where the line is hung. If you get too close, the spread of the rope can loosen the knot. The rule of thumb is to keep the friction hitch below the limb a minimum distance of five times the diameter of the limb.

The length of the Prusik cord or the tether on handled ascenders is very important. A Prusik loop should be long enough so that it allows for a full stretch with just a little slack remaining. Remember this is only a fail safe. Never sit in it unless you need to. However, when using ascenders, you must be able to reach the ascenders easily when hanging from the ascent line, so the tether must be long enough to allow a nearly full range of motion. To reduce joint strain, keep the tether just short enough so that when you reach up in a stretch you still have a very slight bend at the elbow (image 4). When you are standing on the ground under the



4) Practicing low and slow with ascenders.



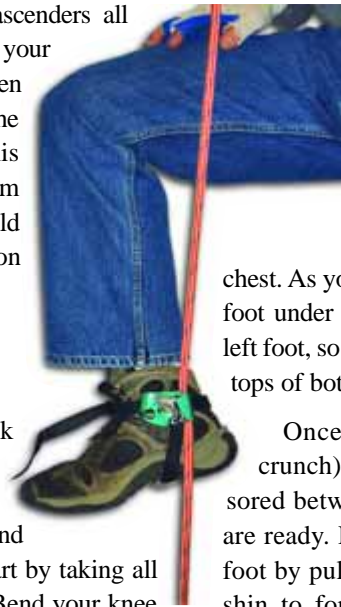
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ascend line, holding the ascenders all the way up, the bottom of your hands should be about even with or slightly above the top of your head. This should keep your arms from overextending, which could cause a repetitive motion injury.



5) The Petzl pantin is a foot ascender that can be used to footlock the tail of the climbing line for those who have not yet learned footlocking. The pantin also reduces repetitive motion joint strain.

**Starting the ascent**

Whether using a Prusik cord or ascenders, or going single or double line, the basic motion and technique is the same. Start by taking all the slack out of the line. Bend your knee to lift your left foot to about knee height. Cock your left knee slightly out to the left, to let the line(s) hang down on the inside of the left knee and the outside of the left ankle. Then transfer all your weight to your arms as you do a leg up motion into a tuck, where you lift both knees up into your

chest. As you lift both legs, keep your right foot under and slightly to the left of your left foot, so that the rope hangs between the tops of both feet.

Once you are in the tuck (or crunch) position with the line scissored between the tops of both feet, you are ready. Hook the rope with your right foot by pulling your toes up toward your shin to form a hook. And then in one motion bring your right foot under, around and then on top of your left foot. At this point the rope should be going over the top and side of the left foot, near the ankle, be looped under the left foot at the arch, then come up past the right sole at the arch and be draped over the top of

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6 & 7) Close up of the bite. Editor's note: A "bight" is an open loop in a rope. A "bite," as used in this article, refers to the grip on the rope with the feet. In footlocking, you create a bight in the rope with every bite. For clarity, we've used bite.

the right foot (Images 6 & 7).

The final motion is very simple. Just step down hard on the rope with the arch of your right foot onto the side and top of your left foot and stand up on the rope quickly. This should clamp the rope tightly between your two feet with enough friction

so that it will not slip when weighted. As a matter of fact the more weight you put on your feet while standing the tighter the rope is held in place.

If the rope is slipping between your feet, it's probably due to one or more of the following mistakes. You might:

- ▶ have a bad bite with your feet
- ▶ be wearing improper footwear
- ▶ be using your arms to help lift as you stand up, which takes weight off your feet. You need friction at the boot to keep the rope from slipping.

When using a double(d) line, each leg of the line has to support only half the load, so there is much less friction needed on each of the two lines than is required on a single line. This makes it easier to learn the basic movement on double(d) line as there will be less slipping. However once the bite and standing motion have been perfected, most climbers prefer to use a single line.

When you stand up, bring your legs directly beneath you, pulling the knees together, and stand straight up into a full stretch, pushing the ascenders up as high as possible. Repeat the motion. Transfer your weight to your arms as you let the line go with your feet, then lift your legs, get another bite, and stand up again. Keep the

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(8-13) Practice taking a bite from a chair on a loose single line. Clockwise, from top left:  
 Rope falls inside of knee and outside of ankle.  
 Lift legs up into crunch position with right foot under left and in position to hook rope.  
 Bring right foot around left hooking rope.  
 Right foot steps down on top of left clamping rope firmly.  
 Pull up hard on rope to check the bite.  
 Put your feet down on floor and stand up and then sit back down and repeat.

line in constant contact with the outside of your left ankle as you lift your legs. This way it will always be in the right place for you to hook it with your right foot. And as you lift your legs bring your right foot back under your left foot so the rope is again scissored between the tops of your feet. Your feet will be positioned perfectly to take another bite.

Proper form is crucial. Focus on three things when you are first learning.

1. Keep your feet in proper position around the rope as you lift your legs.



2. Get a good bite between your feet as you step down on the line.

3. When you stand, keep your legs directly underneath you and keep your full weight on your feet, making sure not to lift with your arms.

Once you have those basics down, work on developing a smooth rhythm – the key to speed and energy efficiency. When I first started, I would rock my whole torso back away from the rope in order to reach up higher with my feet, get a bite, then rock forward to get my legs underneath me and stand up. This rocking motion is good for novices because it is easier to get a good bite with the feet, but it also wastes time and energy.

When done well, the torso is always kept nearly parallel to the rope throughout the motion. It has to be fast and smooth, less than one second to lift the legs and get a bite and less than another second to stand

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up. The arms and legs should be moving as one, so when you finish one cycle by standing up into a stretch, you move right into the next cycle by lifting with your arms. When you get the rhythm and timing just right, the bounce of the rope helps you stand into the stretch. If you miss a bite with your feet you'll lose the rhythm.

Footlocking demands a good deal of athletic ability. The repeated leg lifting requires abdominal and core strength. The standing motion requires core, hip and leg strength. If you are having trouble with the basic motion, it might be a sign that you need to get into better physical condition. And, those interested in becoming really fast will need arm strength as well to do chin-up type movements. The key is to lift the body with the arms before you take a bite with your feet.

Those are the fundamentals of footlocking. And, as with so many other aspects of arboriculture, the fine points and details of this technique are critical to safe and efficient operations. Let's start by looking at some safety issues.

### Ascending systems

All ascenders, carabineers, screw links, and shackles must be rated at a minimum of 5,000 pounds and meet other ANSI guidelines. All ropes, tethers, and Prusik cords must be rated at a minimum of 5,400 pounds. You need to know and understand all guidelines for each piece in your system. Although it should go without saying, inspect your equipment before use every day and always follow manufacturer's recommendations for equipment use. Read, understand and keep the instructions. If you have a question, call or write the manufacturer. They are usually happy to answer questions. This is especially true for ascenders. You need to know exactly how to – and how not to – use them.

Handled ascenders must be backed up for safety. When using a single line, that means two ascenders attached in line, or an ascender with a Prusik cord above it. Should one unit fail the other is there to save your life. Keep them free of leaves,

bark and twigs, since these could cause the gate to open accidentally or interfere with the locking mechanism or friction on the rope. Maneuvering through thick trees is problematic. That is why you must always back up your ascenders!

Backing up a doubled line is twice as complicated, because each of the lines must be backed up. It could be backed up

using a single three-wrap Prusik over both lines, or a second mechanical ascender on each leg. Most advanced climbers prefer to back up mechanically because the knots take more time to tie and untie.

One way to avoid the need to back up each leg on a doubled line is to use a true double line instead. When a rope goes over a branch union and back to the ground it is



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one line that has been doubled. Should an ascender fail on either leg, the whole system fails, which is why you need to back up both legs. To make a true double-line system, do the following:

Use a throw ball to pull your first ascending line up into the tree. Once the ascending line makes it through the branch union, pull several more feet of line through, just enough to tie it off to the base of the tree. Then tie a second line midline to line 1. As you continue to pull line 1, it will take line 2 up with it. When you tie off the standing end of line 1 to the base of the

tree, line 2 will be tied midline to line 1, up close to the branch union. The working ends of these lines will not move, so there is no need to back either one up. They are effectively backing each other up, so just clip in one ascender on each line and you're ready to go.

It is important to inspect every tree for overhead hazards and potential dangers before ascending. This is especially true when footlocking. The ascending systems are designed for one way travel going up. Should you need to head down in a hurry, you can't just hit your climbing knot. You

need to switch to a descending system, which can take up to a minute. That would be dangerous during a hornet attack, which could cause panic. So remember to take a careful look at those trees before you go.

When you first learn how to footlock, you need to learn and become familiar with switching to the descending system during mid-line ascent, since you may not make it to your intended tie-in point or platform limb. This is done as follows:

Hang from your ascenders or Prusik cord and set a figure-8 descender or an HMS carabineer with a Munter hitch in line below the ascenders. Take the slack out between the 8/Munter and your ascenders. Then take a bite with your feet, stand up and hold it. Keep yourself balanced with one hand holding the rope while you unclip the ascenders or loosen the Prusik. Then sit back down into your saddle, making sure to keep a good grip on the rope below the 8/Munter with your hands, and descend. It is good to have a back-up belay man on the ground once the 8/Munter is set.

The Munter or the figure 8 can be used with either single or double(d) lines. The Munter is generally preferred because it

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14) This shows Kong double-handled ascenders set on a single line. All ascenders must be backed up, as here, with a micro-ascender.



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gives excellent control during descent, while causing less hockling (kinking) in the rope. And the Munter requires only the use of an HMS carabineer, which has multiple uses in climbing. The 8 requires a carabineer and the figure 8, so using the Munter makes for one less piece of equipment taking up room on your saddle.

There may be situations where you want to make a few cuts with your handsaw on the way up; that's fine, but keep a few things in mind. Always avoid slack in the line, as a slip could end up shock loading the ascenders. The ascending hardware is not designed to take shock loads. It doesn't take much of a drop to cause a toothed ascender to shred a line. Also having a chain saw flopping around on the side of your saddle is not conducive to good footlocking technique. Leave it behind. And though you may be tempted to start working from the ascenders, don't do it. There are approved methods for working single-line technique, but they are beyond the

scope of this article. Learn to footlock for initial ascents and become completely familiar with the proper use of ascenders before even thinking about switching to single-line technique.

### Don't learn aloft

When learning and incorporating new gear and techniques into your climbing, always start low and slow. Throw a line over a 10-foot limb in the backyard and take a bite or two and then walk your hands back down the rope. Or start practicing by footlocking the tail of your climbing line. In order to do that you'll need to have a slack-tending micro pulley set below your friction hitch.



15) When footlocking on a Prusik cord, don't sit on the knot between bites. Hold your weight up with your hands.

It is easy to learn to footlock on the tail of your climbing line because the system's approximate 2:1 mechanical advantage puts about half the load on the tail. You only need about half the friction with your feet and half the strength to stand up. It is much slower, since you only advance half the distance with each cycle, but it is still easier and faster than body thrusting.

Another way to learn is to practice in a chair. Throw a rope over a limb or rafter and sit right under it. Try single line at first. Sit back in the chair and get a bite with your feet. Then grab the rope and pull up hard to make sure you have a good grip with your feet. Keep the bite and put your feet down on the floor and stand up into a full stretch, reaching up high on the rope with your hands. Then pull the rope down as you sit back in the chair. Drop the bite with your feet, lift your legs up for another bite and repeat. Focus on keeping your feet in a good position relative to the rope throughout the movement.

Once you are confident that you are getting a good grip with your feet, switch to a doubled line. And this time when you get a bite, come out of the chair so your full weight is now hanging on the rope and then stand up. Now you're footlocking. Next practice with your saddle and ascenders and practice switching to a Munter and descending. Once you have mastered taking that first bite and switching to a Munter, you're ready to take it into the tree.

### Other gear

Proper footwear is crucial to getting a good grip on the rope. If your form looks good, but you still find the rope slipping through your feet, you probably need to change your boots. Good boots are expensive and well worth the investment to any serious tree climber. Quality lightweight hiking or mountaineering boots are ideal. The key friction in footlocking is at the arch of the right boot, as it presses the rope down on top of the left foot. The tall heel in

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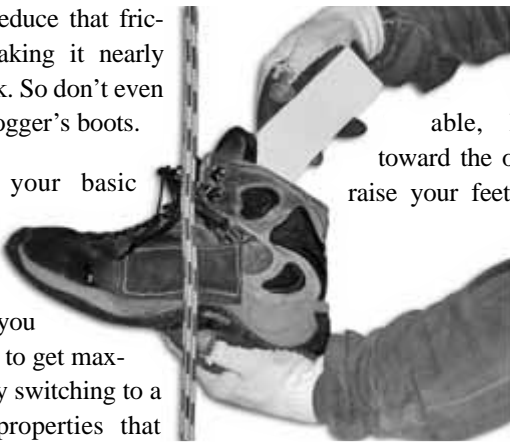
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logger's boots will reduce that friction at the arch, making it nearly impossible to footlock. So don't even try to footlock with logger's boots.

Once you have your basic movement and ascending hardware perfected and are using a good boot, you can tweak the system to get maximum performance by switching to a quality rope. The properties that make a good rope for footlocking are low stretch, light weight, and the appropriate gripping ability of the cover. The amount of stretch in a rope will make a big difference in footlocking, especially on long ascents. Every time you stand up onto the rope, you put additional force on it which will cause it to stretch. The more elasticity in the rope (dynamic), the more of your energy goes into the stretch before you get any lift. So a low stretch or semi-static rope is best for footlocking.

A dynamic rope with a lot of stretch reduces the effective forces in shock loading, which is why it is generally preferable to use a dynamic rope in rigging. Climbing lines are designed to be slightly dynamic as well to reduce the force on the climber should he fall with slack in his line. Unlike rock climbers and other high angle disciplines, tree climbers rarely climb with much slack in their lines, so we really don't need to climb on dynamic ropes. Semi-static lines have enough stretch to protect the climber in case of a fall, yet have far less stretch than many older climbing lines.

New England Ropes makes the Fly, which is a low stretch (semi-static) climbing line with great resistance to abrasion and wear. Samson's Velocity is another preferred climbing line that is slightly lighter. And Yale makes a great handling line called Blaze. For particularly long ascents you might consider going with a true static line, such as New England's KMIII. You would use the static line for ascent only and then set a lanyard and switch to a semi-static climbing line when you reached your tie-in point.



16) I have sewn a stiff rubber patch on the outside of my left boot and use a piece of hard foam rubber inside of the boot to prevent rope pressure from bruising the outside of my foot.

When footlocking near the trunk is unavoidable, keep your back toward the obstacle so you can raise your feet unobstructed, and proceed carefully. Tom Dunlap, safety trainer and arborist guru, recommends that the ascenders NEVER touch anything except rope. Leaves, twigs and branches should be pushed aside, the ascenders should NOT be pushed through plant material. To do this you need to keep a hand free to push the branches aside as the other hand advances the ascenders. When the line is touching a large limb you can rock on the rope to pendulum

away from the limb as you advance the ascender past it.

When you have reached the top of your ascent, simply tie in with your lanyard before unclipping your ascenders. Then set your regular friction hitch, lower your ascenders to get them out of your way, and get to work.

Footlocking requires the right set of skill, equipment and physical ability. Good form takes time, effort and determination to perfect, and is richly rewarded in both productivity and a sense of personal achievement.

*Daniel Murphy is a working arborist, tree care company owner and founder of Tree University, which provides educational training materials, seminars and consulting services for professional arborists. For more information, visit [www.treeu.com](http://www.treeu.com).*





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**October 27-29, 2006**

NJ Shade Tree Federation Conference  
Philadelphia Cherry Hill Hilton, Cherry Hill, NJ  
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Tree Care Workshop  
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[mike.schnelle@okstate.edu](mailto:mike.schnelle@okstate.edu)

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ISA – Texas  
Austin Hilton, Austin, Texas  
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TREE CARE INDUSTRY – JUNE 2006



## PLANET hosts day of service at Arlington National in July

Once every year, members of the Professional Landcare Network (PLANET) converge in Washington to reaffirm their sense of patriotism and pride. PLANET is the merged organization of the Associated Landscape Contractors of America (ALCA) and the Professional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA).

This year, a Renewal & Remembrance event at Arlington National Cemetery will be held Monday, July 24, from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m., with a welcome reception the day before, Sunday, July 23. At Arlington, volunteers from the lawn, landscape and tree care industry dedicate manpower and equipment to enhance this national treasure. PLANET, which is organizing this effort in honor of America's veterans and leaders, is asking TCIA members to help with lightning protection, cabling and bracing for some historic trees in the cemetery. A limited number of specialized crews are needed.

For more information or to volunteer, please contact Phil Fogarty at (216) 289-5446 (office), (216) 410-5489 (mobile) or pfogarty@adelphia.net.

## Davey makes Richard Foote operations manager

Richard Foote recently was promoted to operations manager in charge of acquisitions and expansion for The Davey Tree Expert Company. In his new role, Foote will supervise Davey's acquisitions, a crucial part of the company's strategic growth and expansion. As part of the job, Foote will also help retain newly acquired customers and assimilate newly acquired companies to Davey systems and methodologies.

A 1975 graduate of Kent State University with a degree in conservation and a 1987 MBA graduate, Foote previously served as district manager of Davey's

Denver residential office, where he integrated four acquisitions in the Denver market. Foote started his 30-year career with Davey in lawn care and progressed from lawn care technician to sales representative to district manager and then area manager and to operations manager in Davey's residential/commercial full-service operations.



Richard Foote

## Asplundh partners on utility vegetation management

Asplundh Tree Expert Co. has signed a license and distribution agreement to bring eVMS – the electronic Vegetation Management Solution – to its customers in North America, the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand.

eVMS's patent-pending software and business process provide the tools and support for utilities to create, plan, execute, monitor and report on every aspect of transmission and/or distribution vegetation management programs and activities. Such activities may include performing an inventory of vegetation, prioritizing pruning activities, and scheduling the people and equipment to perform the required tasks. eVMS not only offers process efficiencies, but it will also help utilities comply with and report on new NERC mandatory transmission clearance requirements.

eVMS was developed by CN Utility Consulting, Enporion and ViryaNet. CNUC, with experience in consulting on UVM issues, provides product definition leadership. Enporion is responsible for the development and operation of eVMS, which has incorporated key capabilities from ViryaNet's work management system, Service Hub.

A pre-production field trial of eVMS has

been successfully completed with Asplundh and Southern California Edison. As a result of the agreement, Asplundh Tree Expert Co. will now market eVMS.

"Asplundh has a long history of identifying new processes and tools that have driven productivity improvements in the utility vegetation management process," says Scott Asplundh, Asplundh president. "eVMS is a technology tool that will streamline many aspects of that process for our customers, thereby improving reliability and helping with regulatory reporting."

## Bartlett part of HMI field assessment network

Bartlett Tree Experts has joined the Premier Level Member (PLM) network of field-based landscape assessors developed by Horticultural Asset Management, Inc. (HMI). Bartlett's arborist representatives will conduct landscape assessments on residential and commercial properties to determine the types, sizes and condition of the woody trees and shrubs. From this data HMI's system will establish the replacement cost valuation of each plant assessed on the property. In addition, Bartlett and other PLMs will provide property owners with risk mitigation services, repair and even tree replacement services as needed.

"Bartlett prides itself on providing knowledgeable customers with high value tree care services," states Bartlett's president, Greg Daniels. "We are very excited about being a part of HMI's PLM network because we believe the products HMI is supporting will further consumers' awareness of the value of their landscape and the need for high quality tree care and risk management plans."

HMI's system establishes replacement values for an entire landscape as well as for individual plants. These replacement values can be used to establish insurance coverage requirements, help determine casualty loss values, and to support the asking price of a landscaped property during a real estate transaction. PLM members receive work referrals and other benefits.



## Model 3400 joins Bandit's stump grinder line

The recently unveiled Model 3400 high-production stump grinder is ideal for removing stumps in land- and lot-clearing projects, under power lines and beneath rights of way. This powerful stumper easily disposes of stumps, and its versatility allows it to quickly reach stumps previously inaccessible to other stump grinders. Bandit's Model 3400 is equipped with 140 horsepower and a unique hydrostatic cutter wheel drive with a hydraulic, planetary motor built into the cutter head. This combination eliminates the need for a belt, jackshaft or transfer-case-type drive. The powerful 305 Cat rubber-tracked undercarriage allows this machine to go almost anywhere and work effectively in soft or uneven ground conditions. A radio remote controls all functions from any position, increasing operator comfort while providing maximum visibility, leading to increased production. Contact Bandit Industries at 1-800-952-0178 or via [www.banditchippers.com](http://www.banditchippers.com).



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## Monterey Hasta La Vista, Ant!



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## Stonebrooke Stump grinder

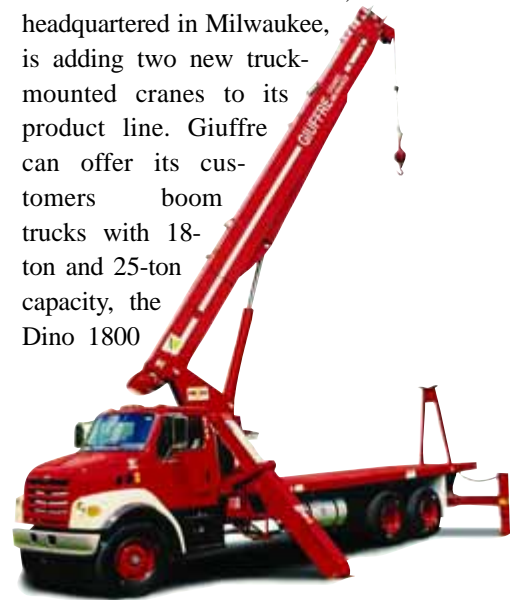
Stonebrooke Equipment Inc.'s ArborWolf stump grinder attachment incorporates patent pending technology and an ultra simple design that eliminates wiring, cylinders, pivot bushings and in-cab controllers. High torque technology gives incredible power and allows up to 6-inch cuts. There are no outriggers to damage the lawn and increase set-up time – just drive up and grind wood. And it is safe. A low rpm design reduces chips thrown and the size of the cleanup area. No case drain line is needed. The unit requires 15 to 40 gpm auxiliary flow. The true view wheel allows easy and precise positioning. The ArborWolf is an affordable, high-production grinder. Contact Stonebrooke Equipment Inc. at 1-800-905-2265.



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## Giuffre and Terex partner on new cranes

Giuffre Bros. Cranes Inc., headquartered in Milwaukee, is adding two new truck-mounted cranes to its product line. Giuffre can offer its customers boom trucks with 18-ton and 25-ton capacity, the Dino 1800



and Dino 2500 respectively. The additions are a result of an exclusive contract between Giuffre Bros. and Terex, an international corporation with a crane division in Waverly, Iowa. Under a special licensing agreement, Giuffre Bros. will be the only crane distributor to handle these two new products. The new units round out the Giuffre Bros. line, which includes truck-cranes with capacity from 17 tons to 40 tons. Giuffre points out that the standard Giuffre Bros. practice of buying in large volume will make these new truck-crane packages available at the lowest prices in the industry. The company offers in-house financing and all products are supported by the Giuffre Bros. parts and service department. Contact Giuffre Bros. Cranes Inc. at (414) 764-9200 or via [www.giuffre.com](http://www.giuffre.com).

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Send Cutting Edge submissions to:  
Tree Care Industry,  
3 Perimeter Road, Unit 1,  
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or [staruk@treecareindustry.org](mailto:staruk@treecareindustry.org)

## Mauget Abacide 2 controls tent caterpillars

Abacide 2, Mauget's newest insecticide, is now double the strength of Abacide. Abacide 2 (2 percent abamectin in 4-milliliter capsules) was shown to have "fast, 100 percent control of eastern tent caterpillars" in a 2004 University of Kentucky College of Agriculture study looking at prevention of Mare Reproductive Loss Syndrome (MRLS). The caterpillars have been linked with outbreaks of MRLS, which can cause late-term abortions, early-term fetal losses and weak foals. "It is the first effective non-spray caterpillar insecticide on the market where the active ingredient has low toxicity to people and livestock," according to a University of Kentucky press release on the Abacide 2 findings. Abacide 2 is a warning labeled effective insecticide controlling spider mites, leaf miners, elm leaf beetle, sycamore lace bug, and lepidoptera insects such as fall web worm and eastern tent caterpillar. Among its added benefits are a faster control time and a longer residual period. Contact Mauget at 1-800-873-3779 or via [www.mauget.com](http://www.mauget.com).



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## Vermeer TG7000 tub grinder

Vermeer Manufacturing Company's TG7000 tub grinder, its latest organic waste recycling technology, uses a CAT 3412 E power plant with a twin turbocharged air-after-cooled engine. Engine options include a 1,000 hp (746 kW) or 860 hp (641 kW). A non-loader machine weighs approximately 73,500 pounds (27,433 kg); with loader feature weighs approximately 84,500 pounds (38,409 kg). Other options include mechanical or air-ride suspension, and wheel assemblies with steel hub piloted duals or aluminum super singles – which provide increased ground clearance and better traction. The TG7000 has a self-tensioning, maintenance-free tub drive chain; an inside tub diameter of 10 feet (3 m), a depth of 56 inches (142 cm), and an 11-foot, 4-inch (3.45 m) loading height. A 13 foot (4 m) tub flare makes loading large and bulky materials easier. The tub table lifts over 90 degrees for easy tub clean out and mill box access. Contact Vermeer at 1-888-VERMEER (837-6337) or via [www.vermeer.com](http://www.vermeer.com).



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# Accreditation Opens a Door to Consulting

By Janet Aird

Opportunity is everywhere in the world of tree care. And the Tree Care Industry Association's Accreditation program is giving consulting arborists and tree care company owners an opportunity to expand their business in a new direction.

Achieving TCIA Accreditation not only makes companies look more professional to consumers searching for quality companies, it also helps them operate more efficiently and safely. But Accreditation is not a 'rubber stamp' – TCIA has 67 points in its audit checklist.

"It's not too common to get all 67 the first time," says Bob Rouse, who designed the program and is now director of Accreditation. "If a company is just getting started on the process, we'd recommend hiring a consultant."

And that's where opportunity comes in. Consulting arborists who want to expand their consulting business, and/or tree care company owners who want to expand into consulting, can get work with companies that want help preparing for Accreditation.

Candidates who go through TCIA's new auditor/consultant training program can become TCIA-approved auditor/consultants. In addition to assisting some companies prepare for the Accreditation process, they can perform the Accreditation audits for other companies that are ready to become accredited, as well as perform periodic inspections of previously accredited companies.



*Randall McDonald, at right, who is undergoing the TCIA Accreditation auditor/consultant training, observes operations during his site visit at Barrett Tree Service in Sheffield, Mass. That's Barrett's Asa Palmer manning the lowering line.*

## Consultants

There's a need for consultants who know the tree care industry.

John Iurka, TCIA's first – and so far, only – approved auditor/consultant, says, "Most well-qualified tree care companies are up to speed on what the TCIA Accreditation program requires, but some need some fine tuning. There are so many areas in our very technical world nowadays; probably almost everyone has an area they need improvement on."

Two years ago, Robert Brudenell's tree care company, The Natural Way, became accredited. It was the third in the country, and the first in Colorado.

"We had a lot of questions," Brudenell

says. "I think having a consultant would speed up the process. It would especially reduce administrative time. But it would depend who the consultant was, how intimately he understood the Accreditation process and how the business was organized."

Company owners who want help preparing for Accreditation don't have to hire a TCIA-approved auditor/consultant. A business consultant may be all they need. But Iurka points out that business consultants are focused "on the bottom line. TCIA-approved auditor/consultants are familiar with all phases of what tree companies do, like pesticides and legal issues."

Bob Good, owner of Good's Tree Care

Inc., worked with a consultant to help him with the Accreditation process.

“It was a lot of learning for myself and the consultant,” Good says. “Jim (Egenrieder) had a pretty good background, but he spent a lot of time bringing himself up to speed on Accreditation.”

Egenrieder has since enrolled in TCIA’s auditor/consultant program.

Most companies could benefit from using an auditor/consultant even if they aren’t getting accredited, Iurka says. “I think every company and every office of larger companies needs to be fine-tuned occasionally. There are so many different facets of regulations, and regulations change. Sometimes business owners may not know what the latest ones are.”

Rouse recommends that companies do a self-audit every year to check things such as their insurance and the number of arborists they have on staff, “so things don’t pile up or fall off the radar.”

“Having a consultant can help. It’s always good to have someone from the outside with an objective view to pick up on things that are second nature to owners,” he says. “Consultants also can help set up safety programs for companies.”

TCIA-approved auditor/consultants are specifically qualified to consult for tree care companies because they go through TCIA’s rigorous training program, Rouse says.

### TCIA approved auditor/consultant

To become a TCIA approved auditor/consultant, applicants must first pass a pre-selection process, where TCIA looks at their qualifications and experience. They don’t have to have previous consulting experience, but they must have worked for at least five years in a tree care business or have equivalent experience in the management and operation of a service-oriented business. They also must have a track record showing that they have ethical business practices and high personal standards. They cannot be employed by a

North American or North American-based tree care company.

Once they’re accepted into the auditor/consultant program, applicants attend a two-day workshop, which gives them intense training in the TCIA Accreditation program. They learn every aspect of a well-run tree care business, from business practices to pruning standards, including:

- elements of a good business plan
- how to address customer complaints in a satisfactory manner, and how to track complaints to find out how many have been settled and how many have not
- requirements for training and certification of employees
- relevant federal regulations, including ones from the Department of Transportation and OSHA
- ANSI A300 performance standards, which include writing estimates, and techniques for pruning and fertilizing
- ANSI Z133.1 safety standards for pruning, trimming, repairing, maintaining and removing trees, and cutting brush

Once applicants complete the workshop, they conduct a trial audit of a company that is seeking Accreditation and write up the audit. After their audit report is reviewed and approved, they may be qualified to both consult for or audit any tree care company in the country.

TCIA-approved auditor/consultants keep informed of current industry standards and adhere to local, national and international laws. They provide objective and accurate service and conduct business in an honest and dignified manner.

They also maintain the confidentiality of all their auditing and consulting activities. They agree to report mistakes to the company and to TCIA as soon as possible and to notify companies and TCIA of potential conflicts of interest.

“It’s very exciting,” Iurka says, of becoming TCIA’s first auditor/consultant. “This is something entirely new in my

arsenal of expertise.” Now otherwise retired, Iurka owned a tree care company for 10 years, and has more than 35 years experience in all aspects of the industry.



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Employees at Grace Tree Care in Hayden, Idaho, conducting a safety meeting. Approved auditors/consultants can help a company set up an employee training program and other business systems related to TCIA Accreditation so that training is documented and effective.

Company owners who have an interest in hiring an approved auditor/consultant to either audit or consult may contact either

TCIA or one of the auditor/consultants directly, Iurka says. They can see his references, experience and location, and discuss

his fee. Consultants cannot audit a company for Accreditation if they have already served as a consultant for the same company.

#### Consultants and Accreditation

Once company owners apply for Accreditation, TCIA sends them all the information they need, at no cost.

“I got a three-ring binder and at least one CD,” Brudenell says.

One CD tells them everything they need to know about becoming accredited. It includes an Accreditation guidebook, a TCIA Model Company Safety Program, ANSI standards, and a management guide. The management guide includes a sample employee handbook that outlines policies such as the employee dress code and vacation time. There’s also an Accreditation training database CD and a self-audit checklist.

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Bob Rouse, left, TCIA's director of Accreditation, and a company employee observe operations at General Tree Service in Clackamas, Oregon, during Rouse's Accreditation audit in March. General Tree subsequently received its Accreditation, the second Oregon company to do so.

Rouse stresses that the information is intended to be used as guidelines for companies, not cut-and-dried rules they have to follow. "We created a model that can be

adapted to virtually any tree care company. How the company implements the policy is up to the company."

Consultants can use all this information as a basis for their recommendations, Rouse says. In fact, he adds, companies can use the Accreditation guidebook whether or not they decide to become accredited. "It's a great blueprint for a tree care company."

Good says that there was so much information on becoming accredited, it was overwhelming. He hired Egenrieder to help.

"The big thing was getting systems in place," Good says. "I needed someone to help organize the process. I got together with him every two weeks. He helped all around. We developed timelines. He got everything to Bob (Rouse) in a timely manner. He helped put systems in place.

He helped with the safety program and put together the whole safety manual. He helped write the employee handbook. He was really good."

### Auditors

When a company owner feels his company is ready to be accredited, the auditor comes in.

The audit itself takes a whole day, Rouse says. First, the auditor visits a worksite and interviews employees to get a general sense of the company, check that training is being done, observe crews working and see some pruning jobs. Later, it's back to the office.

The auditor checks the company's business plan. He makes sure that the company has sufficient insurance coverage and appropriate licenses, and is making tax payments. He also verifies that the company is complying with industry standards for training and certification of employees and with all relevant federal regulations.

By the end of the day, the auditor can usually tell the owners if they're accredited. If they're not, he'll tell them what they need to do. It's a checklist program, Rouse says, so they don't have to complete it all at once.

Good is glad he had a consultant. "It makes the process go a little more smoothly," he says. "And you get it done."

TCIA Accreditation helps tree care companies become more organized and to operate more efficiently and safely. It also provides opportunities for tree care professionals interested in consulting a new avenue through which to expand their business.

*For more information on becoming accredited or becoming a TCIA Accreditation auditor/consultant, contact Bob Rouse at 1-800-733-2622 or [rouse@treecareindustry.org](mailto:rouse@treecareindustry.org).*

*Janet Aird is a freelance writer who lives in Altadena, California.*



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# 3 MYTHS About TCIA Accreditation

## 1.

### TCIA Accreditation is only for large companies

This is one of the biggest myths. TCIA Accreditation is designed to work for companies of all sizes. In fact, if you are a small to medium size business you may actually see a larger return on your investment. *What is true...* If you want to become a more profitable company, this is an excellent place to start.

## 2.

### TCIA Accreditation is too difficult to complete

You may be pleasantly surprised. In fact, you may already meet most of the requirements. *What is true...* The Accreditation process is carefully structured so that you will have access to many tools, resources and association staff that will help guide you through the process.

## 3.

### I don't have enough time to complete the program

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# CHIPS ARE FLYING OVER THE SOARING COSTS OF FUEL

By Rick Howland

Is the cost of fuel eating into your profits? Fortunately, an unintended consequence of the new federal clean air laws, some manufacturing options, and a bit of common sense can save a bundle in the long term – even if it's only at a few gallons of fuel a day.

The new federal rules to clean up diesel engines (diesel by far being the leading chipper power plant) had a rather unintentional result – fuel economy. For engine makers to get their diesel machines to run cleaner, electronic and computer controls were installed. The new controls became largely responsible for how an engine runs in terms of fuel economy, and when it runs. For example, if you leave some chippers running without actually processing wood, the unit will de-stroke, that is, go into a borderline sleep mode, calling for less fuel until you crank it up to speed.

Next, because they can't directly affect the engines, chipper manufacturers are finding other ways to conserve fuel, such as increasing the efficiency with which the disk or drum attacks the wood, reducing the need for brute force – and fuel; and sometimes scavenging energy for processes like moving the chips.

And finally, chipper makers are discovering that business sense is being applied to the size and numbers of chipper units a company runs and, ultimately, how efficiently an operator runs the unit. (Instead of utilizing only the largest machines, users are opting either for very large units that are extremely efficient, or for units of different sizes, thus matching their equipment and fuel economy to the job.)

Eric Ray is sales manager at Altec Industries' Creedmoor Manufacturing



Rayco's RC 20xp 20-inch capacity whole tree drum chipper has a 225 hp turbo-charged John Deere diesel engine that attaches to a maintenance free hydraulic self-adjusting clutch. Automatic feed control protects the engine from overloading and enhances machine performance. Rayco's fuel saver technology throttles the engine down to an idle if the feed wheel control bar is left in neutral for more than 60 seconds, minimizing fuel consumption.

Division in Creedmoor, N.C. The company is largely a distributor of chipper equipment, and most of the power plants in its chipper line are Kubota, Cummins, Perkins and Deutz. With few exceptions, engines are diesel. According to Ray, the company has a cooperative agreement with Wood/Chuck to market its chipper brands. Altec still makes its own smaller, gas-powered Whisper Chippers.

Ray's observations seem counterintu-



While most of its large units have diesel engines from Kubota, Cummins, Perkins or Deutz, Altec still makes its smaller, gas-powered Whisper Chippers.

itive to what one might think in an era of rapidly rising fuel costs.

“What I am seeing is a push to buy bigger chippers, the larger self-feed diesel types versus smaller gas styles,” says Ray. “Larger ones in my opinion help in two ways. First, there's the diesel fuel economy, but also these units can take on larger pieces and more volume, so the run time is not as long.”

The result, he says, is a throughput of material at a lower cost per ton. “Couple that with an accelerating market for tree care services, I think the trend to larger, more efficient units is a matter of business opportunity, fuel notwithstanding,” says Ray.

Jerry Morey, president of Bandit Industries agrees that “fuel is definitely a big issue. We chipper guys can't do much on the engine side. We're at the mercy of Tier 2 and Tier 3 regulations [a tiered approach to mandated emissions] with the government dictating to manufacturers. There's not much we can do there.”



*Bandit's design allows users to touch up the chipper knives. "The biggest thing to rob horsepower and drive up fuel consumption in a chipper is dull knives," says Bandit's Jerry Morey.*

Limited by engine technology, he says, chipper makers are left with trying to make the chipper cut more efficiently and thus use less energy.

At Bandit, the approach is to maximize the angle of the wood's grain as it heads into the action, specifically on the larger diameter drums. "We're standardizing the chip angle of the large drum machines, the 1290, 1590 and 1890," Morey says.

Those steps join others taken years ago, such as the auto feed, which stops and backs out ill-fed material. According to Morey, this eliminates friction created from wood rubbing on the disk or drum and lets the engine recover faster. The result is less fuel consumption.

Additionally, the process reduces the possibility of the wood creating excess heat and taking the temper off the cutting knives. "Knives stay sharper longer," he says. "The biggest thing to rob horsepower and drive up fuel consumption in a chipper



*Steps to increase fuel efficiency at Bandit include creating discharge systems, such as this swivel discharge option, that use the natural energy of the chip coming off the knife to assist in the discharge, a design that allows anvils to drop into their proper settings automatically.*

is dull knives."

Other steps to increase fuel efficiency at Bandit include creating discharge systems that use the natural energy of the chip coming off the knife to assist in the discharge, a design that allows anvils to drop into their proper settings automatically, and including the capability for customers to touch-up knives.

John Bird, president at J.P. Carlton, is of the opinion that the fuel cost crisis is causing tree care businesses to think more carefully and plan more aggressively how they buy and use equipment. Carlton makes five chipper models, all disk, mostly using Deutz, Kubota, Caterpillar or John Deere diesel engines.

Bird, in addressing the federal mandates to clean up diesel emissions, says, "To clean them up, engine manufacturers had to make their engines more efficient," and he observed that the fuel efficiencies were a collateral, albeit positive fallout.

"What I'm seeing are customers in our industry who realize they no longer need all large chippers in the high horsepower range on all jobs." His point is that companies with two to three crews can run smaller ones alongside of larger ones in the fleet. "Not all of them need large machines. Ornamental trimming, cleanup or even a takedown doesn't require an 18-inch capacity with a large engine. We see an increase in the sale of our 9-inch chipper because of its efficiencies and the fact it's on the high end of the capacity and durability spectrum."

Bird sees tree care industry pros purchasing multiple units, each appropriate to a job, and they are no longer rolling out the large ones "just in case."

"It requires better planning," says Bird. "Plus, with systems like reverse-feed that used to be an option becoming more standard, you can get by with lower horsepower."

While engine technology and chipper technology have advanced in recent years, Bird doesn't see the hottest trend in cars,



*J.P. Carlton makes five chipper models, all disk, mostly using Deutz, Kubota, Caterpillar or John Deere diesel engines.*

hybrids, coming to the tree care industry anytime soon. "I have not heard of them, and I doubt we'll see one in the next 20 years," Bird says. He pointed out that hybrid cars use regenerating technologies from braking to help recharge the car's battery. "I doubt if this is applicable for chippers."

Tom Gross, owner of Dynamic Manufacturing Corporation, notes, "When diesel topped \$2 a gallon, everyone started asking questions about fuel consumption."

"First off, one of the greatest sources of fuel economy is the cutting system in your machine. The more efficient the cutting system, the more your fuel economy," Gross says. "Engine manufacturers tell us that machines under load require so many gallons per minute of fuel per number of horsepower. That said, if you're processing wood at a high rate, the cutting system becomes the major variable."

Rather than disk and/or conventional drum style chippers, Dynamic makes the Conehead chipper. "With this basic design, we've seen guys using them get more tons per gallon (of fuel) per hour because it's a more efficient cutting system," Gross says.

As Gross explains it, the benefit of the Conehead technology is the angle of attack the chipper takes on the wood, actually creating a shearing force to help the knife slide through wood, using less energy, less power and less fuel. The Conehead line consists of the 300, 400 and the most popular 500 series, each with multiple models. All are diesel.



A Morbark Hurricane 18 with CAT 213 hp power unit. Morbark uses mainly diesel in its six models of 8- to 18-inch chippers.

“Maintenance of knives for better cutting conditions also means better conditions for fuel economy, and I’ve noticed that users who ran chippers wide open all day with little or no wood are getting more cognizant of fuel costs,” says Gross. “Now they will pile up wood, process and then shut down. It’s all com-

mon sense, but it adds up.”

Morbark also uses mainly diesel in its six models of 8- to 18-inch chippers, although it does offer a gas-powered engine on its small 8-inch chipper. Rob Faber, commercial sales specialist, says the fuel crunch right now is not affecting sales but he and the company see rising fuel cost as an issue.

“I’ve heard from engine manufacturers that they are starting to see a call for biodiesel fuel, but there’s a question of how much (biodiesel) chippers can run. Anecdotally, it appears most can run up to 15 percent,” says Faber.

“Customers are going to larger engines largely because of fuel efficiency, and that’s because the newer engines are electronically controlled, which makes them more efficient than the older models. All Tier 2 engines are electronically controlled,” he says, adding that there is customer interest in the Tier 3 engines in

the 175 hp class and up, but he hasn’t seen any yet from the engine makers.

“There have been,” Faber adds, “a growing number of calls from customers on fuel efficiency, and the No. 1 thing a user can do is to keep knives sharp and anvils in shape or replaced. Maintenance is the best weapon to get the most fuel efficiency from a chipper. Dull knives and worn anvils take more fuel to power. We stress proper maintenance to our customers worried about fuel efficiency. That includes keeping air filters clean, running belts at proper tension and keeping clutches in adjustment.”

Although the first intent was to get diesels to burn clean, Ken Sconson at Rayco, which makes 10 models, drum and disk, in sizes from 12 to 20 inches, agrees that the new Tier 2 diesel engines have resulted in very efficient power plants. In many of the electronically controlled models, engines “talk” to the logic board, he says. “That essentially de-strokes an

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*Iveco, distributed by TCIA member Engine Center, of Ferndale, Mich., is one of several engine manufacturers used by Woodsman. Woodsman's Bob Engler has seen the interest in fuel efficiencies grow over the past three years since fuel prices first began their climb, and he expects to see further efficiencies along with cleaner burning engines with the coming of the Tier 3 group sometime next year.*

engine automatically based on demand (thus saving fuel) in cases when the user doesn't remember to do so. The feature is now pretty much standard on heavy horsepower diesel engines of 115 horsepower and up," he says.

Another factor he points to is that "bigger horsepower engines may have efficiencies built in automatically. "Think about it. How long does it take to chip a

tree? With a big unit, one tree can be gone in 15 to 20 minutes. Plus, in the past, arborists may have kept their chipper running for hours, chipping as they dissected a tree. The de-stroking automatically saves because there's no need to run the machine all out while you're working ... When the operator needs to get up and running, all he has to do is hit a bar and the engine automatically goes back to full power."

Woodsman makes eight chipper models, 10 to 22 inches, all diesel (John Deere, Caterpillar, Perkins, Iveco and Cummins) and all drum-style. Woodsman's Bob Engler has seen the interest in fuel efficiencies grow over the past three years since fuel prices first began their climb and he expects to see further efficiencies along with cleaner burning engines with the coming of the Tier 3 group sometime next year. Tier 3 will see things like dual radiators and waste-gated turbo powered engines.

"Mechanical has gone by the wayside," says Engler. "Almost all engines through Tier 3 will have experienced a complete changeover to computer control beginning next year. These are far better and more efficient engines than three or four years ago."

"The fuel issue has really started to hit

home at the tree care level," Engler says. "Initially it appeared the market was softer because of the uncertainty of the economy in the third quarter of '05 and into early '06."

Business for Woodsman has been good to steady, but profitability for the tree care professionals may not be so much a matter of the efficiency of their tree care services, Engler says, as it is "competition with John Q Public for spendable dollars. It's a matter of fuel prices, gas and home heating that leaves less to spend on tree care." To Engler, if there is a real fuel crunch in the business, it's a slowing in tree trimming because of customer cash flow.

"Good tree companies have anticipated that, so we are busy, but taking a wait-and-see attitude," he adds.

"On the flip side regarding the bigger units, there is more talk than ever about the biomass aspect of chipping," Engler reports. "More burners are going on-line to burn chips to make electricity. In the Northeast, especially, we're starting to see that coming, and the result will be good for the arborists who are near these burn plants. Three to five years ago we couldn't get rid of chips. (See related article in the May 2006 *TCI* magazine). Now, people are lining up for chips and I've heard of at least five new plants coming on line with other mothballed ones re-firing. At the same time, there's talk about selling chips overseas to nations like Belgium!"

For Engler, it's not so much a matter of cost, but marketing and profitability. He cites another example. "There has been a big push on for bigger chippers in the last five to seven years," he says. "It's the need to process more and bigger wood without adding personnel. It's no longer a surprise to see people buy a big chipper for large jobs and a small one for prunings and day-in/day-out. A few gallons of fuel a day makes a difference."

At Vermeer, Chris Nichols, national sales manager, says, "Rather than talk about electronic engines becoming more efficient, and using peak horsepower and torque curves of the engines, one thing we do at

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Vermeer is to use the most efficient engines available to their highest efficiencies."

Sometimes it's the little things that count. For example, Nichols says Vermeer took a look at common field practices and found that operators on a job site would be likely to engage the cutter and put the chip-

per to full rpm, run the material through and leave the chipper at high rev as they went some distance to get more material.

"The whole time, the chipper is burning fuel at full rpm. They'll toss more material into the chipper and go for more. One thing we did a couple of years ago may be a small thing, but it does help decrease fuel consumption," Nichols says. "Vermeer changed to a high/low, two-position throttle. It's done with a rocker switch. No levers to adjust or cables. The operator can hit the switch, walk away, then hit it again to high to feed new material. Introduced in part to lower noise, the switch has evolved into a bit of a fuel miser. Making it easy for the operator means they tend to put the chipper at low throttle more often."

Vermeer also "tweaked" the electronic feed control system to flatten peaks and valleys in the rpm to keep the engine more constant and deliver better fuel economy,

says Nichols. "We've also introduced lighter materials as much as possible – plastic and fiberglass to help towing efficiencies," he adds. "Some materials you just can't lighten up, though; they need to be as robust as possible."

"What we're really trying to do is get better at using less horsepower to do more, matching the engine to the demands of the feed, cutting and electronic control systems closely in combination with other parts," says Nichols. "There may be cases, for example, where a 110 horsepower chipper doesn't need a full 130 horsepower engine any more. We recognize that the heavier the engine, the more fuel it consumes."

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the smaller models, and we're seeing a lot more demand on 6-inch and up – strictly diesel engines, because of their lifespan and torque advantage. There was a lot bigger fuel advantage for diesel before the fuel crunch, but people still like diesel because it is a little cheaper and diesel engines have a longer life.”

“Big engines are a fact of life in the tree care business,” Rizzo says. “The challenge is to maximize fuel consumption by matching the horsepower to the work. All of our machines are designed to be able to chip more wood with less horsepower due to our impeller design efficiency.”

Rizzo explains that the company has added speed sensing capabilities to the auto feed. “This monitors the rpm of the cutting disk, which prevents overloading the cutting disk and lets the impeller catch up. This kind of engineering also gives the customer the opportunity to chip larger capacity wood with smaller horsepower. A 120- to 150-

horsepower chipper eats a lot more fuel than a 60- or 80-horsepower unit that can do essentially the same work,” he says. Salsco engines range from 25 to 130 hp for the gas models and 35 to 250 hp for diesel.

Regarding the PTO-powered chippers, “A tree guy typically won't bring a tractor to the job, but those who use the PTO-driven chippers save (in capital costs) because they already own the engine,” he says.

Rizzo points to a sign of the times with this observation: “I've had some customers tell me they make sure they have wood lined up and ready to run before starting the chipper so they don't have to leave it running as they bring fresh wood.”

Chipper manufacturers seem to grasp the need for greater fuel efficiency and, with that in mind, are building machines around the work habits of the end user. Now, if the engine manufacturers can just make a power plant that runs on chips ... ⬆

Joe Rizzo, Salsco sales rep, says, “We see a demand for gas-powered chippers in



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By Peter Gerstenberger

## Is End Near For Co-op Help?



The days in which a commercial arborist can count on partnership from the state or country cooperative extension agent may be numbered. That is what the author reads in between the lines of a recent report provided to the administrator of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service (CSREES).

The Cooperative Extension System (CES) is a publicly funded, non-formal education system that links the educational and research resources and activities of the USDA-CSREES, 74 Land-Grant Universities (LGUs), 30 other institutions, and approximately 3,150 county administrative units. The Cooperative Extension System's stated mission is to enable people to improve their lives and communities through learning partnerships that put knowledge to work.

In early 2004, the chair of the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy (ECOP) and the administrator of USDA-CSREES appointed a task force of extension directors, extension administrators and CSREES staff to review the changes affecting funding for the Cooperative Extension System nationwide. The task force also was encouraged to recommend actions and best practices to maintain and improve the quality and impact of extension programming in the face of a constantly changing financial situation. The report of the task force was released in January. The 44-page report is available online at: [www.csrees.usda.gov/qlinks/ecop.html](http://www.csrees.usda.gov/qlinks/ecop.html) (click on "Final Report" to download the file.)

The national CES has changed significantly in the past 30 years, adding new partners, expanding programming significantly in the human sciences and becoming a trusted source of professional training and certification programs.

These changes have occurred against a backdrop of shifting financial resources. Federal funding has remained flat with the federal government moving to more competitive funding models. State government contributions to Cooperative Extension increased substantially in the 1980s but not equally across the country. Local government support is patchy with some local governments increasing support, others providing none.

Each state and institution has responded to financial challenges in its own way. Some institutions have aggressively sought external grant funding to support programming. Others have reorganized offices and staff to maintain program integrity in the face of budget cuts. Some institutions have experimented with the imposition of fees for programs that result in a private individual benefit, such as certification or accreditation. The public has also responded with a desire to shoulder some of the management and funding burden of popular extension programs through private donations and the creation of Extension-related non-profit organizations.

In fiscal 1972, Cooperative extension funding was just over 40 percent federal, just under 40 percent state, 17 percent local and about 2 percent "other." In fiscal 2003, federal funding had shrunk to 17 percent. With state and local funding not changing appreciably, grants (17 percent) and fees (4 percent) had taken up the slack.

Since the early 1970s, the makeup of Extension faculty and staff has changed dramatically. Some county-based educators and state Extension specialists are host LGU university faculty, some are not. In other cases, state specialists are university faculty, yet county-based "agents" are not, and many such educators are no longer hired exclusively to do Extension work. Today many Extension educators who are

university faculty members located on the institution's primary campus are often hired with split appointments and are expected to conduct research, operate Extension programs and teach courses. Requirements for earned educational credentials and levels of professional performance have been raised dramatically over the past three decades and now more closely match university faculty in other disciplines. County-based Extension faculty members must have expertise in more diversified fields as more positions are unfilled or eliminated. The bottom line is that in many cases, Extension is making do with fewer faculty and staff.

The likeliest outcomes from the challenges faced by CES include: fee-for-service activities replacing services that used to cost nothing; increasing dependency on grants and other private funding to sustain CES initiatives and greater emphasis inevitably being placed on initiatives that can create and sustain their own funding. Even privatization of the cooperative extension system, or key processes within it, is possible.

For the practicing arborist, the days may be numbered that one can call the county horticultural extension agent to get diagnosis and treatment recommendations for a variety of ornamental and shade tree pests. In some areas, those free services are already gone.

It may behoove the local, state and regional tree organizations and arborist associations to engage in more active dialogue with CES representatives. If the private sector doesn't take some initiative, a vital and in many cases free service could be lost.

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

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# Pruning Lilac for Flowers & Shape

Lilacs in bloom make wonderful protective hedgerows. After the petals have fallen and the old flower skeleton has been removed, the flowers for next year will be perpetuated. The lilacs make a fine green wall the rest of time before the deciduous shrubs drop their leaves.

By William Warren

William Warren's "The Common Lilac (*Syringa vulgaris*)," in the December 2002 issue of TCI, addressed the rejuvenation of lilacs. This article updates the progress of those lilacs as well as pruning for flowers, transplanting (ball and burlap), forming and shape for the new lilac.

There is an amazing anomaly where grass, flowers, trees and shrubs are concerned. Homeowners will spend hundreds of hours to take care of the grass and flowers and will do practically nothing to take care of their shrubs, bushes and trees. A nice green lawn, some flowers and some foundation plants can make a house into a home and be worth several thousands of dollars to the resale of the house. Lilacs that are established have an aesthetic value that would be difficult to replace by most homeowners. Yet, lots of established lilacs are failing to flower or are dying because of neglect and the lack of understanding their needs.

The common lilac (*Syringa vulgaris*) is the state flower of New Hampshire. It is not an indigenous shrub to

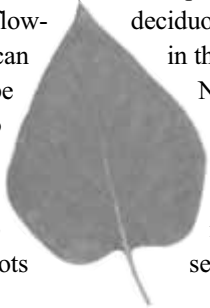
New Hampshire. It was imported many years ago to be part of the fauna for the Wentworth Coolidge house and grounds in Portsmouth, N.H. From there the lilac spread across the United States in zones where it can grow. It is hard to imagine spring in America without lilacs. But if we do not learn to take care of these deciduous shrubs, losing them is a real possibility.

Depending upon the needs of the homeowner, lilacs can be single-stemmed tree-like shrubs or multi-stemmed bush-like ones. In their multi-stemmed state, lilacs make terrific hedgerows for year-round protection even though they are deciduous plants. They drop their leaves in the late fall (October-November in New England). In the early spring (April-May) they produce smooth edged opposite leaves followed by flowers (May-June) in various colors. Purple shades seem to be the most popular, followed by various shades of white.

How strange it would be to drive across the country in the spring without seeing and smelling our beautiful lilacs. Why could this happen? There are voracious

lilac wood-eating borers (*Podosesia syringae*) that will kill lilacs. Pruning and ground vegetation management are two ways to help eradicate the borers because we know their habitat and life cycle.

We need to clean up the dead vegetation matter (leaves, twigs, dead grasses, etc.) beneath lilac shrubs, as *Podosesia syringae* lives in the ground. Briefly, its life cycle shows that in its adult stage, the female of the species comes up to surface, flies to a lilac stem, and lays its eggs in the bark. The eggs hatch into their next stage. The larvae do the damage to lilacs before they exit the wood and fall to the ground to start their



The common lilac (*Syringa vulgaris*) leaf is opposite, simple and broad-ovate. Its margin is entire (or edges without teeth). The lilac hardiness is zone 3 to 7. Soil preference is near neutral.



Lilacs in bloom. The common lilac (*Syringa vulgaris*) is easily grown and takes very little yearly maintenance to enhance the qualities of the shrub.

life cycle again.

In detail, the larvae, after hatching from the eggs, eat their way into the old wood stems or trunks. They eat their way out of the stems several inches below where they entered. Small holes in the stems can be identified to show that the lilacs are infested, but the holes are exit holes. The larvae put enzymes in the wood that hasten wood rot. Lilacs rot from the inside out (from old wood in well established stems). When the larvae exit the stem, they drop into the vegetation beneath the lilacs and burrow into the soft earth to begin their life cycle anew. The following spring, when they pupate into adults, they mate and lay their eggs. If we clean up the ground beneath the shrubs the borers have less chance of surviving.

By careful selection of mature lilacs to remove the older canes (stems), the food chain for the *Podosesia syringae* can be interrupted. The best time to remove older canes is during winter. The best time to



*The old lilac was already well-established when I moved into my home 23 years ago. But like a lot of old lilacs, no one had ever taken care of them. They had been left to be attacked and infested by the lilac borer. When this happens the trunk or stem of the plant rots from the inside and eventually the lilac dies. The hollow roots are all that is left from the original lilac in this location.*

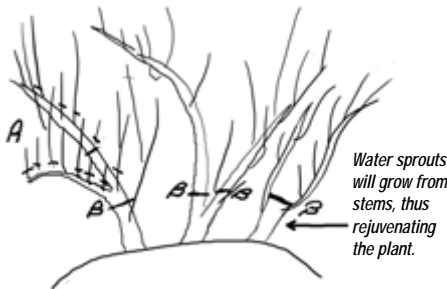
identify which trunks or stems need to be removed over the winter is during the previous summer. Check the wood for the exit holes and mark those trunks with construction tape (a colorful plastic tape that does not have a sticky side). The borer does not attack newer canes of younger lilacs. The borers only like the old, damaged or diseased lilacs. Some control is possible by cleaning up the local vegetation. But to really affect the habitats of the lilac borers, lilacs have to be pruned and managed across a wide area. The good news is that *Podosesia syringae* only lives on lilacs.



*The new lilacs taken from the old established lilacs are about to flower; the buds have broken. With careful ball-and-burlap removal of the best of the suckers (from the old plant) and planting those suckers in the best location in our garden, it was possible to transplant them back near the place where they had sprouted in 2001.*

So, a clear pattern emerges. Prune out the old stems in winter (January-February). Keep the best of the newer ones. Remove dead, diseased, crossed and rubbing limbs. Fill in any holes in the shrubs with the water sprouts (new growth limbs from wood) or suckers (new growth stems from roots and ground). Prune out the old lilac flower skeletons after the flower petals drop and before the first of July. July through August are when next year's flower buds are set.

Bear in mind, when pruning all plants, that one third of the plant is the maximum amount of healthy-for-the-plant removal. Only when drastic rejuvenation is carried out is there an option for more wood to be removed. With good pruning habits, drastic rejuvenation can be avoided altogether.



*Drastic rejuvenation is the last choice to save an infested clump of lilacs. Remember to remove no more than 1/3 of the stems at any one time. a) Prune back limbs to lighten the stem before cutting it off. This is done to keep stem from splitting due to excessive weight. b) The final cut removes the stem 15 to 18 inches above and parallel to the ground. January/February are the time for drastic rejuvenation of lilacs.*

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*This common lilac (Syringa vulgaris) was grown to give some protection from the noise of pedestrians, cars, etc., as well as help create nicer appearing property. The thicker the clump (from ground to its upper-most leaves) the more relief it provides. The downside of keeping our clump this way is that I do not follow some of the basic rules of pruning. The clump has some sections that are not flowered. This happens when people break off limbs of lilac blooms. It can take years (or never) to get flowers back unless the clump is thinned and reshaped.*

### Pruning for flowers

When pruning lilacs for flowers, curved hand-pruners (bypass or secateurs) are preferable. Flat (or anvil type) secateurs require wide crotches where curved ones do not. The rule for lilacs is that the old flower 'skeletons' must be pruned to the first (nearest to flower) opposite pair of buds. The pruning for flowers is a timing event. Pruning has to be completed by July 1. On limbs where there are no flowers, the apical middle leaf may be pruned out as if it was a flower skeleton. Such leaf pruning may trick the lilac into turning the two other leaf buds into flower buds.

Common lilacs, once established, grow vigorously and with little need for attention. There are some common care rules for most vegetation that apply to lilacs as well. The basic rules are simple. Only one person should be in charge of pruning any individual shrub, as every person has an

### Pruning Lilacs for Flowers



*Pruning for flowers is a timing event. Lilacs drop their flower petals early in June. Flower 'skeletons' must be removed before the first of July. The buds for next years flowers are set in July/August.*

aesthetic value different from everyone else. Having two people working on the same tree or shrub can often cause too much wood to be taken from one individual plant. Stand back a few feet every now and then during the pruning session to reassess the job that is being done.

Remember the basic rules: prune for flowers following flower petal fall and prune for good shrub maintenance in the winter.

*The lilac flower skeleton was removed before July 1, which resulted in flower budset for the following year.*

One of the nice arrangements that make lilacs easy to grow is that they are easy to transplant. Lilacs send up suckers in the spring around their main stems. These suckers (wood growing up from the ground as opposed to water sprouts, which are new wood growing from the old wood) can be divided from the existing roots. All one has to do is to dig out an 8- to 10-inch root ball (of soil) along with the sucker (4 to 6 inches of dirt on either side of the sucker). To guarantee that the soil stays with the root, it is best to use a ball-and-burlap method. When moving the root ball, pick it up by the burlap, and not the stem of the sucker, and carefully lift the lilac. It is very important when transplanting any woody shrub to keep as much of the dirt as

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possible with the roots. Being careful not to loosen the dirt from the roots ensures that direct sun light does not shine through to the roots.

Common lilacs like a sunny, warm location. A southwestern exposure is ideal, and remember not to plant any tree, shrub or bush closer than 4 feet from a foundation. Lilacs do well near fences, walls, roads, driveways and in lawns. They need full sun. If lilacs are already established they may continue to do well in areas that have become mostly shade (due to the surrounding trees that have grown) when the lilacs were first planted. For the ideal growing circumstances, lilacs want six to eight hours of sun, and soil that is near a neutral pH (7.0).

It is important to prepare the hole into which the new plant will be placed. The hole might be dug two to three days before the shrub is to be placed. The sides of the hole need to be 'roughened' just prior to the new lilac ball being planted. It should be about 6 inches bigger in diameter than that of the root ball. Generally speaking the hole should be deep enough to permit the previous ground level of the sucker earth to be maintained.

Once the new root ball is in the hole, one can roll it to one side, pushing all of the burlap down under the root ball and then, by rolling the root ball to the opposite side, the burlap can be removed, leaving the soil intact with the roots. With one's hands, the compacted soil of the root ball needs to be



*Single stem lilacs. Lilacs generally are not referred to as trees because, for generic definitions, trees are more than 25 feet tall. Lilacs are usually shorter than 25 feet. Proper pruning of lilacs can keep their heights manageable.*

loosened and any small roots should be directed away from the sucker toward the newly roughened sides of the hole. Knotted or circling roots should be pruned. Then, the dirt taken from the hole needs to be replaced around the root ball. The lilac sucker stem needs to be straightened and the soil gently compacted around the newly placed plant. The soil in the hole should be filled to the previous (to trans-

planting) soil level.

As with all new plantings, water is the key to making sure the plant settles into its new environment with the least amount of disruption to its growing cycles. A cofferdam (mound of soil encircling the new plant) should be built around the shrub base. The cofferdam will help keep a large enough puddle of water to allow it to seep

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## Planting a ball & burlap (b&b) tree/shrub

1. Dig hole 2 times the size of root ball



2. Roughen the hole & add some dirt in bottom



3. Place "b&b" tree/shrub in hole. Open burlap wrap & cut string/wire

4. Rotate to one side & push burlap under ball



6. Straighten plant, pull roots into hole, & prune root curves & knots



7. Back fill hole with dirt from hole & make cofferdam

5. Rotate tree/shrub to other side & remove all burlap, strings, wires and other root ball ties

down into the roots. A hose with just a trickle of water needs to run all day into the cofferdam for the first two to three days.

Then bi-weekly watering ought to suffice.

Where lilac maintenance was not done

in time to save the old lilacs, dig them up and throw them away. Do not put the wood and dirt in a compost pile as it might permit any fungus, virus or insects to continue living. Put new dirt in the old hole and plant the new lilacs several feet away from where the old ones were. Most nurseries offer lilacs in ball-and-burlap form, or in containers.

Planting can be from mid spring to mid fall. Fall has a slight advantage in that the soil is warm, the days are long, and the insects are in transition time and less threatening.

If we then provide the annual maintenance described here, lilacs will adorn the countryside forever.

*William Warren teaches arboriculture of the common lilac at the Urban Forest Center in Portsmouth and Peterborough, N.H.*



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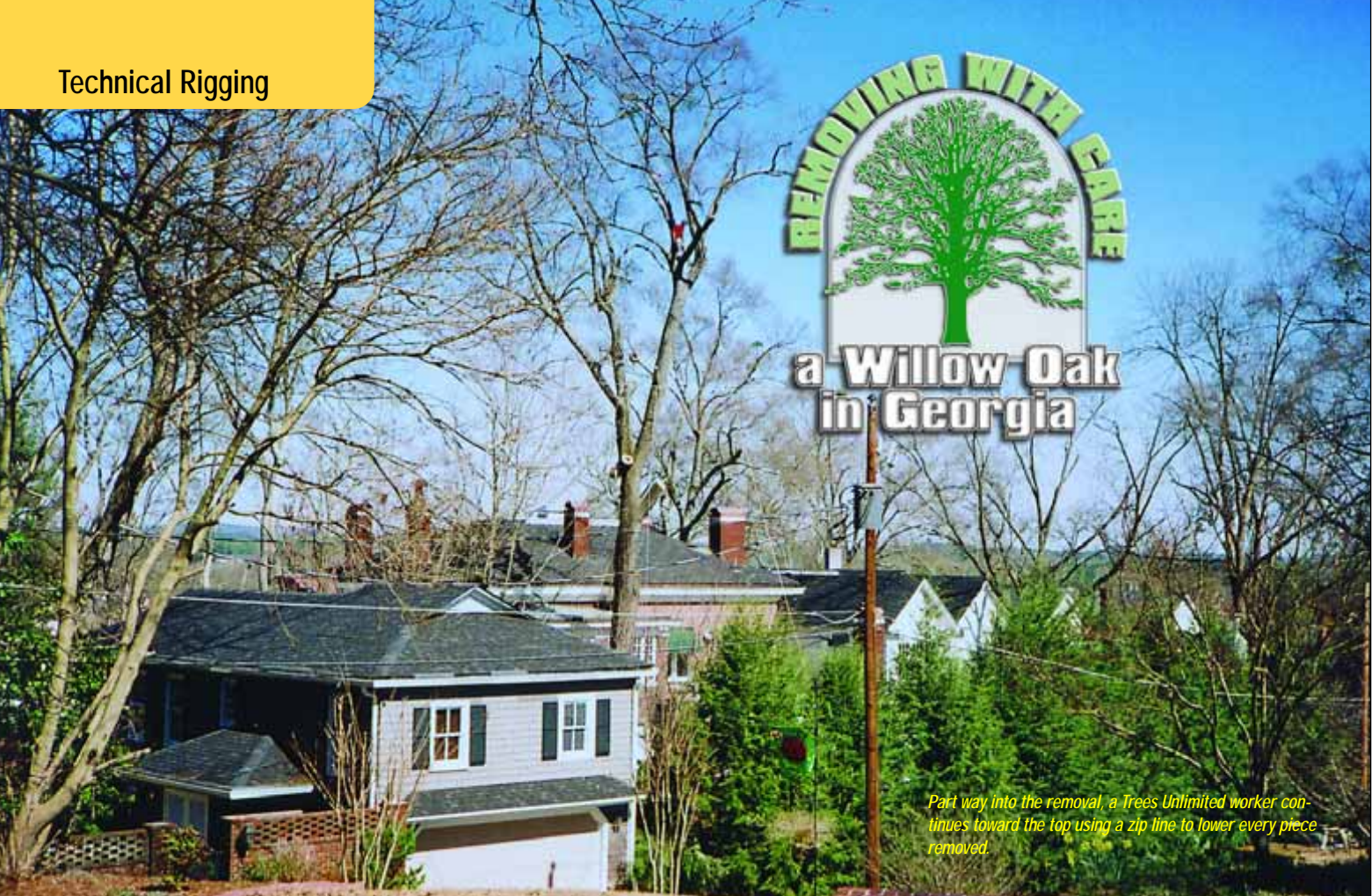
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Part way into the removal, a Trees Unlimited worker continues toward the top using a zip line to lower every piece removed.

*This project earned a TCIA 2005 Excellence in Arboriculture Award of Distinction in the Technical Rigging category for Trees Unlimited, Cave Spring, Ga. This article was excerpted from the narrative submitted for the award.*

**Project:** Dr. Brock Oak, Rome, Georgia

**Size of project:** \$5,000-\$10,000

**Type of project:** Private home

**Your client was:** Owner

**Date project started:** 12/06/04

**Date project completed:** 3/15/05

### Goal(s) of project:

**R**emove a 76-inch DBH (diameter at breast height) willow oak that had become structurally unsound, for the risk that the homeowner was willing to accept, without damaging structures and landscaping surrounding the tree.

### What did you do on this project?

Total removal of the tree. Work was done by climbing, as truck and/or crane

access were not possible. One-hundred percent of the tree was done through a controlled removal to protect the surroundings, all the way down to the stump. The entire tree was removed from property.

### List common as well as botanical names of tree(s) impacted by the project:

Willow oak, *Quercus phellos*.

### History of tree(s) and physical (structural) condition at the time of the project:

This tree predates the Civil War, when General Sherman came through Rome and had his picture taken in front of this property. Sherman stayed at the previous home on this property; the current home was built in 1911.

*This was the first photo taken, just at the beginning of removal of the lower and mid limbs. Note the large lead on the right that is already gone in the photo above.*



About 10 years ago we removed a 28-inch-diameter lead going over the house due to extensive decay at the base of the lead. The decay at this location continued to expand into the trunk until the risk of failure was unacceptable for the owner.

**Describe the expected or unexpected challenges in the project:**

1. Removing the tree without shock-loading the trunk to maintain safety of the climber.
2. Protecting the surroundings in very tight quarters. The trunk was 79 inches in diameter at 26 feet off the ground, just below the major cavity.
3. Removing the bottom 26 feet of trunk that had concrete inside at two locations. These pieces had to be controlled to the ground.

**How did you overcome the challenges:**

1. Taking into consideration the lean of the leads when hanging rigging lines.
2. Using stability lines to offset rigging lines.
3. Removing the smallest pieces possible.
4. Using zip lines for limb removal. Using tag lines to place large wood at desired location.
5. Hammering concrete out of one cavity.
6. Cutting 90-degree-plus notches and letting limbs run for a distance when cut.

**What innovative method, practice or resource did you use on this project:**

We developed a technique of removing the last 26 feet of the trunk in 3-foot sections by twisting the pieces off when they were cut. This allowed full control of the pieces before reaching the ground and reduced the shock load on the two 3/4-inch diameter ropes that were used to carry the load. The ropes were pre-tensioned. This allowed the pieces, estimated at 5,000 pounds, to drop only 7 feet when pulled off the spar.



*This is a ground-level view of the property and home. A swimming pool is to the left of ground man.*

**Describe your Accident Prevention Plan (hazard assessment, work plan) for this project:**

Due to technical rigging and critical situations for property damage, briefings of the operation were a frequent part of the job. The cavity area in the stem

was inspected often as rigging above was performed.

**Describe the rigging method(s) used and why it was chosen:**

1. Zip line with and without tagline for



*The stump is all that remains after the removal is completed.*

speed, placement and mostly to reduce shock tension on the stem.

2. False crotch with 3/4-inch steel pulley and sling for control and reduced friction when lifting was needed.

3. The "twisting" technique mentioned previously to control removal of massive wood in the trunk.

**Describe the rope(s) and equipment selected and why you selected it:**

1. Two 3/4-inch double braid ropes for strength to handle large wood.

2. Two 3/4-inch steel pulleys and slings.

3. 150 feet of 1 1/4-inch double braid rope for mid-size limbs and zip line.



*An employee inspects the cavities in the stem as work in the top progresses.*

4. Two 200-foot, 1/2-inch ropes for small limbs and taglines.

5. Pulley system for tensioning lines and lifting pieces.

6. All size saws up to Husky 372 with 36-inch bar.

**What was the safe working load (SWL) of your rigging system(s), and how was it determined:**

All equipment was new or relatively new and in good shape. SWL was determined from manufacturer's rated strength. SWL on all ropes was set at 10 percent of breaking strength. Weight of pieces was calculated from green wood weight chart for willow oak.

**Describe how the rigging lessened the project's impact to the surroundings:**

For this job rigging was totally necessary throughout to prevent damage to building, patio, brick walls and landscaping. ⚡

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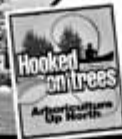


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# Tom Golon Takes Helm of TCIA Board

**T**om Golon, president of Wonderland Tree Care, Inc. in Oyster Bay, N.Y., was installed as chairman of the TCIA Board of Directors at the board's meeting during Winter Management Conference in St. Kitts. Golon was first elected to TCIA's board in 1997, when TCIA was known as the National Arborist Association (NAA).

Golon founded his company in 1979, and through the years it has grown into a thriving business with 12 employees. While attending Oyster Bay High School he did tree work on some of the estates in the area during the summer, but tree care was not his career goal. "When I went to college I thought about a career in engineering or maybe getting a degree in landscape architecture," says Golon. "I earned a degree in automotive engineering and went to work for General Motors."

But a couple of years of working indoors (on cement floors) convinced him to go back to the job he had started in high school. "I decided to pursue arboriculture," he explains, "so I went back to school nights at SUNY Farmingdale."

Eventually, he went to work for a local tree company for a short time, then went out on his own. "I saw the opportunities," he recalls. "There was a demand for professional expert, high-end service. I had an old chipper and some other equipment. With my mechanical background I built some good equipment out of not-so-good equipment. In the beginning we did general tree work, and I hired some people who knew a lot more than me."

In 1981, Wonderland expanded from pruning and removals into the plant health care side of the business. Today, about 45 percent of the business is plant health care.

"Fortunately, we had a gypsy moth outbreak that year so plant health care

business was good right from the start," Golon remembers. "In 1984 we had another growth spurt, then in the late 1980s we moved into integrated pest management (IPM). I hired some professional horticulturists, and we really developed a reputation in the area for plant health care. We have a keen eye for detail and customer service. We know what our clients are looking for in terms of customer service."



**Tom Golon**

In addition to hiring people who know the business, Golon tries to learn as much as possible himself. He notes that when he started, "I went to every meeting, every seminar, and every workshop I could find. At one of those meetings I met John Hickey, who sponsored me to become a member of the National Arborist Association. When I joined, the association was run out of Bob Felix's house on Long Island and peers had to recommend you for membership."

He started attending TCIA's Winter Management Conference to learn more about the business side of running a commercial tree care company. At a Hawaii meeting, he was convinced to join the association's membership committee.

"I enjoy volunteering and learning while helping organizations and other members," he says. That outlook has translated into extensive volunteer commitments over the years. He is past president of the Long Island Arborist Association and a past board member of the Raynham Hall Museum. He serves on the board of the Bailey Arboretum, and is a very active board member with the Oyster Bay Boys and Girls Club, Oyster Bay Chamber of Commerce, Rotary and the Planting Fields

Arboretum.


Golon has seen tremendous change in the industry and TCIA during his 20-plus-year career in arboriculture. The biggest one is an emphasis on tree worker safety.

"We have moved safety into the driver's seat," he says. "TCIA helps create an awareness of safe work practices, what the regulations are that cover arboriculture, and how to comply with them. With the new [Certified Treecare Safety Professional] CTSP program, we are taking a culture of safety and professionalism to the next level."

Another change is the industry's increased involvement in legislative and regulatory matters. Golon stresses that the association has made great strides in creating an awareness of the industry among consumers and government officials. To further his own firm's professional standing, Wonderland became the first TCIA accredited company on Long Island.

"Our biggest challenge is attracting labor," he says. "We pay high wages for the area, we have the right insurance and train our people to work safely. There are a lot of things that can keep a business owner up at night, but I sleep well knowing that we operate with integrity."

"In the next five years member firms will see a better environment for professional arboriculture," he predicts. "I am in favor of fair, balanced and common-sense regulations. Our work in Washington is vital in creating the conditions under which member firms can grow and prosper through workable standards and workable regulations."

And, he predicts, Wonderland Tree Care will continue to grow in the new, more professional environment for commercial tree care companies. 





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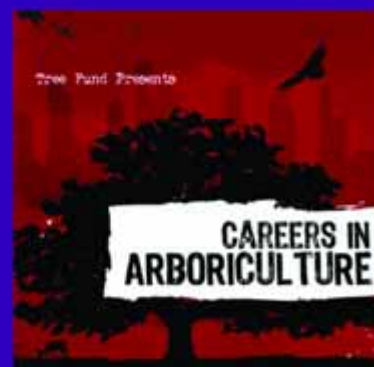
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# Care Needed Using Loader with Tree Shear

*This article is excerpted from a FACE (Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation) accident investigation report. FACE is an occupational fatality investigation and surveillance program of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). In the state of Iowa, The University of Iowa, in conjunction with the Iowa Department of Public Health, carries out the FACE program.*

In the winter of 2001, a 25-year-old self-employed tree excavator was fatally injured while using a skid-steer loader equipped with a tree shear attachment. He was working on a hillside, clearing land of small trees. While cutting a large branch of a tree, the weight of the falling branch tipped the loader forward on top of the tree stump, pinning him against the seat.

The hydraulic shear had two horizontal blades that came together to cut trees up to 14 inches (35 cm) in diameter. The trunk of the tree was about 28 inches (70 cm) in diameter at the base, larger than the capacity of the shear. It branched out about three feet (1 m) above ground into three smaller limbs. He had cut branches from the sides and was finishing cutting the last branch, with his loader on the uphill side, facing directly downhill. The attachment was raised about 4 feet (1.2 m), to where the branches fanned out. When he finished the cut, and while it was falling downhill, it momentarily transferred enough weight to the front of the shear that it tipped the skid-steer loader forward. The loader landed nearly upside down on top of the stump, which entered the cab area and crushed the operator against the back of his seat. The man was killed instantly. When rescue arrived, the machine could not be started, and airbags and a winch were needed to move the loader.

The Iowa FACE program was notified a few weeks after the incident by the state



*The image at left shows the approximate position of the loader and raised tree shear attachment just prior to the accident. At right, the approximate position of the loader after tipping forward onto the fresh stump. These electronically enhanced images were created from actual photographs of the loader and the stump taken during the FACE site visit. Photos and images courtesy of Iowa Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (IA FACE) at [www.public-health.uiowa.edu/FACE/](http://www.public-health.uiowa.edu/FACE/)*



medical examiner, and began an investigation. Additional information was gathered from the County Sheriff, a relative of the victim, and the manufacturer of the shear attachment. Later in the spring, two FACE investigators traveled to view the machine where it was stored, and examined the hillside where the incident occurred.

The victim was self-employed in the tree-cutting business. He had recently started this part-time business and was also working as a mechanic at a manufacturing facility. He was quite familiar with operating various types of machinery. Being self-employed, he did not have a formal written safety program in place. The machine was bought used about a month and a half prior to the incident from a local dealer. It was used only a few times and was in good condition.

## Investigation

The victim was hired to clear trees from a sloped area of ground used as pasture for cattle. He estimated this job to take six hours to complete. He was about three fourths done when the incident happened. He was using a large skid-steer loader equipped with a front-mounted tree shear attachment. This attachment was designed to cut small trees with a trunk diameter up to 14 inches (35 cm), the branches falling to the front or side of the loader. It was hydraulically-powered through a set of quick-coupling

hydraulic lines. Two five-inch (125 mm) diameter hydraulic cylinders powered the heavy horizontally-opposed blades. The blades were 20 $\frac{3}{8}$  inches (52 cm) long, and when fully open, measured 24.5 inches (61 cm) between their tips.

The tree stump being cut was about 28 inches (70 cm) in diameter at its base, which was much too large for the shear to handle. However, the tree branched out 3 to 4 feet (1-1.2 m) above ground into three smaller limbs, which the victim had been cutting prior to the incident. It was evident from track markings in the ground, and the cuts, that he had approached the tree from different angles to cut the left and right limbs. At the time of the incident he was positioned directly uphill from the stump for his last cut of the largest limb in the center, which was about 12 inches (30 cm) in diameter. The shear blades were raised to the base of this limb, about 4 feet. Apparently after he completed the cut, and while the large limb was



*The tree shear in the open position.*



falling to the left front of the loader, it transferred enough weight to the shear, that it tipped the loader forward onto its front wheels. The stump was immediately in front of the loader, and entered the cab area, pinning the operator to the back of his seat. The loader came to rest partially upside down, jammed onto the top of the stump. The frame of the cab was slightly bent by the tree stump, which just barely fit through the front opening of the cab.

The landowner drove by and noticed the skid-steer loader tipped forward on its front wheels. On approaching, he saw the victim inside, crushed against the tree stump. He immediately called 911. When rescue personnel arrived, they tried to restart the machine, but were unable, due to the functioning seat pressure interlock safety switch. Airbags and a winch, attached from an uphill position, were used to pull the loader back, but the operator had already died from crushing chest injuries.

There was no door or protective screen on the front of the skid-steer loader. A relative of the victim said the victim was planning to install one to provide protection from smaller branches. The tree shear had a 40-inch (1 m) tall heavy wire brush guard above the blades. This guard separated the operator from the shear in normal operation, however, provided no protection if the shear was raised several feet off the ground. In addition, when the shear was raised 3 to 4 feet, there was no visibility of the shear blades, and no way to observe the degree of penetration of the blades.

The operator's manual states this attachment is for ground use only, and that the lift arms of the loader should not be raised while making a cut. Using the tree shear attachment in a raised position created the hazardous opening under the loader attachment, large enough for the stump to fit through. When the loader is used near ground level, the operator is better protected. In case the machine would start tipping forward, the loader attachment itself would hit the ground and stop the machine from tipping. Also, the stumps would be shorter, unable to hurt the operator in a similar tipping situation.

## Recommendations/Discussion

*Recommendation #1* Skid-steer loaders and their attachments should be used as recommended by manufacturers, not exceeding their capacity.

*Discussion:* The small wheelbase of a skid-steer loader makes it unstable on sloped terrain, and operators must consider the inherent risk of overturn. Attachments

on skid-steer loaders may create additional hazards if not used as designed and recommended by manufacturers. A raised, heavy load will change the center of gravity and further increase the likelihood of tipping or overturn. In this case, the tipping of the machine was the result of using the machine on sloping ground, and having the added weight from the raised tree-shear attachment and the tree limb. The opera-

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tor's manual for this tree shear attachment instructs cutting trees low, near the ground level. This will help prevent overturns and the protective screen will be at the right height to provide protection from tree branches. The tree shear attachment was designed for small trees up to 14 inches (35 cm) in diameter. In this case it was used to cut a tree about twice that size. Exceeding the capacity of the attachment created a hazardous situation. The loader had to be re-positioned several times at different angles around the tree for cutting smaller limbs first. While making the final cut, the weight of the branch was enough to tip the machine forward. It is important not to exceed the designed capacity of a tree shear. Larger trees, as in this case, should be left for cutting with a chain saw, or other appropriate equipment.

*Recommendation #2* Machines using tree shear attachments should have a barrier on all sides of the operator station to



*View from uphill side of stump showing large limbs that had fallen downhill after cutting.*

protect from tree limbs and other objects.

*Discussion:* Operating a tree shear creates frequent hazards from falling tree limbs or branches entering the operator's area. The operator station must be protected from all sides with a heavy gauge metal screen or similar barrier. In this case, the loader had a cab protecting the operator from the top, back and both sides, but the

front of the cab was unprotected. The victim had been planning to install a door on the loader, to protect from low-lying branches while cutting trees. A protective door, if of sufficient strength, may offer sufficient protection in the event of a rollover.

Considering the high likelihood of being hit by the tree or falling branches when cutting trees, it is important to have a protective cab totally surrounding the operator. Often skid-steer loaders have an open front area for easy access to the cab. In tree shear operation, the loader should have a protective door made of heavy metal screen or other durable material.

*Recommendation #3* Manufacturers of tree shears and similar attachments should warn operators about using the attachments in a raised position, and working on sloping ground.

*Discussion:* Working on sloping or rough ground involves an obvious overturn hazard. Using the tree shear attachment in a raised position creates additional hazards. First, the attachment and the weight of the tree being cut raise the center of gravity of the skid-steer loader and make it more prone to overturn. Second, it is difficult to see the blades when the attachment is raised 3 to 4 feet, making it difficult and unsafe to operate. Third, the protective screen is above the shear blades, leaving no protective barrier under the attachment. In this case, since the shear was raised up, there was nothing between the operator and the fresh-cut stump. The operator's manual for this attachment did warn about using the shear attachment in a raised position and on slopes. These warnings should be emphasized in operator's manuals, perhaps with diagrams. Furthermore, warning signs could be placed in a visible location on the tree shear attachment.

*For the complete report on this investigation, visit [www.public-health.uiowa.edu/face](http://www.public-health.uiowa.edu/face). Click on Fatality Summaries, then "2001." Scroll down to case #011A04201. For more on FACE or other investigations, visit [www.cdc.gov/Niosh/FACE](http://www.cdc.gov/Niosh/FACE).*

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Reporter is the monthly newsletter of the Tree Care Industry Association. TCIA members can access the complete publication at [www.treecareindustry.org](http://www.treecareindustry.org).

## How are you marketing your company?

By Bob Rouse

Steve Sylvester of S&S Tree and Horticultural Specialists in South St. Paul, Minn., sent us an e-mail with the following signature:

Steve Sylvester  
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TCIA has discovered what green industry consumers are searching for when deciding to hire a tree care company. How have we discovered this? During the past year TCIA has been sponsoring Internet searches on Google and Yahoo search engines. We select the specific keywords for which our advertisement will appear. This allows us to track how often the keyword is searched in the United States. We

## CTSP: Are you on board?

As of May 1, less than 2½ months after its launch, the TCIA Certified Treecare Safety Professional program boasts 114 enrolled participants from 28 states.

Two ambitious professionals has already completed their "Core Competencies" requirements to become eligible to sit for the Advanced Training Workshop and CTSP Certification Exam.

In other CTSP news, the first meeting of the CTSP Council will take place on May 22

in Manchester, N.H. The staff is working on Workshop/Exam dates and fees, and should be able to provide more information very soon.



Does your company have one or more employees enrolled in CTSP? Act now by downloading an enrollment form from the CTSP Web page at [www.treecareindustry.org](http://www.treecareindustry.org).

For more information on the CTSP program, call Peter Gerstenberger at (603) 314-5380 or e-mail [peter@tcia.org](mailto:peter@tcia.org).



This is one of the sample Web banners available to TCIA accredited companies from TCIA.

have tested many different keywords to see which ones consumers really use when searching for information about tree care.

We have analyzed the results of our sponsored searches for a three-month period running, from January 15 to April 15, 2006. During this period, our ads were viewed by searching consumers more than 1.6 million times, and more than 16,000 consumers responded to our ads directing them to search for qualified tree care companies on the TCIA Web site.

Our analysis shows that potential consumers most often use keywords that help them investigate and compare companies, such as tree service, tree care service, tree pruning service, etc. This indicates that consumers want to learn more about your company before hiring.

A solid number of potential consumers also search for technical subjects, such as tree care, pruning, tree pests, etc. This indicates

that consumers want to learn more about the service you provide so they can make a good decision.

Only a minority of potential consumers search for qualified individuals such as tree experts, arborists, tree surgeon, etc. In fact, an analysis of our results showed that out of every 10 potential consumers searching the Internet, five out of 10 used company-related keywords, four out of 10 used technical-related keywords, and only one out of 10 searched for qualified individuals.

### What can you do?

1. Focus marketing on promoting your company first.

*Good introduction:* XYZ is an accredited tree service company that has served the ABC community for more than 22 years. Our staff members are dedicated and trained to provide you top quality, courteous service. Our com-

*(Continued on next page)*

## Attention Employers!

Gain exposure to the graduating classes in Arboriculture for 2007 and 2008 by reserving your recruitment booth at TCIA's annual Student Career Days' Jobs & Internship Fair. Held in conjunction with TCI EXPO, this year the Jobs Fair will take place on Saturday, November 11, in Baltimore. Based on recent experience, EXPO should attract close to 200 vocational and college students seeking careers in arboriculture. Reserve some of limited space available for your company today! Call 1-800-733-2622.

(Continued from previous page)

pany is fully insured and TCIA Accreditation means that we meet rigorous standards of practice for our industry. Use a "company history" page and/or a staff page to outline your personal credentials and the credentials of your staff.

*Poor introduction:* A. B. Arborguy started XYZ tree service more than 22 years ago. A. B. Arborguy has the following credentials . . .

2. Get your company accredited, so you have a credential for your company.

3. Maintain a professional Web site, since this is what most consumers will look at when they research your company on the Internet.

4. Market industry affiliations, such as TCIA membership, to show that your company is a member of professional organizations. Call our membership department at 1-800-733-2622 to get a TCIA logo designed for use on your Web site or e-mail signature.

5. Enter your company in awards programs,



*This is one of the sample Web banners available to TCIA accredited companies from TCIA.*

then mention any awards you receive in your marketing materials.

6. Participate in community events, charities and sponsorship programs, such as Arbor Day celebrations, service projects, sponsoring a little league team, etc. and market your participation in a tasteful manner.

7. When marketing your or your employees' credentials, frame them as being an example of how your company is qualified.

## Passports needed for travel to WMC in 2007

Traveling to Canada or Mexico? New federal requirements to be implemented at the end of 2006 will require those traveling by air or sea to have "a valid US passport or other secure travel document" to reenter the country. US citizens have been allowed to cross the borders more readily in the past, with little more than photo identification. Speaking at the World Travel & Tourism Summit last week in Washington ("Securing borders while welcoming visitors," 4/14), Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff claimed that the feds are trying to make it "more efficient for people to come and go," while increasing borders security. Similar requirements will go into affect at the end of 2007 for those traveling by land. Assns planning meetings outside the US should properly document the requirements for their members traveling to and from the meetings.

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# Get ready for '07 EPA diesel emission changes

By Tony Gann

The year 2007 will mark the next leg in EPA emission changes for diesel truck engines. The new emission requirement will have a significant impact on trucks used in the tree care industry, from diesel pickups to medium and heavy-duty chassis.

The new requirements dramatically lower tailpipe emissions of nitrogen oxides and particulates (soot). The lower emissions will be achieved by changes to the engines and their exhaust systems, in combination with reduced ash-content lube oils and low-sulfur diesel fuel, which will start distribution throughout the United States later this year.

Engine manufacturers are still working out the last details in their changes to meet

2007 EPA requirements. While there will be some mechanical differences from manufacturer to manufacturer, they will share some common elements.



Tony Gann

In general, these new engines will have more aggressive EGR (exhaust gas recirculation). This relates to exhaust gases that are passed back through engine combustion.

All engine exhaust will pass through a diesel particulate filter, which traps particulate matters (soot) in the


exhaust on its way out of the system. The soot collected in this filter must be burned off occasionally to prevent the filter from clogging. This process (known as regeneration) will actually inject fuel into the trap and reduce the soot to ash. From time to time, the collected ash will have to be removed and the filter will have to be cleaned.

While the truck manufacturers have not released firm price increase figures, you can bet they are coming. Early estimates are that light-duty diesels (pickups) will increase in price \$2,000 to \$3,000, medium-duty chassis \$5,000 to \$7,000, and heavy-duty chassis \$7,000 to \$10,000.

In addition to cost, particular attention will need to be given when ordering these new trucks related to specs. This will be extremely important when purchasing a chassis for a body/equipment upfit. Larger radiators needed for additional cooling may cause front frame access issues in some configurations.

This could prevent the ability to mount items such as a front winch if considerations are not made first. Additionally, the routing of the new exhaust systems may not allow room for mounting a PTO or may interfere with the body if the correct layout is not ordered up front. New regulations will not allow tampering with the exhaust system by third parties, so if the wrong configuration is on the truck, a whole new exhaust system may have to be installed to allow the upfit to work.

It will be a good idea to consult your chassis dealer and/or equipment supplier for additional information on these upcoming changes. This will be a must to ensure that the proper truck is ordered for your need. To save money and manage this issue proactively, many are choosing to purchase current-model chassis this year for next year's needs. If you are considering this, it is imperative you contact your chassis dealer or equipment upfitter as soon as possible as time is running out!

Tony Gann is sales manager at Altec Industries and a member of the TCIA Board of Directors. 

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# Voice from Washington

Immigration, pensions and budget issues dominated Washington's spring agenda. Both the House and Senate struggled throughout the month to curb spending in the face of pressure from the White House and public concern over deficits and earmarks. In addition, representatives from both chambers debated differences between their respective bills overhauling the pension system.

## Immigration

On March 27, the Senate Judiciary Committee approved immigration reform legislation by a 12-6 vote, with the all committee Democrats and four of the committee's 10 Republicans supporting the measure.

The proposal approved by the committee would create a guest worker program under

which foreign nationals could obtain a three-year work visa with the option to renew for an additional three years (six years total). Guest workers would be allowed to apply for a green card and eventually seek citizenship. The number of visas would be limited and subject to restriction based on unemployment in the U.S.

While most Democrats support the legislation, Republicans remain split. Many claim that Congress should focus on securing our borders before developing programs for undocumented or guest workers. Others object to providing the undocumented population with amnesty or creating any guest worker programs, claiming the "guests" rarely return home.

It looked as if Congress would reach a com-

promise addressing some Republican concerns during the first week in April, but the deal fell apart at the last moment and Congress adjourned for a two week recess. The Senate is expected to take up immigration again when it returns.

TCIA has worked with others in the business community to encourage Congress to pass a comprehensive bill that addresses both our need for greater security, while also helping certain parts of the country with their labor shortage by providing avenues for undocumented and other foreigners to work legally. As part of this effort, TCIA has joined several letters to the Senate.

Through the Voice for Trees PAC, we will continue to advocate for comprehensive reform that takes into account the reality of today's industry workforce.



## Two join PACT partnerships

This month two valued Partners Advancing Commercial Treecare (PACT) members signed on as Seed level partners in support of Student Career Days at TCI EXPO 2006.

Based in Bedford Hills, N.Y., SavATree has not only shared in financial support, but in time and talent as well. SavATree has been providing professional landscape maintenance services throughout the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic region since 1985. SavATree currently has 18 office locations serving communities in

Conn., N.Y., N.J., Mass., Md., Pa., Va. and Washington, D.C., and boasts the first TCIA accredited company in Connecticut.

The Care of Trees has been a long-time supporter of TCIA and its programs, having provided funding, advisory committee members, board members and the like. Based in Wheeling, Illinois, The Care of Trees has offices in metropolitan New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, San

Francisco, and Washington, D.C., with more than 500 dedicated arborists and support staff in more than 25 offices. The Care of Trees is an award-winning, full-service tree care firm with roots dating back to 1919.

Partners Advancing Commercial Treecare is a strategic partnership with the Tree Care Industry Association that will allow your company to gain maximum exposure to our membership and other partners. For more information about PACT and to see how your company can benefit, please contact Kim Anastasiou at 1-800-733-2622 or at [kim@treecareindustry.org](mailto:kim@treecareindustry.org).



## Member News

### Davey Tree acquires Organicare

The Davey Tree Expert Company added Portland-based Organicare to its list of recent acquisitions. The acquisition marks Davey's 17th in three years, and is in line with the company's long-term growth strategy, says Ken Celmer, senior vice president and general manager of residential/commercial services. Organicare had been a TCIA member since 1994.

"Organicare has a focus on tree, lawn and plant health care that fits in perfectly with Davey Tree's service offerings," says Celmer. "The Portland Mediterranean environment is

such that it requires special attention, and Organicare's use of organic fertilizer, and organic insect and disease control products has achieved great results."

The company will be called Davey-Organicare and will continue serving customers in both Portland and Vancouver, Wash. Paul Drake started the company in 1988 and will be staying with the office, along with most of the other employees.

"This is a great opportunity for us to spread the organic message that we use here by targeting different markets that are now accessible to us through Davey," says Drake, who will be the district manager. "In addition ... working with a company that is historically

known for its tree expertise and employee ownership affords our employees different opportunities to grow and move up within the company."

Richard Foote, operations manager in charge of acquisitions and expansion, agreed that the acquisition was a good fit. "Davey has wanted to penetrate the Portland market for quite some time," he said. "This is a fabulous opportunity for both Davey Tree and Organicare to grow in new directions."

He also pointed out that all of the Organicare employees have the opportunity to join Davey, an employee-owned company.

"It's a beneficial situation for everyone involved," Foote says.



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2. Almstead Tree & Shrub Care Co. ....	60	35. NESCO Sales and Rentals .....	79
Altec Industries Inc. ....	41	36. New England Ropes, Inc. ....	11
3. Arborjet Inc. ....	45	37. Onderdonk Tree Care .....	46
4. Arbortech .....	64	38. Opdyke, Inc. ....	21
5. Arborwear, LLC .....	20	39. Rapco Industries, Inc. ....	61
6. Bailey's .....	12	40. Rayco Manufacturing, Inc. ....	5
7. Bandit Industries, Inc. ....	35	41. Red Wing Shoes Company .....	47
The F. A. Bartlett Tree Expert Company .....	61	42. Redmax/Komatsu Zenoah America Inc. ....	13
8. Beaver Squeezer Grapple, LLC .....	66	43. Royal Truck & Equipment, Inc. ....	29
9. Bishop Co. ....	10	44. Salsco Inc. ....	39
10. Border City Tool & Manufacturing Co. ....	60	45. Samson Rope Technologies .....	15
11. Buckingham Manufacturing Co., Inc. ....	14	46. SavATree .....	62
12. Certified Crane .....	52	47. Schodorf Truck Body & Equipment Co. ....	63
13. DICA Marketing Co. ....	61	48. SilkyUSA .....	Inside Front Cover
14. Dynamic Manufacturing Corp. ....	36	49. Southco Industries, Inc. ....	34
15. FAE USA, Inc. ....	73	50. Stump Removal Inc./KAN-DU .....	63
16. Fanno Saw Works .....	27	51. TCIA Accreditation .....	31
17. Fecon, Inc. ....	Inside Back Cover	52. TCIA EXPO .....	56 & 57
18. G & A Equipment, Inc. ....	22	TCIA PACT .....	49
19. Giuffre Brothers Cranes .....	19	53. TCIA – CTSP Program .....	77
20. Gyro-Trac, Inc. ....	72	54. TCIA Tailgate .....	55
21. IML-Instrument Mechanic Labor, Inc. ....	52	55. TCIA Membership .....	67
22. J. P. Carlton Company .....	7	56. Terex Utilities .....	43
23. Jameson, LLC .....	16	57. Teupen America .....	1
24. John Deere Power Systems .....	38	58. Tilton Equipment Company .....	17
25. Kubota Engine America .....	37	59. Timberwolf Manufacturing Corporation .....	76
26. Leonardi Manufacturing .....	48	60. TREE Fund .....	68 & 69
27. Liberty Financial Group .....	28	61. Trees, Inc. ....	62
28. Loftness/US Attachments .....	71	62. Vitamin Institute .....	Back Cover
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## How I Love My Job(s), & Similarities I've Found between Classroom and Tree Work



By Alyssa Carlock

Currently a college student, I am going to school to be a teacher. But my summer career choice is to be out working for the arborist business that my dad founded.

I work for my dad's business, Landcare Enterprises, based in Chester, Vermont, during the summer when I am not doing my college courses, and I enjoy every minute of it. Believe it or not, I have realized that there are some similarities (and differences, of course) that can be drawn between the arborist business and teaching elementary school students. Let's begin with the education that takes place on the job.

When we go on a job, we always try to educate people on what they can do to save their trees through injections, fertilization, more watering, etc. In the classroom, I am educating a child and, with an arborist as a dad, we do discuss trees often. However, if we cannot save the tree, or if people have called us in to do a tree removal because there's nothing else to be done for the tree, we set up for work.

First, we prepare the site and make sure all the equipment is in good running order. In a similar manner, to prepare for teaching I make lesson plans, determine what I will teach weekly, and ensure that all the teach-



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ing materials I will need are available.

Second, on the job site, before we start the chain saws, chipper and aerial lift, dad briefs us on exactly how we will do the takedown, what we should do in an emergency situation, how he wants the cleanup done, etc. In the same way, I have made it clear from the beginning of the year what is expected of my student. He knows the rules, and usually abides by them, although he does forget sometimes!

Working for the business is hard physical toil. Often we will work 10 hours a day; mostly we do things that involve a lot of

manual labor, such as chipping mountains of brush, bucking huge butt logs and carrying them to the truck, and dragging more brush long distances to get it to the chipper. In the classroom, the work involved gives my brain more of a workout than my muscles, but I am still doing labor. Thinking is hard, especially with some of the unanswerable questions that an active 8-year-old boy can come up with, and for which he just has to have a solution.

In addition, in both the tree business and the classroom, I deal with people on a regular basis, although our clientele is usually quite a bit older than my student is.

As you can see, there are some similarities between the arborist business and teaching a child in a classroom setting. Whether I am at work at one job or the other, I can always be learning new things to add to my experience in the other field. Doing tree work with my dad, I can find more facts about God's awesome design in trees and bring back samples, stories and information to the classroom. In the classroom, I can learn ways to use my brain more in tree work, such as coming up with an easier way to drag brush, or a faster way to fix the chipper when the winch cable breaks. That is thinking smarter, not harder!

*Alyssa Carlock is an 18-year-old self-proclaimed "groundwoman" from Landcare Enterprises in Chester, Vermont, who enjoys tree work and teaching.*

TCI will pay \$100 for published "From the Field" articles. Submissions become the property of TCI and are subject to editing for grammar, style and length. Entries must include the name of a company and a contact person. Send to: Tree Care Industry, 3 Perimeter Road, Unit 1, Manchester, NH 03101, or [staruk@treecareindustry.org](mailto:staruk@treecareindustry.org).

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- HERE ARE THE SURVEYS — AND ONE-SECOND "LEMONADE" TECHNIQUE PROVEN BY THOUSANDS OF GARDEN CENTERS.



## PLANT FACTS -

1. U.S. Federal Trade Commission says **ONLY 1 OUT OF 25 UNHAPPY PLANT-KILLING CUSTOMERS EVER TELL YOU** — (Except bare-root stock.) (A few more if guaranteed.)
2. But U.S. FTC Surveys find **2 OF EACH 5 PLANTS BOUGHT ARE DEAD WITHIN A YEAR.**
3. AND **9 TO 15 NEIGHBORS HEAR YOUR FIRM NAME, WHERE A DEAD PLANT WAS BOUGHT, BEFORE TALK QUILTS CIRCULATING IN A YARD OR LIVING-ROOM,** according to GALLUP POLL AND ACLA (Associated Landscape Contractors of America) surveys.
4. **ONLY KEY to CURE IS SUPERthrive™ CHAMPION REVIVER.**
5. **ONE SECOND GETS YOU OFF THE HOOK AT CHECK-OUT. EITHER PASS OUT FREE SLIPS - OR REFER TO FREE SIGN.**



Please circle 62 on Reader Service Card

( AT PLANTS CHECK-OUT)

Your "get-off-the-hook" check-out slip or sign.



6. Customer RETURNS like clock-work, if plants go downhill.
7. **COUNTLESS NURSERYMEN AGREE — "IF ANY LIFE IS LEFT, SUPERthrive™ WILL REVIVE THE TREE OR PLANT!"** For example, one drum SAVED OHIO LANDSCAPER \$100,000. IN CONDEMNED PLANTS AT ONE JOB ALONE at U.S. Corps of Engineers Pennsylvania planting.
8. Two or three neighbors will hear of the green thumb you gave the customer — say surveys.
9. **YOU, THE DEALER, WILL HAVE THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS: Both the profit from the plants, as well as good-will, (without the risk, in the department store, of losing \$1000. in ill-will for \$1 in paper profit.)**



## 5 1/2 MONTHS FROM "DEAD" — ZERO FOLIAGE!

TYPICAL SUPERthrive™ unique extra life:—REVIVING: "IMPOSSIBLES"—MADE EASY FROZEN "DEAD" 5 1/2 MONTHS BEFORE. NONE of foliage below existed. "Impossibly" REVIVED BY SUPERthrive™ 50 VITAMINS-HORMONES. Official decoration of American Nursery and Landscape Association convention, with more of same —Whole "out of business" big nursery put back in business again.)



## ONLY SUPERthrive™ 50 vitamins-hormones REVERSES THE SURVEYS

- \$1,000 Guaranteed to be World Champion REVIVER — Unchallenged 65 years.
- "BRINGS BACK FROM 'DEAD' trees and shrubs with as little as green under the bark," said, when asked at trade-shows, 100% of over 2000 heads of garden centers stocking SUPERthrive.™

At national nurserymen's symposium on plant guarantees, only one product name was recommended (repeatedly) — **SUPERthrive™**