

17 July 2015



Dear IAA members,

Your board has been very busy these past few months. There has been a lot to discuss and even more meetings with other organizations.

As I'm sure you're all aware of by now, the IAA board has been exploring the idea of breaking away from the Midwest Chapter of the ISA and becoming our own independent chapter. Back in June, some of the board members met with Jim Skiera, executive director of the ISA, to get answers to the questions we had and find out whether or not this would be in the best interest of the IAA.

This is what we found out. Breaking away from the MWISA is not a new concept. Minnesota, Illinois and Wisconsin all used to be part of the Midwest ISA but over the years they grew and decided to separate and become self-sustaining. The most recent state to break away from a larger group was Florida. I mention this only to underscore that this seems to be a natural progression as states grow and assume more responsibilities on their own.

Next, it has been largely assumed that Iowa provides the majority of membership to the Midwest Chapter. This may have been the case years ago but we have been passed by Missouri and are followed closely by Kansas. This is relevant because there was a concern from some members that our leaving the organization may leave the MW crippled and unable to continue. Obviously, that won't happen.

Before I go any further, I feel I should explain why we are looking at this. In no way did it come about as a result of any friction with the MWISA. It all comes down to service. Some time ago, the IAA board looked at what we providing and asked "What else can we offer our members?" We then listed the things that we already do: CEU workshops, our climbing day (which is now a 2 day event), we have our own gear to support that and we have our own insurance. We also have a Day of Service, a Kids Climbing Event, a functioning website and new this year we are taking a greater part in the ISU Shade Tree Short Course. It became apparent to us that the IAA is responsible for a lot of opportunities here in Iowa. Then it occurred to us that if we were our own chapter, we could offer all of the same benefits one would receive from being a member of the Midwest ISA, namely discounts on purchases made from the ISA but at a lower price.

During our meeting with Mr. Skiera, we also found about profit sharing with the ISA as well as the fact that they would help us out with our membership renewals. These two things are huge. First, because it has always been a struggle for us to track who's currently a member. Some people sign up at Shade Tree and others at the climbing day. If the ISA were to handle it, a person could sign up on any given day and know that they were getting one full year of membership. Next is the profit sharing part of the deal. The IAA would get 40% of the certification revenue. There are currently 176 ISA members in Iowa and 309 ISA credential holders. That money is currently going to the MWISA. We would also receive a large portion of any ISA programs that were held here, namely the TRAQ program.



To add to that, Iowa would also have a direct connection to the ISA global network (think international speakers and climbing instructors) as well as the International Tree Climbing Championship. Those are a lot of benefits that Iowa does not directly receive. We could.

I want to reiterate that we are not looking to break away from the MWISA due to hard feelings. We are looking to do this because we believe that Iowa would gain bigger, better and more benefits if we did.

The next step is for you to vote. I will be sending out a poll shortly for you to participate in. If the majority of you vote yes then we will fill out the application and submit it to the ISA. From there, the ISA must poll Iowa members of the MWISA. If there is consensus and the Iowa members wish to proceed, it would go to a vote before the ISA Board of Directors. If they approve it, we would be our own chapter but would be on a 3 year probationary period. If for some reason during those three years, one of our organizations determines that this isn't working, we would most likely be folded back into the Midwest Chapter. This isn't going to be quick process. There are several steps involved.

This is what they look like:

- 1) IAA votes and we submit the application. Or not depending on how the vote goes.
- 2) The Iowa members of the MWISA vote. If approved then it's on to step 3
- 3) The ISA Board of Directors votes on whether to allow us to become our own chapter.
- 4) If we get the green light all the way through we are on a 3 year probationary period, After those 3 years, we are a full fledge ISA Chapter

For those who wished to remain members of the Midwest ISA, that is certainly an option. You would not be forced to pick one or the other. You could join both if you so desired.

We are going to offer the Midwest ISA a chance comment on these proceedings. Following this letter are their comments. At any time, should you have questions I would expect that you can ask MWISA directly. As always, you can contact any of our board members with your' concerns. Our contact info is on the website.

Ok, now for the next bit of business. We have secured a room during the lunch hour at the ISU Shade Tree Short Course. This is when we will hold our annual meeting. It was decided to try this for several reasons. One, because we want more people to participate and two because we (the IAA) have been invited to participate in the INLA dinner/social hour at Reiman Gardens that evening. I suggest all who can make it that event to try. It should be a good time.

Speaking of the INLA we are going to work with them this year in order to have more tree related vendors at Shade Tree Short Course. I'm not sure how many will respond but be sure to show your support to those who do.

Last but certainly not least is our climbing day. We have Norm Hall returning this year to give a presentation on the 17th of September. The climbing day will be on Friday the 18th. We will have a flier to distribute shortly with all of the details so keep your eye out for it. This years' event will be held at the



Iowa Arboretum near Madrid. Some of you may remember it from a past Day of Service or more recently Ed Gilman's pruning class. I hope to see all of you there.

In parting I wanted to share with you an email I received from Jim Skiera shortly after we met with him:

"Hello all,

It was great to visit with you all last week, it appears you have a good team in place. I learned a lot about the organization, I really had no idea IAA was that active. I think you have the highest per capita board member with the BCMA credential I have witnessed, a smart bunch. Thank you for your support of ISA programs.

Please let me know if you have any further questions, I look forward to hearing from you.

Regards,"

The IAA is growing and our future, although undecided as of yet, looks bright regardless of the path we choose. I look forward to seeing you all this fall at our climbing day. Enjoy your summer and be safe out there.

Regards,

Brandt Jelken
Board Certified Master Arborist #MW-4883BM
President, Iowa Arborist Association



Greetings IAA Members

I thought I should take a moment and address the issue of the IAA becoming an ISA chapter. As a member of both the IAA and the MWISA, I was torn on what this move may do to the current and the future membership of both organizations. I just want to assure the membership that this exploration of the future of the IAA was not one sided. We have had countless of hours of research, debate and soul searching as to whether this is the right direction we, the IAA, should go. When it comes right down to the facts; the IAA meets all the requirements to become our own chapter. We have the membership numbers, we are financially stable, and according to Jim Skiera with the ISA, the ISA is in support of us becoming a chapter member. If you think about it, we have been doing all the work that is expected of a chapter for years, but not receiving any of the support and benefits that come as a chapter.

As a member of the MWISA, I have to ask myself, will this move cripple the MWISA? With the majority of their membership coming out of Missouri, not Iowa, the Midwest will still be its own chapter. I am sure the Midwest will still retain most of their Iowa members. I foresee myself as keeping a dual membership with both the MWISA and the IAA if this goes forward.

I will be voting **YES** on starting the application process. I personally believe this will make us stronger and this is the right direction we need to move in. I would like to encourage each of you to do the same. Please feel free to contact me or any of the board members if you are in need of further clarification.

Todd Reese

IAA Treasurer

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It is a pleasure to have the opportunity to address you, the members of the Iowa Arborist Association, as our organizations have historically enjoyed a close and cooperative relationship. I'd like to thank your President, Brandt Jelkin, for giving me this opportunity.

I've become aware that some of your leadership has expressed interest in breaking away from the Midwest Chapter of the ISA and forming your own Iowa chapter. President Jelkin and I have discussed this issue at length via email, and President Jelkin has also put forth his reasoning in the April issue of this newsletter. The IAA is a valued and important partner with the MWISA. As president of the MWISA, it is my sincere desire that any decision by the IAA on this important subject be made with serious consideration of what is best for Iowa arborists. This is why I decided to address you in this newsletter.

Whether or not breaking away from the MWISA is best for the IAA, or best for individual members, may depend in part on the answer to a bigger question. What benefits do you hope to receive as part of a professional organization like the MWISA?

For me, one of the greatest benefits of membership in a professional organization is the opportunity to meet and network with a variety of people in our industry, and to learn from and support one another. We currently have over 850 members from seven states, all of whom have unique jobs, experiences, and insights. As accomplished as you, the professional arborists of Iowa are, your jobs and lives can only be enriched by taking advantage of the opportunities that are available in an organization that spans seven states, just as your presence in the MWISA enriches the jobs and lives of arborists across each of the seven member states.

Iowa is and has been well represented in the MWISA. Several of your members have served or are currently serving on the MWISA board, including Dr. Jeff Illes, Chip Murrow, Chris Johnson, and Rick Tagtow, our current Executive Director.

Since 1999, we have held our annual conference in Iowa 4 times, including back-to-back conferences (Dubuque in 2014, Council Bluffs in 2015.) Iowa has hosted our annual conference more times in that time span than any other member state. We intend to always look at every state for inclusion in the conference rotation. Our goal is to include the largest number of members possible at every conference, to maximize networking, communication and support throughout our industry.

So, what are the stated advantages to you to form your own chapter? Here is President Jelkin's answer to that question in his April letter:

"Simply that all the benefits one receives from being members of the MWISA would now be received through us."

Respectfully, I disagree. When it comes to networking, support, and the sharing of knowledge and experience among professional arborists, none of the States in the MWISA, not Iowa, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas or Oklahoma can provide the robust benefits of all of those

States together. And even if President Jelkin's argument is correct, and you could receive all the same more tangible benefits you receive from the MWISA through an independent IAA chapter, wouldn't it be better to enjoy those benefits with the addition of many times more arborists, bringing many times more knowledge and support from all over our industry, across the Midwest?

I have made a standing offer to your board to speak to the issue of breaking away from the MWISA in person. So far, it has not been convenient for your board to take me up on this offer. I would encourage you to contact your IAA board and ask them to accept this offer. I would then encourage all of you who can attend to do so. You will benefit from a full vetting of this issue.

Again, my thanks to President Jelkin for allowing me to address you. I hope that you give this issue careful and objective consideration.

Kevin Harrel
President
Midwest Chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture



Prospect Park Cottonwood Pictures
by Mark Rouw





SPRING FEVER COTTONWOOD

As a kid, I wasn't a bad student but I always had one problem. I had a chronic case of spring fever. I had trouble concentrating because I would have preferred to be down by the river exploring among the tall trees. During the months it wasn't too cold, my friend John and I would head for the river right after school. In seventh grade, John left for Colorado where there were unlimited opportunities for exploring.

My wandering affliction continued through junior high and high school. I have never had an aptitude for math and this problem was made even more difficult in one math class. In this class, I had an excellent view of the timber along the river. I couldn't keep from looking out the window and day dreaming about walking among the big cottonwoods. Despite my lack of focus, I did manage to barely pass the class.

In 1973 one of the largest trees along the river measured just over 18' in circumference. I have been monitoring this tree for the last 42 years. Despite some significant storm damage, which has reduced the crown spread, the tree is still alive and growing. Today, the tree has a height of 111', an average crown spread of 106' and a trunk circumference of 25'!

There are cottonwoods in Iowa with a larger girth but they all have trunks that divide much closer to the ground. This tree maintains a clear bole for over 25'! I can't think of a more impressive cottonwood in Iowa. Most of the big trees that I measured back in the early days are now gone. A few like this magnificent tree have beat the odds. I don't expect the height or spread to increase much on an old tree like this but as long as it survives, the trunk circumference will continue to grow a little every year. Over the last 42 years the circumference has increased an averaged about 1.9" per year.

If I had it to do all over again, I would try to concentrate more on my classes. Since I can't go back, I'll never know if I could have been a better student. Even though my studies suffered, at least there was one amazing tree I managed to find due to spring fever.

Story Submitted by Mark Rouw

SAVE THE DATES:



There will be a Seminar on Thursday, September 24th from 9:00 am – 3:00 pm presented by Norman S. Hall, ISA Certified Arborist and Tree Worker #IL1060AT

Topics to be covered include:

1. Tree risk assessment
 2. Throwline techniques
 3. Installing a ring and ring friction from the ground using throwline
 4. Installing a climbing rope into the friction saver
 5. Setting an SRT ascending rope in the tree and anchoring it near the base to a basal anchor, allowing the system to be lowered from the ground should the climber become incapacitated
 6. Ascending the SRT rope using mechanical ascenders and textiles
- If time allows; basic rigging set-ups using arborist blocks, spliced eye slings and rope friction devices
 - I am willing to stay after the presentation for climbing gear inspection

This seminar will be held at the Iowa Arboretum, 1875 Peach Ave., Madrid

The climbing competition will be held on Friday, September 25th at the Iowa Arboretum, 1875 Peach Ave., Madrid



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We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.iowaarboristassociation.org
