

Arborescence

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE MINNESOTA SOCIETY OF ARBORICULTURE

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WINTER 2009



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Want to Contribute?

MSA is looking for a few good people. Okay, not just a few. But if you are passionate about this industry and want to share that enthusiasm, we are looking for the following: writers, committee members and photo's. Please contact any member of the Executive Committee

President's Message

Looking ahead... This time of year, you'll hear of people looking back at the previous year and looking ahead at the challenges and opportunities to come. MSA is no different. It's a time to reflect on 2008 and think about what's ahead in 2009 and beyond.

2008 was an interesting year. Since February, we have been operating without staff, reverting to an all-volunteer organization. There have been some bumps in the road, but overall, our members have risen to the challenge. EHAP (Electrical Hazard Awareness Program), a summer climbing workshop, and the Minnesota Tree Care Conference at the Arboretum were all exceptionally successful. There also was a basic climbing workshop for students at Central Lakes College in Brainerd. MSA continues to be an important partner in the Minnesota Green Expo, where education offerings for arborists have increased substantially.

MSA presented awards to some very deserving individuals in October, including our Distinguished Service Award to Dr. Dale Herman from NDSU in recognition of his career achievements developing cultivars for the Great Plains. In May, so many arborists competed in the Tree Climbing Championship that the event had to be extended into a second day. The TCC again partnered with the Festival of Trees, which was hosted by the City of Eagan. In addition to the competition, the TCC has become a significant opportunity for the community of climbers in this state to network across company lines and learn from each other. The ranks of Certified Arborists continued to grow and there is growing interest in some of the Certified Arborist specializations. And finally (but certainly not least), we ended the year with a sizable positive balance in our checking account!

I can't say enough about all the people that planned, presented and participated in all of these events. MSA is all about education and networking, and we are clearly succeeding in that mission.

For 2009... more challenges, more opportunities. We just finished the Green Expo and by all measures, 2009 was a success. Our representatives on the Turf & Grounds Foundation and on the Commercial Arborist committee are already busy planning topics and speakers for 2010, so if you have

suggestions, this would be a great time to bring them forward. EHAP was presented February 17 for those who need electrical certification, and John Ball (our EHAP presenter) offered a half-day session on identification of hazard trees on February 16. The Tree Climbing Championship team is hard at work planning a two-day competition in St. Paul on May 16 & 17. There's a group of climbers working on plans for the summer climbing workshop, with this year's focus on aerial rescue techniques. If that's not enough for you, the Program and Education committee is working on plans for the Minnesota Tree Care Conference at the Arboretum on October 8.

There are some exciting new developments with MSA and you're holding one of them in your hand. This past year, Paul Buck managed to keep Arborescence going in his spare time (THANK YOU, Paul!). Starting with this issue, Chris Anderson is forming a team to manage the newsletter. This is a great opportunity for a few more members to step up and help Chris out. Amy Caldwell has taken over as chair of the Awards committee and they are already looking at some innovations to raise the prestige of our awards. New technology gives us opportunities to serve our membership with education and networking in ways we couldn't imagine just a few years ago... watch for the changes.

In addition to all the things MSA is doing, other organizations have put together some great educational opportunities that you might want to know about. The Rochester Arborist Workshop was held on February 20. Rip Tomkins and Ken Palmer from ArborMaster talked about techniques for arborists to work safely and productively. Rainbow Treecare is presenting a series of training seminars on Friday mornings through March to help participants prepare for the ISA Arborist Certification Exam. And the Shade Tree Short Course will be back at Bethel University this year, better than ever with two days packed full of learning and networking, March 17 & 18.

If I don't see you at the MSA Spring Picnic on March 17 at the Como Golf Course clubhouse in St. Paul, I hope to catch up with you out in the trees sometime soon.

Don Mueller
MSA President

New Committee Chair

Welcome Amy Caldwell!

Ever since I can remember, maybe four or five years of age, I have been an outdoor kid. Making mud pies, mud soup, forts or just running around doing what kids do. My first year of college was at the University of MN, Duluth. Then I came back to the Twin Cities U of M campus, still undecided about my career path. I couldn't conceive of a 9-5 job, sitting behind a desk. Thankfully, my parents were only interested in my happiness and reminded me of what I loved...the outdoors.

I visited a family friend, Dennis Bradley, who worked for the forest service on the St. Paul Campus. He introduced me to Lisa Burban, USDA Forest Service – Northeastern Area, who helped me confirm my career choice of forestry. Lisa was a great role model and mentor for me. She introduced me to Jim Hermann, Minneapolis Park Board Forester and others while doing some volunteer work in the Twin cities.

While pursuing my degree in Urban Forestry, I worked with grounds maintenance on the St. Paul campus. This is where I first gained some experience climbing and pruning. I also received encouragement from my boss Mark, as he told me that women could do this job just as well as men. Most days were spent weeding shrubs and flowerbeds or mowing and trimming the grounds...all good as long as I was outside.

During summers, working as a tree inspector for the Cities of Minnetonka and St. Louis Park, I experienced more firsts. This is the first time someone looked at me differently for being a woman in a male dominated industry. When I went to inform residents of their diseased trees, both men and women were surprised or shocked to see a woman arborist in steel toe boots, blaze orange vest and tree care gear. I am

still not surprised when older clients are skeptical about what a woman has to say on the subject of trees. Today's environment has certainly changed, as more women are involved in forestry.

Foresters Jim Vaughan of St. Louis Park and Craig Sinclair of Minnetonka were both influential in giving me experience. After almost 14 years with Rainbow Treecare, I enjoy working with trees more than ever.

Today, I am with Vineland Tree Care and very excited to be ramping up their Plant/Tree Health Care services this year. I am married to Jamey Caldwell; we have two daughters Emma (8) and Kelci (5). We have a knucklehead, yellow lab named Bauer and a black cat named Puck. We enjoy Gopher hockey in the winter and going to our cabin year round. Fishing, hiking, and biking are some of the activities our family enjoys.

This year is my first experience working with MSA. I am heading up the awards committee. My goal is to make the nomination process less complicated and to make the awards dinner an exciting and festive experience for everyone.

I thank Don Mueller for inviting me on board.



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Ralph's Rant

Don't be surprised when you vote for ISA President-Elect

In the not to distant future, all ISA members will receive a ballot for President-Elect. The ISA Board of Directors recently approved a candidate slate that may seem atypical. That's because the slate will only have one name on it. Before you get too miffed about the limited choice, I implore you to hold judgment until you hear the entire story.

As Chair of the ISA Board's Nominations and Elections Committee (NEC), I had the pleasure and challenge of overseeing the process that produced this result. It certainly was not what the NEC expected at the outset. In developing criteria for ISA Board President-Elect, the NEC identified Board service at the international level as being very helpful. This provides exposure to Board processes, which is

important with a somewhat unique board that has 46 internationally diverse members. By having already established a relationship with other ISA Board members, the transition to a leadership role can be much smoother. The NEC also recognized that the lack of previous international Board service should NOT, in and of itself, prevent potential candidates from being recommended. However, the potential candidate should be able to identify for the NEC other board and leadership experience that would demonstrate the candidate's ability to serve effectively.

The NEC used an application form and interview process that included questions designed specifically to address this issue. Even though previous Board service is an important criterion and there is a large pool of international Board members, we don't necessarily have a large pool of Board members with the capacity, interest, and willingness to be considered as a candidate. This year, the NEC had ten (10) names

submitted out of which only two (2) agreed to be considered.

When you vote for ISA President-Elect, you can rest assured that the candidate whose name is on the ballot will not let you down. If you have questions after reading this article, feel free to contact me.

Submitted by:

Ralph Sievert, ISA Board of Directors – MSA representative
1/30/2009



Climber's Corner

By Tom Dunlap
Canopy Tree

When do you use a second tie in while climbing?

Many times the second tie in is for positioning and balance. Before changing tie in points [TIP], a second tie in has to be chosen. Many times, a lanyard is adequate. Second TIP must be strong enough to support the climber in case of a fall.

There was a time, in the not too distant past, when it was accepted practice to use chainsaws in the tree without a second TIP. After too many near misses, accidents and deaths, the ANSI Z133 committee added this to the standard:

6.3.8 Arborists shall use a second point of attachment (for example, lanyard or double-crocheted climbing line) when operating a chain saw in a tree, unless the employer demonstrates that a greater hazard is posed by using a second point of attachment while operating a chain saw in that particular situation. Using both ends of a two-in-one lanyard shall not be considered two points of attachment when using a chain saw.

As you can see, there is a little wiggle room

built into the standard. The employer, and no one else, can allow climbers to sidestep using a second attachment point. For years, I've challenged climbers to show me a place where they can't use a second TIP. So far, I can always find one. I'd rather take a swing any day than a fall from cutting a lanyard or climbing line.

With the development of tri-cut handsaws, many climbers have found climbing easier without having a chainsaw on their harness. When working the outer crown, a handsaw is generally a better tool. In order to abide by the Z133 standard, a climber would have to find a suitable TIP every time that the chainsaw is fired up, not to mention putting on hearing protection too. How much time can be saved by just grabbing the handsaw, making a quick cut, and then move on?

The handsaws that are used these days cut wood with little effort. They can also cut ropes, lanyards and flesh! At an EHAP training a few years ago, I remember Gary Albig asking the group, 'How many people have been cut with a chainsaw?' Many sheepish hands were raised. Then, Gary asked the second question: 'How many people have been cut with a handsaw?' Almost everyone raised a hand, including me. We all realized the point that Gary was making. We have been taught to have a high respect for chainsaws, which is very good. On the other hand though, our use of handsaws is a bit too casual. Over the years, I've met more climbers

who have worse stories about handsaws than chainsaws.

This brings me to my current personal climbing standard. When I make a cut with a handsaw, I use a second TIP as often as possible. If the stroke of the saw is going to go anywhere close to my climbing rope, I either reposition myself or find a secure second TIP.

Once a climber starts to use a lanyard or second TIP, they'll find that production rates will not be compromised. Even if there is a few seconds saved by not using a second TIP, if a climbing line is ever cut, all of that timesaving will evaporate. Making small changes can add a lot of safety margin in the risky workplace many feet off the ground.

Climbers have configured many, very functional, lanyard setups. Having a lanyard setup to become a short, second, climbing line is a way to increase production and work safe too. There are several threads on <http://www.treebuzz.com> where climbers share their favorite variations.

Tom Dunlap currently lives in the Dallas, TX area but will never be from Texas or be a Texan. Home will always be Minnesota.
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<http://www.treebuzz.com>

Green Sidewalks, Patios and Trees

By Gary Johnson, *Extension Professor, Urban and Community Forestry, Department of Forest Resources, University of Minnesota*

Homeowners are reinvesting in their properties rather than building new homes and moving on. Urban parks are being renovated as aging facilities and pavement are declining from years of Minnesota weather and heavy use. Parking lots and restaurant patios are being torn up and reconstructed in order to provide more desirable outdoor dining areas or reduce the amount of storm run-off water. So, where does that leave the trees that have managed to survive the years of assaults and are actually providing some environmental and aesthetic benefits? Many are summarily removed or are severely damaged during the reconstruction and subsequently die, but there are other options.

More trees are damaged and/or die each year from construction activities in landscapes and streetscapes than in new subdivisions built in wooded areas. The most common reason for tree damage and mortality is root loss. Root loss may be a direct result of construction, such as digging trenches for utilities or foundations, re-grading the lawn (i.e., raising or lowering the grade), or deep roto-tilling the landscape in preparation for a new lawn or planting. Indirect root loss is just as common but a bit more

insidious. Soil compaction from construction equipment or vehicles driving over the root systems, elevated soil pH from burying debris (especially paint, mortar, plaster or concrete) or washing out concrete truck chutes in the landscape all eventually kill roots by reducing soil oxygen and water or from the direct chemical toxicity of some buried materials.

Not all construction has to end up harming plants. There are materials and techniques that allow projects to be completed without creating a tree un-friendly environment. Predicting the potential damage to tree roots and avoiding or lessening that damage will, in the end, result in more healthy trees shading the landscape.

Roots, Sidewalks and Patios

Hardscapes in the landscape are often essential, yet are often the most common and predictable causes of tree root damage and tree mortality. The materials used for sidewalks and patios are generally less of an issue than the techniques used to construct them. An experienced hardscape contractor will stress the importance of preparing a solid base for walkways and patios, as it should be. Without a solid base, the sidewalk or patio will be more prone to heaving and rupturing of the surface.

Base preparation usually involves excavation of at least 6 inches of the topsoil and then compaction of the installed base material, often sand, gravel or a mixture of the two. If the patio or sidewalk is under the dripline or within the critical root area of a tree, the direct loss of a significant number of roots is inevitable. Most tree roots are within the

MSA ANNOUNCES 2009 Tree Climbing Championship

The Tree Climbing Championship Committee of the Minnesota Society of Arboriculture announces the 2009 TCC will be held in Mounds Park, St Paul, Minnesota on May 16th and 17th. The TCC is held in conjunction with the Minnesota Festival of Trees, so there will be plenty of events that the whole family can enjoy!

George and Lynn Welles, Committee Co-chairs, are very excited by the condition, size and variety of trees available for this year's contest. The City of St Paul has generously offered to host this year's event and has provided the services of Scott Kruse of St Paul Forestry. Scott and the Forestry department will be preparing the site for competition this February.

The competition will be held over two days due to the tremendous number of competitors that are now participating. The preliminary events (Throwball, Aerial Rescue, Belayed Speed Climb, Work Climb and Footlock) will be held Saturday, May 16th. The Masters Challenge will be held Sunday, May 17th, with the winner of each division eligible to compete at the ISA TCC in Providence, Rhode Island on July 24-29th.

Participants are reminded that there is a mandatory safety meeting and gear check on Friday, May 15th. The meeting is held Friday afternoon to minimize interruptions to work schedules.

As always, volunteers are needed for the events. The TCC committee is handling all of the logistics and organizational details. What we need are timers, technicians (in tree and ground) runners, etc. No experience

is needed to help and the TCC committee will guide you to a volunteer position that most suits your abilities. This is a great opportunity to become more involved with the MSA in a fun, no pressure atmosphere.

Contestants and volunteers with any questions are encouraged to contact George or Lynn Welles @ 612-789-9255 or sales@northeasttree.net.

Updates on the schedule for the TCC and other events, will be posted on the MSA website www.msa-live.org. Just scroll through the calendar section. Check back often.

TREE WORKER CERTIFICATION AND TCC TEAM UP

The ISA has announced that people interested in becoming a Certified Tree Worker (CTW) can now waive the climbing portion of the skills exam if they meet certain criteria. Any participant that completes all of the events at a chapter TCC or the International TCC may waive the work climb portion of the skills exam. Simply fill out a waiver form, have an approved CTW evaluator sign the form, submit form with application and payment to ISA for consideration.

The completion of the skills exam is only part of the CTW exam. All candidates must have a minimum of 18 months experience, verified aerial rescue training, CPR, and first aid. A 50 question multiple choice exam on climbing and basic arboriculture is also required. If you are interested, please visit www.isa-arbor.com and go to the certification page to download your copy of the ISA Tree Worker Application Handbook.

Green Sidewalks, Patios and Trees Continued...

the soil profile. If the landscape soil is a compacted clay, the root system will be even shallower. If the soil is a well-drained sandy soil, the roots may grow a bit deeper.

Two steps to healthy trees. Root loss can be minimized during base preparation rather easily. Two practices need to be modified to avoid damage. (Actually, there is one other practice that works even better...don't build sidewalks and patios within the critical root area of trees, but that's usually not a very practical recommendation.) The first recommendation is to avoid the damage by not excavating. That may seem like a typical, academic recommendation, but on second thought, it may be the perfect solution for someone who wants a sidewalk yet loves the landscape trees above it.

Bases can be built above grade rather than below grade and it's done all of the time. Since organic matter can't be compacted, the sod will need to be stripped. Remove the sod and 1-2 inches of soil with a sod stripper, not a tractor with a front end-loader. Voila! Hardly any roots have been lost

top 3 feet of the soil profile. Most fine roots, those roots that absorb the majority of water and minerals required to sustain life, are within the top 12 inches of



Tree Fund

Speeding the Process from Research to Results

By Ward Peterson

Davey Resource Group and TREE Fund Trustee

Research can be fascinating in itself. It's rewarding to identify a need and see it solved. However, for research to be valuable, it needs to be used. Often this is called 'technology transfer.' The real return comes from using new technology or information to solve problems that will benefit trees, arborists and public safety.

There's often a reluctance to try new processes in any industry. For business owners, it can be expensive to make the changes that new ideas require. Existing equipment may have to be replaced before it has depreciated. Arborists and staff may have to be trained in the new process. Clients may have to be educated. Systems -- and possibly the entire culture of the organization -- may have to change. So why would a successful business want to adopt a new process or practice?

The benefits of the new research have to outweigh the costs and someone has to prove to us that they will. The benefits of new information or technology are often proven or promoted by someone outside of the existing company. Sometimes, it may be market pressures that force the issue. A new process or practice may be adopted by writing it into contract specifications. Regulations (with penalties to enforce them) are

a powerful motivator because, when they change, everyone has to adapt -- or find a new service to provide!

As an industry, we need to generate new ideas through research. New ideas can make our work safer, more profitable, easier, more effective, less expensive or easier to market. Adopting the new idea should make us feel good about being the best and will differentiate us from our competitors who are slow to change.

From Research to Implementation

There are many steps to take before a new idea is implemented. First of all, each one of us has the power to identify problems that require research to solve, but how many of us express that concern to the people who can start the research process? One place to start is with the ISA Science and Research Committee who play a major role in identifying arboriculture industry problems that require research. The next step is the TREE Fund where grant money is provided to qualified, objective researchers who can study the problem and hopefully, find solutions. Then researchers usually publish their findings in journals such as "Arboriculture & Urban Forestry." Other researchers and practitioners then review the new ideas and decide whether they are viable and effective.

Now comes the hard part -- how do we implement or use the research? The new information has to get to the right people and they have to be convinced to use it. Implementation occurs through: Presentations at conferences (ISA, TCIA, UAA, SMA, etc.), pilot or demonstration projects, discussions among peers, success stories that illustrate the benefits of the idea, proof that the new idea is more profitable and effective, standards

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mndaily.com, U of M Minneapolis/
St. Paul, 9/29/08

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or Best Management Practices (BMP) that incorporate the new idea, manufacturers investing in developing related equipment and materials, training to implement the processes and educating the public and clients that the new approach is better than the previous one.



Critical Steps in this Process

Which steps will make the most difference in fixing problems in tree care and work processes? Certainly, it's important to identify specific problems that will make the most difference if corrected and then, fund the research to do so. The researchers and early adopters have to prove that the new idea is an improvement and more profitable. The public has to be educated through all forms of media and advertising, as well as arborists in face-to-face meetings and client advising.

What can we, as an industry, do to speed or improve the process?

- Fund more research and fund the best research
- Personally evaluate and test the ideas
- Discuss the ideas among ourselves and with the public
- Invest in the best, most current solutions and recommend them to clients

The bottom line is that people, trees and the environment will benefit if we support more research through the TREE Fund and other funding opportunities. Donations, sponsorships and planned gifts are vital to moving our industry forward. And once the research is done, each of us must also commit to evaluating the solutions developed, discussing them with fellow arborists at TCIA and ISA conferences, and putting them to work as soon as possible.

CHIROPRACTIC USA FOR THE WELL-ADJUSTED LIFE

Tips for Starting, Then Surviving, the Work Day

A Positive Start...how you start each day is crucial. Your mood and attitude in the first few minutes of waking set the tone for the rest of the day, and this outlook affects the rest of the folks on your crew. If you crawl out of bed a crab, then be sure to take some "me" time to adjust your attitude. Believe it or not, the first five minutes can make a difference for the whole day. Stretching slowly, as when performing tai-chi or yoga, will jump start your adrenaline without shocking your body. Tree climbing is a sport; your body is that of an athlete. Always be sure to include time for breakfast. A good breakfast will give your body and mind the fuel to power it through the early part of the day. Show up with a smile and be determined to be safe and to have fun.

A LOOK BACK AT THE SUMMER CLIMBING WORKSHOP AND A LOOK FORWARD TO 2009

The first annual MSA "Summer Climbing Workshop" was introduced to members in June of 2008. The workshop offered a safe environment that is well suited for learning, performing, and discussing climbing techniques. Fifteen attendees took part in the 2008 workshop.

The theme of this introductory year was rope access techniques and ascending systems. Instructors Taylor Hamel, Andy Hovland, Eric Raven, John Sirbasku and Pierce Wasmund reviewed the various aspects of rope access, beginning with throwline and rope installation skills. Each ascending system was demonstrated, followed by a discussion of safe operating practices. The configuration and compatibility of equipment was also highlighted for each system. Attendees were then given the opportunity to perform the techniques themselves, as well as share their own input and experiences with regard to rope access.

The MSA is working hard to put together the 2nd annual Summer Climbing Workshop. The 2009 workshop will focus on Aerial Rescue. This is a great opportunity to see various techniques used for different situations and also to learn from professional emergency medical personnel. All participants will get a chance to perform a scenario rescue of an injured climber.

The location and date of the 2nd annual Summer Climbing Workshop have yet to be determined.

Questions regarding the 2009 workshop can be sent to pwasm@hotmail.com.





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Important Dates

Shade Tree Short Course, and MSA Winter Picnic
Bethel College, March 17-18

Tree Climbing Championships and Festival of Trees,
Saturday, May 16th with the Master's Challenge on Sunday, May 17th

ISA 85th Annual Conference, Providence, RI,
July 25-29, 2009

MN Tree Care Conference, Minnesota Landscape Arboretum October 8

TCIA Tree Care Industry Association Meeting,
November 5-7

MSA Day of Service – Veteran's Day, November 11

Green Expo, January 6-8, 2010

Certified Arborists

Upcoming Certified Arborist and Certified Tree Worker exam dates.
Applications must be submitted 12 days prior to the exam. Anyone can
take the written CTW exam whenever the CA exam is offered. The skills
part of the CTW test are offered separately.

Visit www.msa-live.org to learn more.

EXAM DATE	LOCATION	REGISTRATION DATE	MAX ATTENDANCE
03/27/2009	St. Louis Park, MN	03/11/2009	50
04/24/2009	Andover, MN	04/07/2009	30
06/19/2009	Alexandria, MN	06/03/2009	25
11/20/2009	St. Louis Park, MN	11/04/2009	50