

## Illinois Arborist Association Day of Service

by Norm Hall

The Illinois Arborist Association held it's Day of Service on February 28, 2019 at The Farnsworth House in Plano IL. The Farnsworth House was designed and constructed by the famous German architect Ludwig Mies van der Rohe for Dr. Edith Farnsworth in 1951. The 60-acre grounds have chipped paths with some very desirable tree species, including ginkgo, bald cypress, American and European beech. The chipped paths are the walkways for the public to view the 60-acre grounds, and lead to the one-of-a-kind Farnsworth House. Along these paths were some very hazardous trees and dangerous hanging limbs. Some of these were directly over the walkway. Our Task was to remove the hazardous trees and dangerous hanging limbs in one day.

Todd Haefke, the Illinois Arborist Association's Day of Service Coordinator, chose the site. Todd, Steve Lane and I met with Scott Mehaffey, the Executive Director of Farnsworth, at the Farnsworth Visitor's Center on the 5th of December to check out the scope of work. We wanted to meet with Scott and walk the site to get a feel for how many arborists and what kind of equipment we would need to complete the task. Starting at the Visitor's Center, we walked



on chipped path along the Fox River that led to the Farnsworth House. As we walked the quarter mile path, Scott pointed out the hazardous trees and hanging limbs he would like removed. Most of the hazardous trees were dead ash, with a few black willows. As we made our way to the Farnsworth House, Scott also pointed out a 22" dead American elm with a 25° lean, hanging over a small grove of Ginkgo. Being that the elm was hanging over the very desirable Ginkgo's, the limb wood would have to control lowered (rigged). Steve Lane and I agreed this tree was critical risk, which meant too dangerous to climb and/or rig from. Fortunately, there was a hackberry in close proximity that a climber could set a climbing rope to access the American

elm. That would be our plan. As we walked back to the Visitors Center, Scott also asked that we deadwood prune and elevate 5 Norway maples that were along the path directly behind the Visitors Center.

After our walk, Todd, Steve and I met to determine how many climbers, cutters, groundspersons would be needed, as well as equipment needs to complete the work. Due to the narrow paths and limited access, we decided to limit it to 25 to 30 arborists.

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Don't forget  
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the upcoming  
IAA Summer  
Conference.

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## Illinois Arborist Association Mission Statement

*"Foster interest, establish standards, exchange professional ideas  
and pursue scientific research in Arboriculture"*

# President's Message

Steve Lane

Dear Illinois Arborist Association Members,

As we look towards Spring, this industry is really getting into high gear right now! Spray tanks are being cleaned and set up for plant health care, buds are starting to break on all of the early season trees, and the amount of cold weather gear we all wear starts to get lighter and lighter. It's one of my favorite times of year to be an Arborist, and possibly a human being. But it's also one of the busiest times of year, and one during which most of us are trying to staff up for the season. And therein lies one of our biggest challenges as an industry: Where to find the talent to take on the daunting amount of work we as an industry are tasked with. There's never a shortage of work, but always a shortage of workers...

At IAA Strategic Planning every year, we always talk about this unfortunate fact, that our industry is one that most people haven't heard of, see as "not a real job", or think is too dangerous. And let's face it, in a more digital age, we spend less time outdoors as a species, much less a workforce. People opt for indoor work over outdoor in much larger part these days. How do we get around this? I'll be giving a presentation at the ISA conference in Knoxville this August on just this topic. I think there's a few ways we can all better ourselves and our industry through some simple actions, like representing ourselves well on the jobsite and in public, helping to educate the public whenever possible, and raising our own personal levels of knowledge and professionalism.

As part of some of these simple steps, I would advise you to get involved with IAA's programs which will build your professional credibility and skill set. We have a great calendar of events building for this year: The student days down in Carbondale, summer conference in Champaign in July, many Advanced Training opportunities throughout the year, Certified Arborist and Municipal Specialist classes, Certified Tree Worker classes, the Tree Climbing Competition in September, and of course the Annual Conference and Career Fair in November. There are so many opportunities to better yourself as an arborist, and help benefit our profession as a result of your IAA membership. And earning a few CEU's along the way doesn't hurt either! So as this busy season approaches, IAA would just like to remind you to take advantage of these great programs to better yourself and our profession, and wishes everyone a safe and prosperous spring.

Sincerely,  
*Steve Lane*  
IAA President



# Illinois Arborist Association Day of Service (cont.)

(continued from page 1)

Our IAA Executive Director, April Toney, applied for a grant to train personnel in the green industry on tree removal and pruning. The grant was approved, so the training was scheduled in combination with the Day of Service project. The trainees were from Greencorps Chicago, The City of Chicago's 'green job training program'. I had the pleasure of training the following Greencorps Chicago trainees: Deshawn Dunn, Jerry Exheridge, Sharon Flowers, Keontrae Johnson, Daniel Longfellow, Mathew Smith and Joe Sussmar. The training process involved (1) basic chainsaw maintenance (2) the 6-step precision felling plan (3) deadwood and elevation pruning.

The other Day of Service arborists were set up in groups of 4-5 arborists and given locations on where to perform their removal operations.

The following Companies and arborists contributed to the Day of Service: Davey Tree Experts sent Charles Shonts, Rich Thorton, Bill Volchko and Alan Ungurait with a truck and chipper, and a material handler; Kramer Tree Specialists sent Patrick Kelsch and Pedro Bernal with a grapple truck; Lopez Tree Service sent Luis Lopez, Jesus Cervanros, Alden Davilla and S. Hinne with a pick up truck and chipper, and material handler; Bartlett Tree Experts sent Hector Acevedo, Sergio Hernandez and Ramiro Gardos with a truck and chipper; The Village of Oak Park sent their Village Forester Rob Sproule; Plus the following individual arborists, Steve Carlson, Andrew Zimmerman, Collin Verbick, Thomas Costanza and Tom Morrison. All of them performed flawlessly and diligently. THANK YOU TO ALL

While the work was being performed our IAA President and arborist extraordinaire, Steve Lane, of Graf Tree, went from group to group explaining to them about the wetlands, tree decay and more. Behind the scene at the IAA office, our Executive Director, April Toney and her assistant Jeannie Kelley helped organize this event.



# 5 Simple & Powerful Safety Meeting Topics by Eric Petersen (ArboRisk Insurance)

Keeping your safety meetings interesting to your employees can sometimes be a challenge. Below are five simple yet very powerful meeting ideas that you can use to help continue to promote your culture of safety.

1. Watch Face Exercise - At the TCIA's 2018 Winter Management Conference, Jim Spigener stated that 75% of all work related fatalities in the United States come from making a mistake while doing routine work. 75%!! To prove this point, he asked everyone to write down as many details about the face of your favorite watch. He said to include specifics like colors, what the numbers look like, what shape are the hands of the watch, etc. It was shocking to see how difficult it was to explain something as common as my favorite watch. This exercise will make the connection that we take routine items and tasks for granted which could lead to a serious accident.

2. Scenario Training - Gather your team in small groups and have the team write out three near miss scenarios from their personal experience. Then instruct the group to discuss the events and create solutions to avoid this near miss in the future. Have a team member from each group share their group's near misses and solutions. This promotes open communication between team members and encourages everyone to continue to better themselves to be safe every day.

3. Old Rope Under Tension - Because many Arborists learn by watching something happen, this meeting topic shows the importance of always having a second line secured while making a cut. Take an old rope that is out of commission and put it under tension in a vertical setting like it would be when climbing a tree. Use a handsaw to lightly touch the rope until the rope fails. If you have enough rope, split your team up

into groups to perform the same test. When the arborist realizes how little pressure is needed from the handsaw to compromise the rope, you should never again see someone not being tied in twice before making a cut.

4. What is Your Safety Story? - I wrote an entire post on this idea in a previous article, however, it was such an easy, influential topic, I wanted to mention it again. Begin the safety meeting by asking everyone to write down a time when safety mattered to them. It could be from a serious accident that happened to them or one they witnessed. It could be from an event they heard about. Whatever it is, everyone has a story about the importance of safety that gets to their core. After everyone is done writing, explain why safety matters to you and what your safety story is. Then break the team up into small groups to discuss their individual safety stories. While this is similar to the Scenario Training exercise, this meeting idea should help employees dig deeper to find their motivator for safe behavior. When you focus on personal stories that revolve around safety, the message of working safe becomes a reality for your team.

5. Chainsaw Demo - Gather your team around a log in your yard. Tell everyone to watch very closely as the chain tears through the log easily. Ask them to take note of the sounds that it makes, the sight of the wood chips flying, perhaps the smell of the exhaust, chain oil and gas mixture. Get them to really be present in the moment of how powerful this machine is. Turn off the saw and pause, for dramatic effect. Quietly ask your team, what would they hear, see and smell if that saw was going through one of their limbs. A chainsaw is the most common tool that we use as Arborists and like our watch face, very often we take for granted what we use every day. When your team really thinks about the damage that a chainsaw can do and how quickly it can happen, there should be no reason that chaps are left in the truck.

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**Friday, August 23, 2019**  
**9:00am Shot Gun Start**  
**4-Person Scramble**

**St. Andrews Golf & Country Club**  
 2241 Route 59, West Chicago, IL 60185

**\$105 Per Golfer**  
**Price Includes:** 18-Holes of Golf, Shared Golf Cart, Sleeve of Golf Balls, Hot Dog/Brat Lunch, Beverages, Full Dinner, Raffle and Prizes

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**GOLFER REGISTRATION - Deadline is August 16, 2019**

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Preferred Foursome:

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**Thanks for our current sponsors!**





## 5 Simple & Powerful Safety Meeting Topics

(continued from page 5)

There you go, five simple yet extremely powerful ideas to keep your safety meetings fresh and make safety personal to everyone on your team. By committing to safety excellence, we all can make sure that every arborist gets home safe each night.

Lastly, I want to credit Scott Jamieson of Bartlett Tree Experts for sharing the Scenario Training, Old Rope Under Tension and Safety Story meeting ideas at a TCIA Roundtable that ArboRisk hosted back in June of 2018. Thanks for your dedication to the industry Scott!

## Calendar of Events

### May 11th

Advanced Training  
Tree Diseases

**Location:** Mulch Center, Deerfield

### May 29th

Northeast Municipal Foresters Meeting

Pruning Young Trees

**Location:** Village of Lombard

### May 20th

Arborist Certification, Municipal Specialist, and Utility Specialist Exams

**Location:** Downers Grove Public Works

### May 23rd

Advanced Training  
Aboitic Problems

**Location:** Mulch Center, Deerfield

### May 22nd & 23rd

Advanced Training  
Rigging Level II

**Location:** Cantigny, Wheaton

### May 25th & June 1st

Advanced Training  
Summer Tree ID

**Location:** Palatine Park District

### May 29th

Advanced Training  
Felling

**Location:** Forest Preserve, Elk Grove Village

### July 16th & 17th

IAA Summer Conference

**Location:** iHotel, Champaign, IL

### July 18th & 19th

Strike Team Training

**Location:** Champaign, IL

### July 22nd

Certification Exams

**Location:** Downers Grove, IL

### August 8th & 15th

Advanced Training  
Abiotic Problems

**Location:** Mulch Center, Deerfield

### August 23rd

IAA Golf Outing  
St. Andrews Country Club

**Location:** West Chicago

### November 5th & 6th

IAA Annual Conference  
Holiday Inn Convention Center

**Location:** Tinley Park, IL

# 2019 Illinois Tree Climbing Competition

## 2019 ArborMaster Climbing Kit Prize Package

The Illinois Arborist Association is pleased to announce the 2019 ArborMaster Climbing Kit Prize Package for the Tree Climbing Champions (TCC), held in conjunction with the chapter's 2019 Tree Climbing Championship (TCC) event.

This climbing kit is being offered to each chapter champion (both man and woman, if applicable)! This package is intended to help equip the chapter representative(s) for the International Tree Climbing Championship (ITCC) Competition.

### Each prize package includes:

- Buckingham Master 5.0 Arborist Tree Climbing Saddle
- Silky Zubat Arborist Professional Hand Saw with Leg Straps
- OREGON Tool Bag
- Vermeer Logo'd 52 oz. Stainless Steel Oversized Mug
- 50% savings for an ArborMaster 2-Day or 3-Day Hands-On Training Module
- Samson ArborMaster 150' Hawkeye Climbing Line with eye splice

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# New Living Exhibit To Showcase At The Morton Arboretum

by Eric Petersen (ArboRisk Insurance)

LISLE, Illinois (April 3, 2019)— On June 8, The Morton Arboretum will unveil the Gateway to Tree Science, a new living exhibit that embodies the institution's vast knowledge of trees as informed by nearly a century of science and research.



The interactive outdoor exhibit, set along a half-mile, wood-chipped trail on the Arboretum's east side, is designed to educate professionals, homeowners and others on best practices for tree care as well as to inspire students and future tree scientists with practical and timely advice drawn from decades of research at the Arboretum, one of the world's leading centers of tree science.

Living tree demonstrations along with informative panels highlight important aspects of tree care. Visitors can see how soil type affects trees' growth as well as the consequences that result from planting trees

under power lines and in spaces that don't allow for adequate root growth. Demonstration areas illustrate the importance of proper practices—in one section along the route, visitors can find trees that have been correctly pruned standing alongside those that have received improper care. As time goes on, the poor pruning will become more pronounced, drawing attention to the detrimental effects this practice has on the life and vitality of an impacted tree.

The entry to the Gateway to Tree Science is a welcoming wooden pavilion supported by black locust tree trunk columns. Leaving the pavilion to travel the path, visitors will find an overview of the site, where they can learn about the basics of tree biology and scientific processes, including the types of questions researchers seek answers to as they conduct field work.

Various sections will center on different aspects of tree care and expertise:

- **Choosing the Right Tree** communicates the importance of selecting a tree based on its suitability for a given site, taking into account factors such as the species' tolerance of wet or dry conditions and the width and height of the tree at maturity. Also addressed are trees' ecosystem benefits such as providing food and habitat to wildlife and helping to prevent soil erosion.
- **Caring for Urban Trees** details the many ways people can care for the trees in cities and suburbs, from the long-term benefits of proper pruning to the use of cables to hold together the overextended branches of large trees.
- **Addressing the Challenges of Urban Soils** provides more insight into the unique issues faced by trees in built environments, including poor soil quality and the stress trees experience when transplanted from a nursery to an urban setting.
- **Cultivating Resilient Trees** showcases cultivars and hybrid trees, with examples of selections from the plant introduction program, Chicagoland Grows®, along the route.

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# New Living Exhibit To Showcase At The Morton Arboretum

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- **Laying the Groundwork** gives visitors a closer look at the Arboretum's current research and how the institution is protecting threatened and endangered trees worldwide, with conservation efforts guided, in part, by findings from scientists such as those mapping genetic connections in oak trees across the globe.

"The Gateway to Tree Science is an immersive experience that imparts decades of scientific learning and field work to provide expert insights and practical guidance for people and communities to help trees face real-world challenges," said Nicole Cavender, PhD, vice president of science and conservation. "The exhibit is a valuable resource for tree care professionals, students, and homeowners in the Chicago region and beyond."

Entrance to the exhibit, which will continue to grow with additional information and demonstrations over the coming years, is free with Arboretum admission, from 7 a.m. to sunset 365 days a year.



The Gateway to Tree Science is supported by the Growing Brilliantly campaign, a five-year effort that raised \$73.9 million to deepen the Arboretum's work in

science and conservation, expand new tree development and improve core facilities to meet its strategic vision. The campaign concluded at the end of 2018.



## About The Morton Arboretum

The Morton Arboretum is an internationally recognized outdoor tree museum and tree research center located in Lisle, Illinois. As the champion of trees, the Arboretum is committed to scientifically informed action, both locally and globally, and encouraging the planting and conservation of trees for a greener, healthier, more beautiful world. On 1,700 acres are 222,000 plant specimens representing 4,650 different kinds of plants, along with specialty gardens, educational exhibits, the award-winning Children's Garden, 16 miles of hiking trails and the Visitor Center, featuring The Arboretum Store and the Ginkgo Restaurant and Café. The Morton Arboretum is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) charitable organization, welcoming 1.3 million visitors annually and serving more than 53,000 member households in 2018.



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## Are You in Danger of Losing your Best Employee?

by Eric Petersen (ArboRisk Insurance)

So, I know you want to keep your best employees with your company for as long as possible, especially since you own a tree service and good team members are hard to come by. And you probably already know that one of the top reasons why talented employees quit is because they do not see a future with their employer. What is even more frustrating is that most of the time the advancement opportunities are there or could be created for those high performing employees, there just was a breakdown in communication and the employee went looking for a different job.

How do you easily inform your current and future employees of the advancement opportunities within your company? My simple answer is to build a career path. Make an easy to follow diagram to show how an employee can progress through your company. Even if you are a small tree service and there are not be many positions available, set up different levels of their position based on skills and training, so they have an idea how to develop their career.

To start creating your career path, ask yourself these four questions:

1. *What are all of the different positions in your company today?*
2. *Will you be adding any new positions in the near future?*
3. *What is a logical career projection for an entry level employee?*
4. *What skills do you need at each position?*

Use the answers to these questions to begin laying out the foundation of the career path.

When guiding some of my clients through this exercise, I've found it helpful to take a sheet of paper and turn it horizontally. Start with putting the entry level position on the far left side and move to the right adding the next level positions one at a time. In between each position draw a line to show the progression of the advancement. There may be a point where the employee could move into more than one position, like sales or plant health care; split the career path to show multiple ways for the employee to continue their career.

Pro Tip: Grab your job descriptions and use those. You probably already have your career path figured out within the different job descriptions for your company. These should list the skills required for each position.

Once you have the layout of the career path assembled, make notes based on what differentiates each level from the previous one. For instance, if you have a Climber I and Climber II positions, what training or skills must the Climber II employee possess? It could be a designation like the Certified Arborist or Aerial Lift Specialist or that they passed an in-house test to make the jump into the next level. Plotting these requirements out onto the diagram will quickly show any employee where they are in the career path and give them an easy visual of where they can go.

Your next step is to hand the piece of paper with your career path on it to someone in your office that can make the document look good. Making this document attractive and easy to understand is very important.

Lastly, communicate the career path with each individual on your team. Make it crystal clear to them that if they invest in themselves and their careers, they will get rewarded by moving up in the organization.

If you'd like to see a sample career path that we created, email me directly at [eric@arboriskinsurance.com](mailto:eric@arboriskinsurance.com) and I'll send one your way.

## Mark Your Calendars!

2019

IAA Annual Golf Outing  
August 23rd

St. Andrews Golf Club  
West Chicago, Illinois

2019

Illinois Tree Climbing Competition  
September 28th

Shiloh Park  
Zion, Illinois



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# Tree Inventory/GIS Fulfilling Your Needs In-house (Part 2)

by Tony Doti

After last month's article, our GIS Coordinator received inquiries from Municipalities & the GIS Community regarding our field app. Field apps, such as this one will benefit everyone. I asked our GIS Coordinator Andrew Vitale if he would put together some more information about the field app. He is going to touch briefly on a few inquiries he received.

## **Andrew Vitale GIS Coordinator, Village of Niles**

"In looking at ways our field app has benefitted Niles staff across all levels, let's take a look at a few regular activities that have been impacted and streamlined. These can be seen in three broad categories: Tree Planting, Reporting and Planning of future work. For Tree Planting and Removal, the Village regularly employs Contractor assistance twice a year to support such a large Village-wide effort.

### **Tree Planting**

For a large effort such as Village-wide Tree planting, the Village regularly employs the assistance of Contractors. The gathering of all relevant information via paper documents about the Trees to be planted, as well their relatively accurate location, is daunting to say the least. Paper documents get damaged, lost, can be difficult to read, or may be redundant between Contractors or Village staff. Using the app, Village Forestry crews are able to document the planting of a new tree alongside the Contractor as it happens. All relevant information about that tree (agreed upon between Village staff and supplied by the Contractor) can be collected digitally along with a photo(s) of the new planting. The new Tree appears on all Interactive mapping products offered

by the Village to internal Staff immediately. They can also be visible to the public if the Village chooses to do so. The individual Tree is now also available to the Village asset maintenance software for Service Requests or work orders to be written against with no delay. What used to take days to weeks, now takes mere minutes. As a result, the Village has realized a tremendous amount of time savings.

### **Reporting and Planning**

Reporting on Trees and Planning for future activities can take on many forms and has many purposes. Reporting activities can only have value if the data on which they are based is current and accurate. The field app does not have direct reporting capabilities and in that sense, does not affect reporting per se. Planning for many common activities is also dependent on accurate and timely information. Because the field app is helping us to keep our information accurate and timely, report writing and planning future work is not only possible, but can take on new meaning across all levels of Village staff.

### **Reporting – Current Conditions & Dashboards**

The Village maintains regular reports to depict current Tree conditions - Tree species composition is just one example. The Village also employs an interactive dashboard giving the Village Forester and other Public Works and Village management staff an interactive view of Trees planted on a daily basis during the planting season. This allows field staff to view the results in their work and make corrections if necessary. It also allows the Village management to demonstrate current field activities and expenditures to elected officials and the public (if they so choose).

# Tree Inventory/GIS Fulfilling Your Needs In-house (Part 2)

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## Planning future work

When a tree is newly planted and entered into our database using the app, all relevant information is present to do calculations both immediately and on a regular basis to keep up with the changing characteristics of that Tree. By setting the Dorsal Breast Height (DBH) of a tree when it is planted, the DBH can be recalculated over time on an annual basis since its planting to reflect theoretical DBH growth of that tree. DBH can then be used in calculating the cost of trimming (since tree trimming is based on the DBH) that particular Tree. This type of calculation and cost estimates would simply not be possible without the accurate and timely entering of the information about an individual Tree at the time of planting.

For activities such as Planting, to the Reporting

of current work and planning of future activities, the field app not only allows us to enter and update information about our Trees. It becomes an invaluable tool to employ the best management practices to insure the health of the Villages' urban forest".

Everything that Andrew touched on should be important and useful to any municipality. Apps are the present and future. We all use them every day on our smart phones and tablets. Many of these apps allow you to post a selfie, pinpoint your location, and give a description of what you're doing. Giving your staff the ability to do the same thing for your municipality will save you time and money. These articles weren't written to promote or sell a particular company. Sell yourselves to your elected officials and your communities. It's amazing what can be accomplished in-house.

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# Illinois Trees



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