

Tree Talk



Education, Training, Communication, Professionalism & Public Awareness in Arboriculture

October 2015 Volume 4, Issue 4



Hello everyone,

It's that time of year again when the leaves are turning brilliant colors and people are taking a closer look at their trees. For some of you, this may mean an upswing in business, for others it may signal a time to begin addressing snow control equipment. Regardless of your annual fall time rituals, we all know that just because the seasons change, the work doesn't stop.

Neither does the IAA. We have had a pretty big year this year with the purchasing of more climbing day gear to the really big stuff like applying to become an ISA Chapter. We started the year the same way we always do, at the ISU Shade Tree Short Course. For those of you who haven't been for some time, 2016 would be great time to make an appearance. It will be the 60th Anniversary of Shade Tree! For the 60th celebration, Dr. Iles has secured an international speaker from Germany. Dr. Dirk Dejuseifken will be the keynote speaker and will be expounding on Dr. Alex Shigos' work with the CODIT Principle. If you're not familiar with this, Shade Tree would be a great place to become introduced.

Close on the heels of our annual meeting at Shade Tree we hosted a conference at the Drake University on Tree Law. Victor Murrello did a wonderful job of explaining an arborist's responsibilities and liabilities in the field of arboriculture. Then, in July, board member Todd Fagan went above and beyond and just about single handedly lined up and put together the ISA TRAQ program that was held in Cedar Rapids. I completed this course in 2011 and can tell you with all certainty; it is an excellent program and has paid for itself many times over. Hopefully we will be able to bring it back to Iowa in the near future for those who missed it last time around.

As I write this, it has been one month exactly since we had the IAA Climbing Day. I would like to take a minute and address all the people who help to make this event possible. First and foremost is Scott Carlson, our Past President. Scott has pretty much been in charge of this event since its inception and it has become a staple for our organization. Without his leadership for this event, it would not be what it is today. Scott, the IAA thanks you.

I would like to individually name each and every person who is involved in the climbing day but they are to numerous and I would feel terrible if I missed single one. So, to the judges and sponsors, spectators and those who support our climber's we offer heartfelt thanks. You really help to make our organization what it is and one I am proud to be the president of.

At this time I would like to introduce you to our newest member, the official IAA photographer, Robert Koehler. I met Rob at this years' climbing day as he walked around with his camera. All of the pictures you see on the website from this years' event were taken by Rob. So at the next event when you see someone taking your picture, it's probably Rob. Go over and give him a big IAA welcome! Don't worry Leah; the photos you took will be up there shortly!



This next bit of business is very important. Our annual Day of Service. This year we will be at the Iowa Veterans Cemetery in Adel. The event will be held on Saturday, November 7th starting at 8:00 am. The trees out there are fairly young and can be pruned with a pole saw. As we are all aware, proper pruning at an early age can greatly improve a trees' longevity. This is a worthy event and I hope to see a lot of you there.

Coming up in January (date is TBD); we will be having another workshop covering tree and landscape appraisals. Check the website for updates.

I feel I would be remiss in my duties if I didn't talk about our application to the ISA. Voting closed for that on September 25 at noon and for those unaware, it was a resounding YES! We submitted our application to the ISA on October 9th. Next Friday I have call with the ISA to make sure our application is complete and to discover a time line for the process. I will be sure to share that with all of you.

Well, that about sums it up. My time as your president is drawing to close and I would like to take a minute to talk about the future of our association. We have come a long way since I first joined the IAA board. We have achieved a lot we can be proud of but we're not done. There are still goals to be accomplished and hurdles yet to overcome. I have every confidence that our organization can attain them all and beat every obstacle. I am proud to be among your ranks. I am proud of you.

Thank you,

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

IAA Climbing Day

A perfect, sunny day began as competitors, volunteers, spectators and vendors arrived at the Iowa Arboretum in Madrid, IA to the 10th Annual Iowa Tree Climbing Day Workshop and Competition. This was to be the first in several years without rain. Twelve Midwest climbers showed up to learn and compete.

Josh Hodson expertly ran the show again with the expert help of Brad Terry and a bunch of volunteers. A thorough gear safety inspection was held. By the end of that discussion all participants were well-versed in what is expected of safe gear and how to inspect for those qualities. Then Josh led competitors on a visit to each event with an introduction to the officials and a discussion of what to expect at each. Aerial Rescue, Work Climb, Throw Line and Belayed Speed Climb were the four events held.



Butch Christiansen of Asplundh and his lovely girlfriend Rhonda Shunk and Matt Pregon also of Asplundh volunteered to put on a new and exciting aspect of our event this year - The Kids Climb. You may remember that Butch prepared a sycamore at the Arboretum in April with an elaborate and super fun system for kids at the IAA Kid's Climb Day. Again at the IAA Climb Day four kids enthusiastically and safely climbed a birch under the close supervision of Butch and Rhonda. We hope this becomes a much bigger part of our event in the years to come.

When asked about the event, Butch said, "Seems every climbing event I've been to { which is a lot } I always see a few kids having fun trying to climb trees without climbing gear. So I figured out a way they can actively enter into the tree, not just climbing a rope, but by strapping stubs to the trunk like a rock wall. Then up a rope tied with hitches to the main limb to ascend higher to a horn they can sound off at the top - about 25 to 30 feet off the ground, all the time being on a belay system to descend. To make it more fun we had 1st 2nd and 3rd place prizes, judged by time and how safe they were. For the older kids and adults we set a normal climb line in the same tree. We also set a SRT [single rope technique] for more advanced climbers to try, using the rope wrench and the rope walker system. We had a technician in the tree at all times for safety. During the event a 2 year old girl wanted to try. She was unable to do so, but did try. Matt used a long lanyard he had snapped onto her saddle from the lanyard to a lower limb, making a nice swing. All this making it SAFE, FUN, and FREE for everyone that would like to try." Colin Shermer was the first place kid climber followed by Ben Shermer, Preston Lee then Gabriella Fox. Nice work kids! Nice work Butch, Rhonda and Matt.

Thanks to Brad Terry of Asplundh in the Quad Cities, Kevin Kasal of City of Des Moines Forestry, Jerry Sheese and Aaron Soboroff from Advantage Tree Service in Davenport, Beige Turner of Vermeer of Pella - the Aerial Rescue officials. The overall winner of the Aerial Rescue was Jeremy Fox from Advantage Tree in Davenport, Matt Starks from Stark Brother's Tree Service in Lee's Summit, MO placed second and Jay Lewiston of Norwalk and employed by the City of Des Moines Forestry took third. Brad Terry - the head judge of the event - commented, "The rescue station of the climbing competition was deceptively challenging this year. There were some components of the injured climber's gear that a lot of the competitors were not familiar with. Overall, everyone did well, and it is always great to practice these different scenarios in non-critical settings. I think most climbers today want to help and keep their climbing cohorts safe and will do what it takes to perform a rescue if the situation arises. That being said, it is my wish that these "practice" scenarios become so repetitive that the likelihood of rescue failures diminishes significantly. We don't want accidents to happen, but we *really* don't want to add a second victim to the equation. I would encourage frequent practice by all in the industry, and it is always more fun to add a competitive edge to it."

Thanks to Aric Hollingshead and Rob Philipsen and Mike Kielty of Des Moines Forestry, Todd Fagan - Waterloo City Forester - and me - the Work Climb officials. Matt Starks scored highest, Jeremy Fox placed second and Brody Lloyd from Asplundh in the Quad Cities took third. As head judge of this event, I observed that "The contestants experience and skill levels varied greatly but the encouragement and advice from their opponents - who are really just their colleagues and friends - never wavered. This is crucial."

Thanks to Ryan Lewis of Asplundh in Des Moines, Jason Kakert and Trevon Spicer of Scott Carlson Certified Arborists in the Quad Cities and Zach Melik of Advantage Tree - the Throw Line officials.



Jeremy Fox scored highest followed by John Dixon of Asplundh in the Quad Cities and Jay Lewiston in third. Head Judge of Throw Line - Ryan Lewis said of the event, "I think the guys had a great time as usual. The course was challenging for all skill levels."

IAA thanks the Belayed Speed Climb officials - Stuart Buse, Tyler Sutherland, Tim Wilson, Caleb Buse of Xtreme Tree in Adel, and Joe Goldsberry of Advantage Tree. This year's winner of Belayed Speed Climb is Matt Starks. The second place spot was taken by Jeremy Fox followed by Jay Lewiston with a solid third place finish... again. "It was fun. It was a good time. It was fast-paced and high energy. Those guys were pumped." said Stuart Buse the head judge of the event.

Congratulations to Jay Lewiston for a respectable 3rd place overall finish for the day, Jeremy Fox for a commendable 2nd and Matt Starks for winning the Tenth Annual Iowa Tree Climbing Competition. This is Matt's third time placing in the top three at this competition. Thanks for your years of competing. Congratulations to all who competed.

When I announced Jeremy Fox's second place finish he approached the highly coveted prize table. Instead of grabbing the valuable prizes he had earned, he faced the crowd of arborists. "Who here has been in the industry less than a year?" he asked. Three hands rose. "Pick a number between one and ten." he said while hiding six digits behind his back for me to see. Joe Goldsberry of Advantage guessed the closest. Jeremy invited him to come up and grab whatever he wanted from his pile of hard-won goodies. Joe wisely grabbed a brand new Stihl MS 193 T chainsaw donated by Stuart Buse and Matt Vrieze of Xtreme Tree. Kevin Pendergrast of Advantage Tree, grabbed a hard hat. Jason Kakert was the third closest and scored a Silky Zubat handsaw. This is not the first time that Jeremy has done this. You're a class act Jeremy. Nice going.

Several years ago Bill Reese created a new award that recognized the competitor that showed the greatest enthusiasm and good sportsmanship. The award was dubbed the Spirit of the Competition Award. This year's recipient did not stun the crowd with blazing speed or agility as he is not that experienced yet. Instead, in this - his first competition - he showed courage and an eagerness to learn and help. At one point he even volunteered to wash dishes in the kitchen! Now that's classy. Congratulations to Josh Schmidt of Tree Care LLC in Swisher for winning the Spirit of the Competition Award. Nice work.

Mindy Charron - IAA Incoming President - input dozens of scores as she expertly ran the scoring software.

Delicious morning refreshments and a grilled lunch was prepared by IAA past President Todd Reese and his lovely wife Rhonda.

One arborist in attendance this year has been a very good friend to IAA and this event. Ryan Lewis has attended every single IAA Tree Climbing Day. As a competitor he placed third in 2006 - the first year of this event. Then he won the event in 2008 and 2010. This year an older (and wiser?) Lewis was head judge of the Throw Line event. Thanks for all you do Ryan.

IAA thanks Mark Schneider, Joe McNally and Kevin Lantz of Iowa Arboretum for allowing us the use of the beautiful grounds and trees - the official home of IAA.



Thanks to Jim Scott of Vermeer of Pella, Iowa for again providing great prizes for the winners. This year Vermeer was particularly generous with some very serious loot!

Thanks to IBEW local 55 for a very generous donation to the event.

Thanks to Sean Stanley at Midwest Underground Equipment of Bondurant for providing several nice prizes.

Stuart Buse and Matt Vrieze of Xtreme Tree in Adel donated a brand new Stihl MS 193 T chainsaw!

Adel Power Equipment donated a valuable climbing helmet.

Thanks to Wright of Des Moines for providing a bucket truck. Thank you Andrew Harden of Wright for climbing and operating the bucket truck during set up the day before the event and during the Work Climb event.

Thanks to Wes Tregilgas for providing a GRCS for the AR event.

A huge thanks to TREESTUFF.COM for donating \$2486 worth of loot including a \$500 Matt Cornell saddle, an air powered throw ball gun and a ton of throw line cubes, rope bags stickers etc.

Thanks to my crew (Scott Carlson Certified Arborists) for helping out for two days with set up and tear down of the event.

Thanks to all those too numerous to credit individually who jumped in and helped out. Thanks to all who sacrificed a day of work or a personal vacation day to attend. You are appreciated.

Last, but not least, IAA thanks Josh Hodson for another great program! This year Josh (and IAA) had the challenge of a new location with smaller trees. We knew this would be difficult but that Josh would persevere. Not only did he make it work, but he did so while adding one event to our roster. I asked Josh for his thoughts on the event and he said, "I think the day overall was a big success. The weather was great and I think adding the throw line event was a lot of fun. I hope to see the event brought to a full competition in the near future."

Just in case these challenges were not enough for Josh, he rose to this occasion fresh off a win at ISA Midwest chapter Tree Climbing Championship *and* a 15th place (out of 35) finish at North American Tree Climbing Championship *and* the day before competing at ISA Illinois chapter Tree Climbing Championship at Morton Arboretum over 300 miles away! We are fortunate to have such a dedicated and accomplished professional leading this event.

Next year the event will probably be held in September again. It will be held in Iowa City at City Park where this event started ten years ago. In addition to the Kid's Climb we hope to have a "Geezer" division for our more seasoned arborists. Let us know what you think, old dudes (and ladies).

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Your thoughts? If you would like to receive regular updates about the event, shoot your e-mail address to me at s Carlson9999@csteldridge.com

**Oops! IAA apologizes to Stuart Buse and Xtreme Tree in Adel for donating valuable prizes and time to the Climbing Day event without being formally recognized the day of the event. Your contribution this year and many past years was significant and appreciated. Thank you!*

Hope to see you at the IAA Day of Service on November 7th at 8:00am
Iowa Veterans Cemetery in Adel

Officers:

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See us at:

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