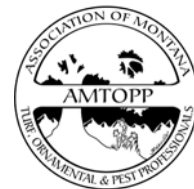




# AMTOPP

## Fall News



October 2019

### AMTOPP Returns To Columbia Falls for Summer Field Day



**By: Lydia Hesel**  
**AMTOPP Director**

Our Veterans, serve in different branches of the military, protecting our country, the freedoms we enjoy and take for granted, as well as aid our allies. Each one pays the price for this duty; leaving their family and friends, missing out on events in their children's lives. If that isn't enough, some are injured to various degrees and some paying the ultimate price.

AMTOPP's members are made up of many branches of the green industry, and we maintain and sometimes

enhance the grounds which these veterans have secured for us. Whether it is our residence, school, workplace, park, hospital, nursing home, or a cemetery; the landscape can affect our mood. The AMTOPP Summer Field Day is more than just a day of volunteer work. The results of our labor can have a profound effect on those who will visit, live, or work on the grounds we have given of our time, material, and equipment. That is why it is essential for us, as AMTOPP, to continue this long-time tradition of our volunteer work on



Left to right: (Back Row)-Ray Coffey; Eric Maisch; Ian MacCallum; Dudley Marburger; Stephen Pulley; Lydia Hesel; Carlo Hesel; Pat Plantenberg; Clint Hesel; (Middle Row) Juliet Maisch; Jason Stringer; Cooper Elwood; (Front Row) Levy Hesel; Rob Dillon; Chris Galanti

### AMTOPP Represented In Washington DC

**By: Cooper Elwood**  
**AMTOPP Vice President**

Part of the duties of the president and vice president of the board is to make the annual trip to Washington DC to participate in Renewal and Remembrance, and Legislative Days with our industry partners at National Association of Landscape Professionals. This year, along with our president Jason Stringer and director Steve Jonas, I was fortunate enough to participate in what I would consider the best trip to DC yet!

For me, the most rewarding and essential aspect of the trip is always Renewal and Remembrance. It is on this day when we can volunteer for several projects at Arlington National Cemetery as well as joining in fellowship with other green industry pro-



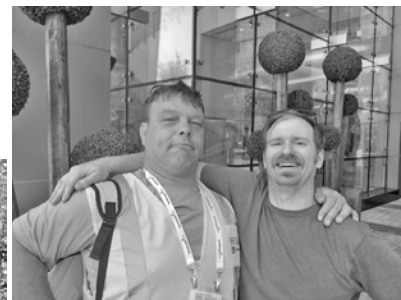
fessionals from around the country. This year marked a bit of a change from previous years, as we were also able to join in on some of the tree work that is completed annually. Jason and I were happy to help install lightning protection in several oak trees throughout the property, while Steve worked on auditing and repairing some of the sprinkler systems at the facility. While laying lime and fertilizer is a vital part of the project every

**See DC on page 4**

**AMTOPP President Jason Stringer (L) and Vice President Cooper Elwood**



AMTOPP Director Steve Jonas working on the sprinkler system at Arlington National Cemetery during Renewal and Remembrance.



AMTOPP group waiting for the start of Renewal and Remembrance



# President's Message



Hello AMTOPP Membership, I hope your summer season has kept you busy. Speaking of being busy, AMTOPP's board members have been busy with AMTOPP's summer events and preparing for AMTOPP's 30th Annual Winter Conference.

On July 15th, Vice President Cooper Elwood, board member Steve Jonas, my wife Tiana and my-self attended The National Associations Landscape Professionals (NALP) annual Renewal & Remembrance Day(R&R)

at Arlington National Cemetery. Cooper and I helped install lighting protection in effort to protect the trees from Mother Nature's wrath. While Cooper and I were monkeying around, Steve Jonas was assisting in irrigation repairs. As

for Tiana, she found herself, once again, spreading lime. Additionally, former AMTOPP President Gerald Landby and Hunter Industries Representative Lynda Wightman participated in Renewal and Remembrance. Later in the evening at NALP's dinner ceremony Lynda Wightman was awarded NALP's Work Horse Award for all her relentless work ethic. An award that is not guaranteed to be awarded each year. The recipient must meet a strict criteria to receive the award, otherwise, it is not given. Lynda without a doubt met the criteria and then some. Great job Lynda!

Following R&R, we attended NALP's Legislative Days. We visited with both our state senators and congressman, as well as their aids. We discussed both national and state issues regarding pesticide regulations and other Green Industry related issues.

A few days later, on July 19th, AMTOPP and Dave Stice from Wes Spur Ascension Group NW held an Ariel Rescue training class. All participants were able to participate in live rescues including several from the VA's Fire Department. The day was very productive, and the participants are all now better prepared to respond to an emergency if ever needed. Thanks again Dave Stice, your contributions to AMTOPP are appreciated.

On August the 2nd, the board held its' meeting at the Colombia Falls Veteran's Center. The board meeting was productive. We approved the upcoming Fiscal Year Budget and continued preparing for the upcoming winter conference. In addition to normal agenda items, the board discussed making Pat Platenburg an honorary board member. Pat has contributed to AMTOPP in countless ways. The board discussed and voted to make Pat Platenburg an Honorary AMTOPP Board Member. Thanks Pat for all your help, you have more than earned the Honor.

The next day on August 3rd, AMTOPP held its' annual Summer Field Day at the Colombia Falls Veteran's center in Colombia Falls, Montana. We were able to prune trees, fertilize the lawn, kill a few weeds, and plant some trees. Thanks to all those who participated.

Finally on September 18th, AMTOPP cosponsored Saluting Branches at the VA in Helena, Montana. Saluting Branches is a nationwide event held each year in September. The event, much like NALP's R&R and AMTOPP's Summer Field Day, is an opportunity to give back to the Veterans who sacrificed so much to ensure our freedoms. Members of AMTOPP and others traveled from all around Montana to donate their time and equipment. The amount of work that was performed was staggering. If you want to work side by side and network with some of the best arborist in the state, this is the event to do so.

Now with the summer's agenda behind us, the board will continue working on AMTOPP's 30th Annual Winter Conference. This year's conference is shaping up nicely. The agenda includes a sports field and park turf maintenance program, landscape irrigation technician class, Electrical Hazards and Awareness Program (EHAP), Chipper Safety Certification, and crane training for tree work. Please take the time to look over the agenda and sign up as early as possible. Some of the classes are limited sign up. I look forward to seeing you all in January for the 30th AMTOPP Winter Conference.

Jason Stringer  
President



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# Secretary/Treasurer's Message

## Family, Community and Work



Finding the balance between family, community and work is a reality that most small business owners struggle with. We need work to pay the endless bills that are created by being in business. We work to support our families and the families of our employees. As members of the community we are often called upon to give back to what has been good to us. One of those pay backs is joining AMTOPP and even more of a commitment is joining the Board of Directors. At our meeting in Colum-

bia Falls at the Veteran's Center many of the members combined all three of these concepts. Eric brought both his bucket truck and his daughter. Lydia brought her husband, kids and climbing gear. Other members brought their companions on a getaway from our normal routines. Volunteering many times takes us away from both our families and our work. But giving back to the community only makes our ties to family and community stronger. Having the skill set, the ability and the desire to use these skills for the greater good.

The board meeting in C Falls was a productive work session with our collective eye on the up coming conference in January. The agenda is a strong one and the scheduling is solidifying. Setting up these conferences is easily a year in the making and requires input from many sources. There is a format that has been honed over thirty years of putting on this event that is flexible and seems to change with the years. Looking back over the years the topics included in these conferences seems to not change. But the information contained within evolves as does our industry. Bringing this evolution to the membership is the primary duty of the BOD.

Staying at the crest of the wave is one of the things that give us the competitive edge in the industry. Taking the time to educate both ourselves and our

fellow workers is critical to moving the industry forward. Using the Summer Field Day as a laboratory so to speak to share techniques, science and of course companionship. Safety, safety, safety was and is always a critical component of any jobsite. Trees were relieved of their deadwood. Stumps were ground. Fertilizer was spread. Four donated trees were planted creating future work for our industry. Putting money in the ground is an investment that will make money grow on trees.

I meet young people in the industry that work seven days a week. And they have families. I have asked them why they work so many hours and the answer back is typically "for my family". I do a Freshman Career Day at two high schools and one of the things I talk about is the concept of time. We are not born with a contract that says we will live until eighty and have our health. Time is a commodity that is finite for us all and we do not know how much is left in the "bank". Money is a tool to facilitate our actions. Having more tools is great. Having control of how our time is spent is greater. Keeping the balance between family, community and work is important. Use your time wisely.

W Dudley Marburger  
Executive Secretary/Treasurer.

### Board Meetings - Mark Your

### CALENDAR

**November 1** - Quarterly Board Meeting - 10AM  
Fairmont Hot Springs

**January 22** - Pre-Conference Board Meeting - 5 - 6:30 PM

**January 24** - Post Conference Board Meeting - 3:30 - 5:30 PM

## NOTICE ----- ALERT!!!!!!

The EHAP Class scheduled for, Wednesday, January 22, 2020 has limited seating. Please send in your registration as soon as possible if you are planning on attending this class. There is a registration form in this newsletter, or you can go on-line and register at [www.amtopp.org](http://www.amtopp.org).

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# Continued From Page 1

## DC, continued from page 1

year, I will say that it was a blessing to be doing some tree work this year.

While a few changes within NALP have been occurring the last few years, specifically with the Days on the Hill program, our meetings with our representatives were very productive. For me, the time spent at Arlington is easily the highlight of the trip. However, the meetings we have each year are equally as important in furthering the agenda of both NALP and AMTOPP. This year we seemed to get a bit more face time with all of our representatives as compared to previous years. All of the time spent sweating in a suit and tie seems, (in hindsight anyway), to have been well spent! Did I mention it was July?

One thing that is difficult to express is the value of fellowship with our fellow green industry members. Usually, when planning the DC trip, we spend time planning the day at Arlington along with setting up meetings with representatives. While these events are essential, we found that we typically didn't focus on the time we would spend with other people in our industry. It is in these networking opportunities that we gain valuable knowledge and insight. Sometimes it is too easy

to fall into a pattern with our day to day lives that we become blind to the broader picture that exists within our industry. I have found myself struggling with issues and problems that seem impossible and forget that most of these issues have already been solved by someone, somewhere. I think the real value of a trip like this is in making those connections with different people from different places and expanding our network to include people who are more than willing to help us in our time of need and allow us to help them in turn.

In conclusion, I would like to make what may seem like a shameless plug for our board. If you have not had the opportunity to serve on the board of directors, I will encourage you to consider it. While there are apparent tangible benefits to serving, the trip to DC included, there are far less obvious benefits to being on the board. Aside from the close relationships made with fellow directors, you really get to get your hands dirty (so to speak!), and nothing beats the pride you feel after wrapping up a successful conference.

Thanks again for your membership in AMTOPP, and we will see you at the conference!

## Summer, continued from page 1

the grounds of our Veterans facilities. This half a day of work cannot begin to repay them for what they have done for us. The work we do on the grounds has an impact on more than just the individual veteran; it also impacts those who visit, work, and provide services to the facilities.

It has been four years since AMTOPP held their Summer Field Day at the Columbia Falls Veterans Home, and it was time to return.

Volunteers came with various equipment, material, and skills for this workday, on Saturday, August 3. The goal was to trim as many trees along the main drive into the Veterans' Home, as possible, plant four trees, fertilize the lawn, check out the irrigation system, and grind a stump.

With 17 in attendance, the morning kicked off with breakfast, a safety talk, and a review of the scope of work to be accomplished.

With a tree crew in place, four trees were planted in various locations on the ground of the Veterans Home and Cemetery. Two, of which were donated by Roger Joy of Canyon View Nursery. Also, two were purchased, with sponsor money from MUCFA. Approximately 5 acres were fertilized, thanks to Ray Coffey of Integrated Pest Management of Kalispell. He provided the rider spreader, Chris Galanti,

of Galanti Lawn and Landscaping provided two bag spreaders. This made the task move along quickly, and all the areas that were designated received fertilizer were covered. The sprinkler system was addressed, going through each clock and zone. Some areas were flagged with areas in need of repairs, which were not able to be completed that day. However, minor adjustments and some repairs were completed. As for the trees along the drive, there was much-needed work required. To tackle the job, a crew with a bucket truck, seven climbers, a chipper, and ground crew took on the job and pruned the dead out of at least a dozen trees. Some hand pruning from the ground was also accomplished. It was nice to see some of the residents that came out to observe all the work going on.

All in all, it was a very satisfying day for everyone, and everyone had a good time giving back to the veterans. There is work still to be done, but that will have to wait for another year.

We want to extend our appreciation to all our sponsors for the event, making it possible for this day of work on our Veterans' facilities possible to continue.

If you haven't participated in this event, please consider it for next year, it is a rewarding experience.

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# The Montana State University – Urban IPM Certification Program

**By: Dr. Eva Grimme**  
**MSU Extension**

Does your day often start with questions like “What is wrong with my tree?” or “What are the spots in my turfgrass (Figure 1)?”. How do you find the answers for the diverse situations you are faced with? An accurate and rapid diagnosis of plant diseases, insect pests, plant identification, and abiotic issues is the key for successful pest control in the urban landscape. Would you like to learn more about diagnosing plant problems? Join the Montana State University (MSU) Urban Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Certification Program and learn about the adoption of IPM

practices to prevent or solve plant problems while safeguarding the environment.

Integrated pest management is not about the eradication of pesticides. It is about utilizing current, comprehensive information on the life cycles of plant pathogens and insects and their interaction with the environment to apply successful and economical control methods with the least possible hazard to people, property, and the environment. The Urban IPM Certification Program was designed to supplement practices that are already in place, giving professionals the tools they need for serving an ever-changing client population.

Hands-on workshops, a digi-

tal learning program (<https://mturbanipm.digitalchalk.com>), MSU fact sheets, and MontGuides (<https://store.msuextension.org/>) provide professionals with relevant, up-to-date and scientifically based information on plant pathogens and pests and how to control them. Once certified, a professional will have an official certificate issued by MSU and will also be listed on the MSU Urban IPM website.

As of September 2019, we are pleased to



**Figure 1: Why is my turfgrass dying?**  
**Photo by Cheryl Moore-Gough**

announce that we have nine new certified Urban IPM professionals.

For questions regarding the Urban IPM Certification Program, please contact Eva Grimme ([eva.grimme@montana.edu](mailto:eva.grimme@montana.edu); 406-994-5150) or visit us online: <http://urbanipm.montana.edu>

## Spotted lanternfly: is Montana at risk?

**By: Dr. Laurie Kerzicnik**  
**MSU Ext. - Schutter Lab**


Like many other invasive pests, it is a good hitchhiker, laying masses of eggs on almost any available surface. Some of its preferred hosts include grapes, apples, cherries, hops, maples, oaks, pines, plums, peaches, poplars, and willows. If it successfully hitches a ride out West, we have many susceptible hosts and industries that could be impacted. The spotted lanternfly is not actually a true fly but a planthopper with piercing-sucking mouthparts. It sucks sap from younger branches and stems, which severely weakens and damages the woody ornamental. It also releases honeydew as a waste product, which can attract black sooty mold. The immature is black with white spots and turns red before it becomes a winged adult. It infests trees/hosts in masses as an adult, and its egg masses are a pinkish-white to grey color. If you suspect that you have

The spotted lanternfly is an invasive insect from China that was introduced into Pennsylvania in 2014 and has been confirmed in four neighboring states.


a spotted lanternfly (either an adult or nymph), place the insect in rubbing alcohol in a sealed container and bring it to your local extension office for identification. You can also submit the insect directly to the Schutter Diagnostic Lab ([diagnostics.montana.edu](http://diagnostics.montana.edu)).



**Figure 1. Spotted lanternfly adults and nymphs.** Photo by Richard Gardner, Bugwood.org



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# Saluting Branches Volunteers Work for Montana Veterans in Helena

**By: Patrick Plantenberg**  
**MT Director, ISA Rocky**  
**Mountain Chapter &**  
**MT Saluting Branches**  
**Coordinator & Site Leader**

Saluting Branches: Arborists United for Veteran Remembrance is an opportunity for tree care professionals throughout the country to unite on one day each year and do what we do best – provide exceptional tree care – to keep our veterans cemeteries and other veterans' facilities safe, beautiful places for all those who visit.

On Wednesday, September 18th, 60 volunteer tree workers from over 20 tree care companies, Montana cities, service organizations, nurseries, landscape companies, veterans' organizations, and veterans from across Montana gathered in Helena to donate a day of service for Montana Veterans at the Ft. Harrison State Veterans Cemetery and VA Medical Center.

About a dozen of the volunteers



led by Mike Hiel, from Gardenwerks of Helena, removed sod from over 40 young trees at the Veterans Cemetery and mulched around the trees to remove competition for water and nutrients from the grass. The mulch ring will avoid injury to the young trees from weed eaters and lawn mowers-the two most common causes of death to young trees.

Early in the day, Mike was interviewed by Fred Bicha, Presi-

dent of the Montana Urban and Community Forestry Association, about why he was working at the cemetery that day. At that point, Mike was working less than 100 feet from where his parents are buried, and he said: "I am doing this to beautify this cemetery for all veterans buried here. My parents are buried right over there. "Hi Mom and Dad."

Four new trees were donated by the Montana Nursery and Landscape Supply of Helena and planted at the peaceful cemetery by the volunteers and cemetery employees.

At the VA Medical Center, around the VA Medical Center Parade Grounds, it was not peaceful at all! Jason Stringer from Tree Amigos Tree Care in Great Falls, organized the volunteers using bucket trucks and chippers to prune and remove trees. Tom Molitor from Big Twig Tree Care in Belgrade, lined out volunteer tree climbers and their chippers and grapple truck to prune and remove trees. The VA grounds crew used their equipment to help haul large log logs to the disposal area. The

green ash tree logs removed during the day were separated so that veterans could come to the VA and utilize the wood for firewood.

Kimber Williams, Regional Safety Director for ASPLUNDH Tree Expert LLC, donated a day of service reviewing the tree care companies' equipment and operational practices to ensure they were compliant with new safety standards for tree workers. Tree work is the most dangerous industry in the country and ensuring the work is done safely is an important component of Saluting Branches.

At the end of the day, about 40 trees were pruned and removed and the debris was cleaned up.

Thirteen AMTOPP members bringing equipment and employees turned out in support. There was even a past AMTOPP President, who has since moved on into another field of work that came out to help. AMTOPP has been doing work at Veteran's facilities for over ten years and continues to be the largest Montana non-profit supporter of Veterans in the green industry!



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Rocky Mountain

# AMTOPP 30<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL CONFERENCE & MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION With EHAP & Irrigation - JANUARY 22 - 24, 2020

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REFERENCE: AMTOPP CONFERENCE FOR GROUP RATE **PRIOR TO 1-6-2020**

Company: (as it should appear on badge) \_\_\_\_\_

Contact: (if different from 1st attendee): \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ ST: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_ Website: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please list additional names of attendees from the same company, at the same address. Each individual must be employed by this company to receive the member rate. Please note discounted rate after two full price attendees from same member firm.**

1) \_\_\_\_\_ 2) \_\_\_\_\_ 3) \_\_\_\_\_  
4) \_\_\_\_\_ 5) \_\_\_\_\_ 6) \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Regular - (at same location) has a pesticide license	\$115 per company	\$
Membership Associate - no pesticide license	\$50 per company	
EHAP Class Attendance Yes _____ No _____ How Many? _____		
Landscape Irrig. Class Attendance Yes _____ No _____ How many? _____	\$50 per person for manual x _____ people	
Please circle the names of those attending the EHAP or the irrigation class.		

**Please Note: EHAP - Seating Is Limited to 20**  
**Irrigation Class - Deadline to register is November 1, 2019**

Conference Registration (postmark is registration date)	Prices Pre-Register Before 1-6-20	Prices Post-Register After 1-6-20	Number of Attendees	Registration Total
Member Rates (regular or associate)	\$280 per person	\$295 per person		\$
Additional attendees <u>after</u> 2 from same company	\$195 per person	\$210 per person		\$
Non-Member Rates	\$395 per person	\$410 per person		\$
Spouse attending - meals only (Mon/Tue AM & Lunch, Mon. Dinner)	\$95. Per person	\$95 per person		\$
TOTAL	Check/money order #			\$

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I agree to abide by the Association of Montana Turf, Ornamental, and Pest Professionals (AMTOPP) ByLaws and any other reasonable codes or standards established by AMTOPP. (See website: [www.amtopp.org](http://www.amtopp.org) for By-Laws (under Membership))

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

For AMTOPP Office use: Date Paid \_\_\_\_\_ Check # \_\_\_\_\_ /C.C./PayPal - Added to Membership File: \_\_\_\_\_  
Added to 1990-Present File: \_\_\_\_\_ Added to Conf. Registration: \_\_\_\_\_ Name Badges: \_\_\_\_\_ QB: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2019 OFFICERS - Executive Board

**President** - Jason Stringer, Tree Amigos; 406-268-8733; jcstringer12365@msm.com:

Term Expires: 2/2020

**Vice President** - Cooper Elwood, Mountain Tree Company; 406-529-0185; coopere@gmail.com;

Term Expires: 2/2021

**Secretary/Treasurer** - W. Dudley Marburger, Dudley's Trees; 406-212-3391; dudleystrees@centurytel.net;

Term Expires: 2/2023

**Past President:** Robert Dillon, Robert Dillon Tree Service LLC; 406-542-5485; info@robertdillontreeservice.com;

Term Expires: 2/2020

## DIRECTORS

Craig Stensby, TruGreen; 406-860-9443; cstensby1971@gmail.com: Term Expires 2/2022

Tom Molitor, Big Twig Tree Care; (406) 600-9365; tom@bigtwigtreecare.com; Term Expires: 2/2022

Ed Nolder, Natures Best Inc.; 406-207-9004; ednolder@naturesbestinc.com; Term Expires: 2/2021 - Resigned

Steve Jonas - Jonas Sprinklers and Fertilizer; 406-216-2281; stevejonas84@gmail.com; Term Expires 2/2021

Chris Galanti; Galanti Lawn & Landscape; (406) 212-4850; chris@galantilandscaping.com; Term Expires: 2/2022

Lydia Heser, Heser Tree Service; (406) 740-0931; clheser@gmail.com; Term Expires: 2/2022

Stephen Pulley; City of Missoula; (406) 214-1316; spulley@bresnan.net; Term Expires: 2/2022

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Trudie Southwick - trudieamtopped@gmail.com or amtopp@amtopp.org - (406) 204-0100

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