

# Illinois Trees

The Quarterly Publication of the Illinois Arborist Association

Volume 38 Issue 3  
Fall 2022



## IAA Hosts Its First Rec Climb *by Norm Hall*



The IAA offered its 1st Rec Climb on October 29, 2022, from 8:00 am to noon. It was hosted by Cantigny Park in Wheaton. The purpose is to educate new climbers on safe climbing skills and elevate the climbing skills of the advanced climber. It attracted 28 climbers from IL.

A week prior to the event, Paul Filary and Todd Kramer met with Beau Nagan at Cantigny to pick the 4 event trees. The day before the event, Beau Nagan and the Cantigny staff checked the 4 event trees for structural integrity and installed throwlines in the desired branch unions for the attendees.

On the day of the event we started by checking in all the climbers at the registration table. April and Ashley had a checkoff sheet and gave all climbers a 'gear inspection' sheet. The instructors started checking all climbing gear to make sure it is safe to use. We found sticking

carabiners, carabiners that didn't meet the ANSI Z133-2017 Standard, and compromised cordage on lanyards and climbing ropes. During the gear inspection, we go over it with each attendee so they know what to look for.

Once gear inspection was complete, we broke the group up into 4 categories for the 4 stations; (1) beginning climbers, (2) throwline tips and tricks, (3) arborist knots, and (4) intermediate and advanced climbers. At the beginning climbing station, we had Don Roppolo, Jason Austin, Katie Fleming, and myself as instructors. At the throwline station, we had the master of throwline, Eduardo Medina. At the arborist knots station, we had Libby Bower. At the intermediate/advanced climbing station, we had Beau Nagan and Phil Prohaska. Attendees were able to float from station to station if they so desired. We had a wide array of attendees ranging from never putting on a harness to Tree

*continued on page 4*

## Table of Contents

IAA Hosts Its First Rec Climb	1
President's Message	3
2022 IAA Golf Outing - Salt Creek	5
Tour de Trees	6
Calendar of Events	7
Rec Climbs are Best Climbs	8
Day of Service - Camp Mathieu	10
IAA Annual Conference is Back!	12
Remembering Those We Have Lost	16
Thank You Sponsors!	18



Don't forget to visit the IAA Website for updates on events, certification classes, and important issues impacting our industry.

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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***

Dear Illinois Arborist Association Members,

I would like to take a moment to thank all the IAA members for the great opportunity to serve as your incoming IAA President. Being a member of this great organization for so many years has meant a great deal to me. To be able to give back to the organization in this fashion is extraordinary. I would like to thank my predecessor, Aaron Schulz for his excellent leadership and everything he's done for the IAA. The entire Board has been hard-working and it's been a privilege to work alongside each of them. I encourage all the members to seek an active role in the IAA. I've been blessed to serve and volunteer alongside many of you. Without your ongoing commitment, the IAA wouldn't be where it is today. As the country continues to navigate the pandemic, new ideas and ways of reaching the membership had to be created. The IAA chapter has stayed committed to providing you with the best possible learning experiences and listening to the needs and wants of its membership.

The Board of Directors will be sitting down for our annual strategic planning meeting in January to come up with new ideas for training, networking, partnerships, and ways to make your experience as an IAA member the best it can be.

If you're looking to serve on a committee, run for office, have a great idea, or volunteer, please contact one of the Board members or email April Toney, our Executive Director at [april@illinoisarborist.org](mailto:april@illinoisarborist.org)

I look forward to seeing every one of you.

Illinois Arborist Association President,

*Tony Dati*



# IAA Hosts Its First Rec Climb (cont.)



Climbing Championship climbers.

We had nothing but positive feedback on this event. Events like this can't happen without a host, thank you Cantigny; without the organizers, thank you Paul Filary, Don Roppolo, Beau Nagan, Eduardo Medina, Alex Julius, and myself; without the instructors, whom all volunteered their time, Don Roppolo, Beau Nagan, Eduardo Medina, Jason Austin, Phil Prohaska, Libby Bower, Katie Fleming, Chris Patnaude and myself; without the IAA staff, who does all the behind the scenes paperwork and organizing, April and Ashley.

We plan to have events like this in the future. We you have any comments or suggestions, please let us know.





# 2022 IAA Golf Outing - Salt Creek *by April Toney*

This year's IAA Golf Outing was held at Salt Creek Country Club, and we had a perfect day for it. The weather wasn't too hot, it was a little overcast and there was no wind. We had 94 golfers that came out and enjoyed the company of fellow duffers.

Each year the IAA hosts an annual golf outing at various golf courses throughout the state. We hope to see more of you come out and enjoy time away from work with your friends and peers from the tree care industry. Our outings feature many hole prizes as well as an awesome raffle where you can win awesome prizes. Listed below are the winners from this year's outing.

## **Men's Longest Drive:**

Justin Bence

## **Women's Longest Drive:**

Laura Schafer

## **Closest to the Pin:**

Brent Lundstrom

## **Longest Putt:**

Tim Rickerson

## **Shortest Drive:**

Kyle Omholt

## **Team low score:**

Kevin Ward, Kasha Ward, Jeff Hall, Connor Hall with a **54!**

The raffle was fun and we had a lot of great prizes:

## **Thanks to our sponsors:**





# Tour des Trees *by Robyn Flakne*



is reassuring but it is seldom necessary – the riders are generally independent and there is opportunity to ride with new friends each day. The Tour is a great way to see new places, and while most of the time your focus is on cycling, your memories will include lots of fun conversations and tree planting events as well. Do take training seriously, as the more you are trained, the more fun the ride will be. But if you have been considering the Tour, I recommend making the commitment – it will be a rewarding experience!

After several years of curiosity, I first rode the Tour des Trees in 2019 – and came back for more in 2022! The 2022 Tour des Trees, “I Wanna Iowa,” was blessed with great weather, beautiful scenery, and constant activity! The route was meticulously planned and allowed riders to visit numerous arboretums and botanic gardens. We were able to view the grounds, meet staff, and often these lovely places hosted our dinners or our snack breaks. The Tour is very well organized and supported, offering several breaks each day for riders to refill water bottles, rest, chat with other riders and tour support, and grab snacks or lunch. The course varies in length and challenges each day, offering something for every kind of rider. All are welcomed and encouraged by the support team and the other riders – there is always someone available if assistance is necessary. This

To view more photos from the event, click on the link below.

<https://treefund.org/tourdestrees/tour-photos>





# ~ Calendar of Events ~

## January Events

January 19th, (10:00am - Noon) NEMF - TBD

[Click here to register](#)

January 24th - March 21st Certified Arborist Classes (In-person)

Crystal Lake, Illinois

[Click here to register](#)

## February Events

February 2nd - April 6th Arborist Certification Classes (Exam on April 6th)

Homewood, Illinois

[Click here to register](#)

February 7th - April 4th (6:00pm - 9:00pm)- Virtual Arborist Certification Classes  
Online

[Click here to register](#)

## March Events

March 7th, Municipal Specialist Classes (Exam on April 6th)

Homewood, Illinois

[Click here to register](#)

March 28th, Arborist Certification Exam

Crystal Lake, Illinois

[Click here to register](#)

## April Events

April 11th, Arborist Certification Exam

Lombard, Illinois

[Click here to register](#)

April 25 - 27, Full TRAQ Course

Zion, Illinois

[Click here to register](#)

April 24th, TRAQ Renewal

Zion, Illinois

[Click here to register](#)



# Rec Climbs are the Best Climbs!

by Paul Filary

Over the course of 2022, the IAA has developed a Tree Climbing Social committee. The purpose of this committee is to create specific IAA events focused on collaboration and fun specifically for the professional tree climbing community. We had a great time at our first ever IAA Rec Climb event at Cantigny Park on October 29th. Climbers from across the state collaborated and gathered to share ideas, tips and skills in professional tree climbing with fellow climbers. A huge thanks to Cantigny Park for providing the amazing space for this super engaging, collaborative and fun event.



Climbers of all skills levels gathered and learned from each other to enhance their professional climbing skills. The event started with a documented gear check for all climbers

*continued on page 9*

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## Rec Climbs are the Best Climbs! (cont.)



who could then choose from four different climbing stations. Each station had a specific focus on a particular skill or technique as it pertains to professional climbing. Stations included throwline, climbing knots, beginner/advanced ascent techniques and climbing tools and equipment. We had a great turnout of over 20 climbers with skills levels ranging from beginner to advanced. Trainers were on hand to assist attendees and provide tips and techniques to enhance others climbing skills. Following the climbing, lunch was provided along with a raffle giving away a ton of fun prizes relative to professional tree climbing.

All proceeds from the raffle were donated to the TREE Fund. A huge thanks to the sponsors who helped make this event possible, All Gear, Aspen Fuel, Norm & Kathy Hall and Theresa Kyriazes. Also, a big thank you to all of the prizes donated to the raffle from All Gear, Notch Equipment, TreeStuff.com and Pro Safety

The climbing community in our industry has high demands on their time and skills to do the work that they do. We at the IAA are trying to put together more climbing specific events that are focused on collaboration and fun, to provide the climbing community an opportunity to interact and learn from each other in a fun, social environment. Keep an eye out for more upcoming events specific to professional tree climbing and join us in advancing the profession and raising the bar in our industry.

If you have ideas or suggestions for future events, please email our Commercial Director, Paul Filary, at [pfilary@kramertree.com](mailto:pfilary@kramertree.com) The IAA Climbing Social Event committee is dedicated to bringing more events like this to our climbing community!

# Not certified? Contact us.

Call April at 877-617-8887

email: [april@illinoisarborist.org](mailto:april@illinoisarborist.org)



# Day of Service - Camp Mathieu *by April Toney*

Camp Mathieu, also known as “Off the Streets Club” was our 2022 Day of Service recipient. This event took place on October 18th in Wheaton, Illinois. 32 Volunteers spent the day making Camp Mathieu safe for the thousands of kids that attend each year. Founded in 1900, “Off the Streets Club” is Chicago’s oldest boys and girls club. They currently serve more than 3,000 kids in one of the most dangerous neighborhoods in the country, West Garfield Park. Against the backdrop of West Garfield Park, where crime, gangs, and drugs are a daily threat, they offer hope. Off the Street Club and Camp Mathieu is a place where kids living in this neighborhood have a safe place to learn, laugh, and play without worry. The IAA was fortunate to have a great lineup of volunteers to do the work free of charge. IAA recognizes all the companies that donated their time with an IAA hat and a Certificate. This is very little in return for all they do! The work donated by all of these companies goes towards a match for our US Forest Service Grant and makes training more affordable for our members! If you see any of the members pictured below, please take a minute to thank them and their companies for supporting the IAA and making our training more affordable.



**Listed below is the equipment and the company that provided the service. Thank you!**

Equipment	Company
Aerial Lift and Operator	Cantigny
Chipper	Cantigny
4X4 Pick up	Cantigny
Mini Skid	Cantigny
Wood Splitter	Cantigny
55' Altec Bucket Truck	FPCC
Short Electrician Style Bucket Truck	FPCC
18" Woodchipper with Truck	FPCC
Front-end Loader with Winch	FPCC
Tracked/Wheeled Lift & Operator	KTS
Grapple	KTS
4x4 Pickup	KTS
Mini Skid	KTS
Vermeer 1800 Chipper	Skyline
Lift	Skyline
Rigging Gear	Skyline
Backpack Blower	Skyline
Tracked/Wheeled Lift Unit	Green Extraction Technologies LLC & Emerald Tree Care LLC
Chipper	Green Extraction Technologies LLC & Emerald Tree Care LLC
Mini Skid steer (Boxer)	Green Extraction Technologies LLC & Emerald Tree Care LLC
Chip Truck	Green Extraction Technologies LLC & Emerald Tree Care LLC
Various Pole Tools	Green Extraction Technologies LLC & Emerald Tree Care LLC
Graf Spray Truck for Cambistat	Graf Tree Care

*continued on page 11*



# Day of Service - Camp Mathieu (cont.)

The services provided totalled \$35,000! The following companies graciously provided their service to make Camp Mathieu a safer place to play: Cantigny, Kramer Tree Specialists, Forest Preserves of Cook County, Skyline Tree Service, Russo, Village of Niles, Green Extraction Technologies, LLC, Graf Tree Care. Equipment that was brought to the Day of Service.



## **RUSO**



## Volunteers!



Leonardo Sotelo – Climber



Davidson Delong, Andrew Ranney,  
Isasias Oviedo - Skyline Tree Service



Eduardo Martinez, Sam Soltwisch,  
Bulmaro Jalapa Kramer Tree Specialists



Chris Roberts, Lisa Mende, Chris  
Patnaude, Beau Nagan



Norm Hall, Tony Dati



Norm Hall, Zac King



Dan O'Brien - Russo



Amber Kunz, Robert Keller, Amanda  
Betancourt, szymanska, Brenan  
Hanak, Phil Prohaska, Eric Menigat, Nick  
Malone - Forest Preserve Cook County



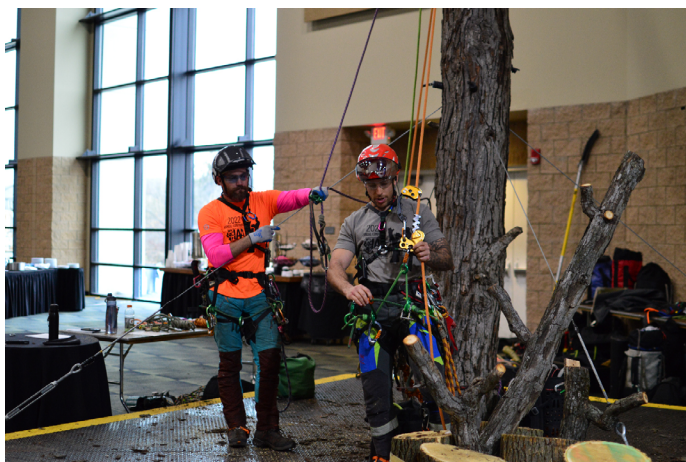
TJ Johnson, Anthony Santisi, Charlie  
Eure, Adrian Luna - Green Extraction  
Technologies, LLC



# IAA Annual Conference is Back! *by April Toney*

The Illinois Arborist Association Annual Conference is back! With COVID-era restrictions lifted, the IAA's celebrated our 40th Annual Conference with participation not seen since 2019. This was all bolstered by an engaging lineup of speakers and relevant topics. Whether it was the **Joe Kramer Demonstration Tree**, where experienced climbers like Beau Nagan, Phil Potraska, and Brandon Dobnick, demonstrated the latest climbing and rigging techniques, or the **Jim Schuster Plant Healthcare Corner**, where Dr. Stephanie Adams conducted classes and fielded questions, there was something for everyone.

There was a little scare with the threat of a snowstorm, however, the snow was minor and had little impact on those attending. The live stream of the conference proved to be a huge success, affording those who could not attend in person, to watch from the convenience of their home or office.



It is customary for the IAA to give out awards during the conference.

## Here are the 2022 Award Winners:

### Special Recognition Awards (2)

#### Mike Priller

We would like to commend Mike for his hard work helping IAA put together a successful Tree Climbing Championship (TCC). Mike



maintained the site for three years and stored all the necessary equipment. He kept the spirits of all those involved high, and he continues to be a positive force in this organization and in the industry.

We would also like to commend Mike for providing opportunities for the IAA members to take their exams and further their careers. Mike always goes above and beyond, and he is always willing to step in and help whenever there is a need!

### William Bolt Jr Volunteer of the Year Award

#### Paul Filary

During his term as Commercial Director Paul worked hard to develop the Work Force Development Committee, the IAA Annual Career Fair and advance the IAA Student Field Days. These committees and events are very important in advancing the arboriculture industry and growing the IAA membership. Paul's leadership skills and direction haven't gone unnoticed.

### Special Recognition Award

#### Paul Blome

We commend Paul for his efforts to re-establish the WIU Urban Forestry as a minor. The urban environment can present many arboricultural challenges and without students entering the arboriculture industry our forests will begin to decline and the benefits we receive from trees will diminish. To expand our workforce, we need to be able to engage students in a tree-related program

*continued on page 13*

# IAA Annual Conference is Back! (cont.)



to show them the opportunities of the tree care industry.

## Special Recognition Award

### Andrew Guetler

Andrew received this award for his efforts to educate IAA members, non-members, students and municipal workers about Chainsaw Safety and Proper Use of Chaps. Andrew's work has directly impacted the safety culture in general tree work and forestry industries in the state of Illinois.

## Gold Leaf Award

### Urbana Park District

For an outstanding Arbor Day Ceremony with Urbana High School.



Back row: Roger Digges, Savannah Donovan, Michael Walker, Cedric Stratton  
Front: Meredith Blumthal, Chelsea Prah

## Past Presidents Award

### Beau Nagan

In sincere appreciation for meritorious service and leadership as the President of the IAA.



Tim Arbor - Urbana Park District

## Board of Director Awards

### Steve Ludwig, Eric Hendrickson, Paul Filary

For sincere appreciation for the time and dedication to all outgoing board members:

## Welcome new board members:

- President: Tony Dati
- President Elect: Dan O'Brien
- Vice President: Eric Hendrickson
- CoR Rep: Steve Lane
- Commercial Director: Paul Filary
- Municipal Director: Theresa Kyriazes

New this year – the Plant Health Care corner in the exhibit hall will be named the *Jim Schuster Plant Health Care Corner*.

This year's Annual Career Fair had **7 companies and 22 students attend**.

604 individuals registered for the conference.  
36 exhibitors in the exhibit hall.

Please visit the **Thank You Sponsor page (18)** to see the wonderful companies that helped make this event possible.



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# Remembering Those We Have Lost *by April Toney*

On October 8th, the Illinois Arborist Association recognized three very important members of our arborist family during our Tree Planting Memorial at Rotary Park in Springfield. Family, friends, and former coworkers of Harold "Hal" Robson, Sam Tidball, and Cal Williams. Each of these men has left an indelible footprint on the face and history of the IAA.

As customary, each person being recognized receives a tree in their honor that is planted in Rotary Park, along with a plaque. For Hal Robson, his family chose the Red Maple. Sam Tidball's wife chose a Weeping Cherry, and Cal Williams's family selected a Red Oak. These trees were graciously donated by Steve Green, with Green View. Aaron Schulz helped Steve, prep, dig, and plant each of these memorial trees. Thank you both for your continued support of the IAA and its members.

## **Harold "Hal" Robson**

Hal was the first city arborist in the City of Lake Forest, Illinois, a position he maintained for 30 years from 1960 to 1990. Hal devoted his life and career to the City of Lake Forest and was responsible for creating ordinances and policies which protect the city's parks and trees.

Hal was a lifelong IAA and ISA member and board member and was instrumental in helping to shape the ISA organization in its early years. Hal authored numerous articles on city and urban forestry, as well as sharing his expertise by guest speaking at several ISA conventions throughout his career.



## **Sam Tidball**

When Sam was in his early 20's, he was enrolled in the aviation program at Dixie College in St. George, Utah, where he and his wife, Jodie, were newlyweds. His friend worked for the city as a certified arborist, and he helped Sam get hired on



to help prune city trees. Sam decided it would be more profitable to become a certified arborist and around 1998, it happened! This would help him and his family through until he could earn a living as a pilot. In the year 2000, Sam and his growing family moved back to the Chicagoland area so he could continue to acquire and log his flight hours at a nearby airport as he worked toward reaching the next pilot license on his list. In the meantime, he worked for The Care of Trees in Crystal Lake, IL. Sam enrolled in a tree conference in Chicago, set for November of 2001. There, he fatefully met a 67-year-old certified arborist named Don Dennis, who happened to be looking for a young, ambitious certified arborist to take over his business in Springfield, IL. Long story short... the following May in 2002, Sam and Jodie were moving to Springfield, IL with the intention of taking over Don Dennis's tree care business! Don and his wife, Marie, would be Sam and Jodie's mentors for the remainder of 2002 (and beyond) as they learned the business processes of the company. On January 1, 2003, Sam and Jodie became the proud new owners of Pacesetter Tree Care, LLC! Sam loved and cared for his employees and enjoyed witnessing their growth and accomplishments.

*continued on page 17*



# Remembering Those We Have Lost (cont.)

## **Cal Williams**

Cal came by his love for the rivers and woodlands of central Illinois through the teachings of his paternal grandfather. Through hot summer days spent gathering walnuts for the church ladies, digging sassafras root for tea, and growing vegetables of all kinds, and those still hot summer evenings spent with his grandfather fishing local ponds and rivers around Bloomington, Cal grew to love and appreciate the beauty that nature had to offer. Cal went on to serve his country as a Lance Corporal in the United States Marine Corps from 1970 to 1972. After being honorably discharged he found his way to his future career with Corn Belt Electric Cooperative. In his early years with Corn Belt, Cal continued his enjoyment of fishing and gardening in his free time. However, in 1979 a new job in forestry with the electric cooperative put him on a path to rekindle his boyhood passion for the forests and woodlands.



At the urging of another mentor in 1994, Cal undertook the challenge of becoming an ISA Certified Arborist, an ISA Certified Utility Specialist in 1996, and completed the Arbor-Master training program in 1998. Taking his layman's knowledge of trees to a new level in understanding not just the branch and leaf, but the fragile ecosystem and wonder that was contained in every tree. It was the fuel of this knowledge that stoked his existing passion pushing Cal to expand his role and purpose. Cal served as Utility Director for the Illinois Arborist Association from 2006 to 2007 and the Presidential track from 2011 to 2013. Cal was very humbled to receive both the Board of Directors Award in 2007, and the Past President's Award in 2014.



## Want to volunteer?

Call April at 877-617-8887

email: [april@illinoisarborist.org](mailto:april@illinoisarborist.org)



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# Illinois Trees



## *Inside this issue*

IAA Hosts its first Rec Climb  
2022 IAA Golf Putting - Salt Creek Country Club  
Tour de Trees  
Rec Climbs are Best Climbs!  
Day of Service - Camp Mathieu  
IAA Annual Conference is Back!  
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