



World Tree Climbing Champion To Headline AMTOPP 2024 Conference

Known sometimes as part acrobat, part expert rope climber, tree physiologist, competitor, and thrill-seeker, Mark Chisholm is a New Jersey Licensed Tree Expert (LTE #348) with Aspen Tree Expert Co., Inc. His role at Aspen Tree Expert Co., Inc. in New Jersey, is, specifically, the top climber, and he has represented New Jersey as the state climbing champion at the International Tree Climbing Championships for over 20 years. Mark is a twenty-time NJ Tree Climbing Champion and three-time World Champion winning his third World title in Chicago in 2010. Mark was World Champion in 1997 and 2001, finishing second place in 1996 and 2000. He has appeared at numerous TCI Expos doing climbing demonstrations and frequently does climbing seminars in New Jersey and worldwide.

He is also currently the spokesperson for STIHL and Triefelberger, representing their interests at various educational sessions and trade shows nationwide and overseas.

Mark is also an instructor at Cook College and Rutgers University, teaching such topics as Hazardous Tree Identification, Large Tree Pruning, Climbing and Rigging, and Chainsaw Safety. In addition, he teaches short courses with Cornell University Extension Service in New York and The Morris Arboretum in Philadelphia.

STIHL Corporation and Intermountain STIHL have partnered with AMTOPP to make Chisholm's attendance at the conference possible. He will be the Keynote Speaker and will provide three additional talks during the conference. Don't miss the opportunity to meet and hear Mark.



Mark Chisholm

Conference dates are January 23-26, 2024, with pre-conference classes 23-24 and conference kick-off, on the 25th. See you at Fairmont.

New Location for Montana Saluting Branches This Year

Just a little ways southwest of Big Timber, you will find Mountain View Cemetery, also known as Big Timber Cemetery. It was established around 1895, and while not recognized as a State Veteran's Cemetery, it does have a prominent veterans' area with over 100 grave markers, some dating back to the Spanish American War.

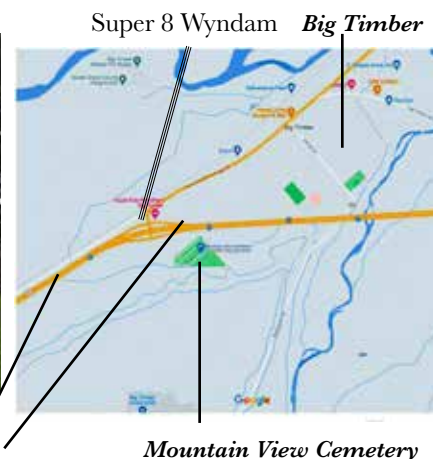
Scattered throughout the property are large Cottonwoods, and while the grounds are well maintained, the large tree maintenance is not the focus.

Mountain View Cemetery, or as some know it, Big Timber Cemetery, will receive this year's Montana's Saluting Branches work.

Thousands of dollars of labor and equipment will provide some much-needed work, addressing the large trees that offer a tranquil setting for these fallen heroes, friends, and family's final resting spot and those who visit.

Mark your calendar for Wednesday, September 20, to participate in this beautification project and the international event of Saluting Branches.

More information to come on group lodging and other information. In the meantime: Register today at: <https://saluting-branches-2023.vercel.app/locations/mountain-view-cemetery>



President's Message



While it hasn't stopped raining, I have yet to see a house float down a river in 2023. With that said, we are off to a better year than last. Positivity can be a funny thing sometimes. We may not see the silver lining until much further down the road. Every struggle can also be an opportunity.

We may have had cabin fever so bad this winter that everyone on my team happily powered through the daily rain, second winter, and third mud season. Every week is planned by the day, and every day is planned by the hour. I am sure it has been the same for many AMTOPP members.

We do have a few updates for our membership. We will be hosting Saluting Branches at a new location in 2023. The event will be held at Mountain View Cemetery in Big Timber, MT, on Wednesday, September 20, 2023. The site consists of large Cottonwoods lining the main road; dozens of trees need deadwood removal, limb weight reduction, and overall tree care. We have Ash, Silver Poplars, and Cottonwoods in decline that may be slated for removal. We

can use climbers, buckets, cranes, chippers, ground crew, stump grinders, and of course, great tree people. Please sign up on the Saluting Branches website and reach out with any questions. (<https://saluting-branches-2023.vercel.app/locations/mountain-view-cemetery>)

We will have an Aerial Rescue Class with Dave Stice on 7/27/2023 at Lake Inez; sign-ups will be posted soon. There will be a board meeting Friday, 7/28/2023, also at Lake Inez. We love seeing our members; perchance, you can join us.

The 2024 AMTOPP Winter Conference is shaping up very well. Mark Chisholm is slated to be our keynote speaker. STIHL has been a huge part of getting Mark to come to Montana.

We will have our usual ISA Testing, EHT, and several educational tracts full of great classes.

Stay tuned for more updates on our conference, and I look forward to seeing everyone in July and September. Good luck to everyone this season, and stay safe!

Tom Molitor
2023 President



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Synopsis of Board Meeting 4/14/23

By: Owen Nickol
Secretary/Treasurer

Hello to everyone and hopefully your spring is going excellent.

The second board meeting for the 2023 year occurred at the Vermeer Office in Billings on April 14. The meeting started off with a lot of discussion about the 2024 conference and many great ideas for speakers and vendors. Since we saw growth at the last conference, the board also discussed how we should adapt to this growth. The board also worked on different ideas to add more training opportunities to AMTOPP and how to use different avenues for funding them. With the discussion of training we were also brainstorming ideas on how to use this training to give active AMTOPP members some more advantages with bidding jobs.

The board had a good discussion of several bills that are in congress that will affect the industry and if we should start sending the President to D.C. again. Also, how we might be more active with other groups when working on legislative issues.

Summer field day was discussed and how we could grow it to include more training and education.

The board talked about this years Saluting Branches and where we should focus our energy. Several good ideas and locations were discussed.

This meeting was awesome to be part of as the new board worked together excellent. I encourage everybody to come and be involved, and if you have any questions feel free to reach out to me.

Owen Nickol
oxan@ronan

What's Coming Up ?

July 27 - Advanced Aerial Rescue Workshop - Lake Inez, 860 Loon Lane - 9AM - 5:30PM. Pre Registration Required - Limited spots available. Observer or Climber - both get credits.

July 28 - Quarterly Board Meeting - Lake Inez, 860 Loon Lane, 10AM - 3PM

October 13 - Quarterly Board Meeting - Belgrade - 10AM - 3PM

September 20 - Saluting Branches - Mountain View Cemetery, Big Timber



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Taking Care Of Stressed Trees And Shrubs After A Tough Winter Season

*By: Mrs. Abi Saeed
Extension Horticulture
Associate Specialist,
Montana State University.*

We saw a significant amount of winter injury in our trees and shrubs throughout Montana this year (especially in our broadleaf evergreens and long needle pines such as Ponderosa and Austrian). Some of these landscape plants are still, albeit slowly, recovering. A combination of warmer fall temperatures last October, followed by a cold snap that led right into a very cold and long winter season created a perfect storm to challenge even some of our hardiest plants. In addition, a cool wet spring/early summer has followed, which has created additional challenges.

Many homeowners are also seeing a

delayed leafing out in their landscape trees and shrubs this year- and in some cases, this can cause uncertainty regarding whether a tree is healthy, and if it will bounce back from a difficult winter. Several factors can impact new growth in deciduous trees and shrubs, including quite a few that we saw over the course of this past season.

If trees are looking a bit sparse in terms of foliage, give them time- it can sometimes take several months to bounce back from an especially difficult winter. You can check to see if there is living tissue within the bare branches by doing a "scratch test" with a pocket knife to see if you see green cambium underneath, or if it looks dry and brownish (the latter indicating the branch is dead). Prune out any dead or damaged material (by cutting back to a live bud or branch union). If there

is living tissue, it is possible for the tree to still put out new growth, so I like to discourage people from making decisions to remove non-hazard trees for at least a year. Hazard trees, however should be assessed by ISA Certified Arborists as soon as possible to prevent any injury and/or damage to people and property.

Trees that experienced winter injury and damage (which includes drying out of narrow and



broadleaf evergreen foliage, sunscald, vole and deer feeding damage, damage and dieback to buds and sometimes entire branches) are stressed. Stressed trees can be more susceptible to other pest and disease issues, so care should be taken to make sure that they are getting everything they need to recover from these stressors: and many times, this often means that less is more. Although many homeowners might want something to actively do, in order to help their trees recover- sometimes the best things to do can be to give these trees and shrubs time, and keeping an eye out for pest and disease issues.

Proper tree watering can play a large role in helping trees recover from winter injury (and preventing future winter injury). Remind people that watering around the drip-line is the most effective way of getting that moisture where it's needed most. Removing competing vegetation (like turf) from the base of trees can also help ensure that trees are getting enough moisture. A 3-4 inch layer of organic mulches like arborist wood chips can help with this (and can mitigate moisture loss, suppress weeds,



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See Stressed page 5

Stressed continued from page 4

and add nutrients back into the soil overtime). Spreading this on as large a space over the root zone as possible is even better!

Although we are often tempted to actively do things to help our plants, it is not recommended to fertilize any trees that are recovering from winter injury, unless there is also evidence of nutrient deficiency (such as pale/yellowing leaves, leaves that are abnormally small, or very slow growth). It is best to let these trees focus their energy on recovering, as opposed to pushing out new growth. Overfertil-

izing can also further stress trees, and result in injury to root systems and rapid, but often weak, growth. If one does want to fertilize, slow-release (water insoluble) fertilizers are better than the quick-release counterparts, in this situation.

Remind homeowners that they can also set their trees and shrubs up for more success in the future, by reducing practices that can impair their ability to make it through a difficult winter season. Avoid fertilizing in the late summer and fall and excessive pruning late in the growing season (be-

cause new growth is more susceptible to injury and dieback). Make sure that they harden off their trees and shrubs in the fall (by tapering watering). Evergreen trees should be watered into the fall, and sometimes during dry and warm winter months as well. Wrap thin-barked (especially younger) trees with tree wrap in the fall to prevent sunscald, and be sure to remove these wraps in the spring.

With a little care and some patience, I am optimistic that we can give our stressed trees their best chance to recover during this growing season!

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Business Corner

Tailgate Safety Meeting THE SEASON IS ONLY BEGINNING – ARE YOU PREPARED?

*By Mitch Sangl
Arborist with
Big Twig Tree Care*

The Spring rush is finally starting to come to an end, but the hustle is not over. In this industry, it is important to make sure we take care of our own bodies just the same as we take care of the equipment that saves our back. As Mark Chisholm once told me, arborists need to consider themselves as industrial athletes. Athletes don't just wake up being the best, that takes years of training and dedication to be the best version of yourself. The following guidelines will help ensure that you stay healthy and prepared this summer.

Get plenty of rest. The human body needs time to heal and rest after working long hours. Seven to eight hours of sleep per night is best, but we all struggle with this from time to time. Six hours of sleep minimum is recommended.

Drink water. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), a person working in the heat should drink 1 cup (8 oz) of water every 15-20 minutes. This amounts to $\frac{3}{4}$ -1 quart of water (24-32 oz) per hour. Drinking smaller quantities of water, more frequently is best. You can drink too much water! Do NOT drink more than 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ quarts (48

as many breaks as you need to reduce the chances of heat exhaustion. This is a great time to drink water!

Truck First Aid Kit. You should ensure you are prepared for any situation in the field from an insect bite to a severe life-threatening injury. A purchased first aid kit may not have all the materials for our needs as an arborist. Each vehicle should have a first aid kit that is large enough for the number of people traveling in it. Don't forget to re-stock your first aid kit!

First Aid Kit while aloft. Although a first aid kit is not required while aloft, it is becoming popular for arborists aloft to carry one. Deep lacerations from a chainsaw are one of the most common non-fatal injuries to aerial workers. Therefore, your first aid kit aloft should contain a tourniquet or hemostatic agent to slow blood loss and various sizes of gauze padding. Practice using them with one-hand since you are likely to be in that situation in the field.

Wear PPE. Wearing the appropriate PPE (personal protective equipment) is vital to ensuring we don't get injured from everyday activities. Hard hat, eye protection, hearing protection, gloves, and appropriate clothing and footwear are the minimum requirements. PPE should be worn at all times while performing arboricultural operations.

Remember - DO NOT CUT CORNERS ON SAFETY! YOUR LIFE OR A CREW MEMBER'S LIFE COULD BE ON THE LINE.



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oz) of water per hour. Additionally, make sure to hydrate before and after work as well.

Take breaks. Sit in the shade and get out of the sun for a few minutes to let your body temperature cool down. Take

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Leadership

Are You Giving Credit To The Thunder Or The Lightning

The thunder is good, the thunder is impressive; but it is lightning that does the work.

— Mark Twain

When you were a kid, were you afraid of thunder? I know I was. Crazy that we are scared of a sound. It is so big and loud! I remember the first time I found out that the sound of thunder is actually the air that expands rapidly from the heat of a lightning. It moves the air so fast that it causes an audible vibration for miles and miles. Crazy right? The thunder is a byproduct of lightning. It is heard, even when lightning is not seen!

As a leader, you will need to discern the difference between the outcome of a win and the cause of the win. Much like the thunder, wins can be deceptive. Some wins can even put you in the spotlight. In those cases, it is important to give credit where it is due.

Giving credit to others is harder for some and easier for others. Let's be completely honest, we all enjoy a little time in the spotlight. As a leader, your job is not to soak in the spotlight, but to move the light to those who did the work to get the result.

Remember: "We go before ego!"

HERE ARE SOME THINGS TO REMEMBER WHEN GIVING CREDIT TO OTHERS.

Make it honest.

*Everyone can see from a mile away when you are going through the motions of giving credit. We have all heard phrases like, "It was a true team effort" and "I couldn't have done it without my team." These aren't bad necessarily if they come from the heart, but if you are just going through the motions, it will cause more harm than good.

*Part of honesty is giving the credit to the right people.

Nothing will hurt a team culture more than giving credit to someone you "think" did the work, but in reality it was someone else. Take the time to do your research. If someone does not deserve credit... don't give it to them!

Make it specific.

*This is similar to feedback. When you are giving credit, don't make it general. It will be far more impactful if you give the concrete examples. An example might look like this. "John is the one who carried the team on this project. Without his expertise in XYZ we would still be on step one."

Make it important.

When you give credit, make it a big deal. Don't give credit in private and take the praise in public. Make it a big deal. If possible, hold a celebration for the win and give credit there.

This has another important outcome. Others who did not get credit will see that good work is recognized and it will inspire them. Some might feel they deserved credit and come and talk to you about it. What a great opportunity for constructive feedback and growth!

TAKING ACTION

Have you considered you might be giving credit to the wrong person?

Do you like the spotlight a little too much?

Write out 3 people you can give credit to this week and go do it!

By: Luke Crane

Published: January 13, 2020

Article source: <https://articlebiz.com>

Luke Crane is the Owner of Leadership Cohort (www.leadershipcohort.com), a leadership coaching, training and speaking group that focuses on sharpening mid/entry level leaders for the next level.

How To Identify Your Next Front-Line Employee



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How To Identify Your Next Front-Line Employee

Sometimes it helps to take a minute and actually list the employee qualities you are looking for when hiring at your organization. Do you know what your organization is looking for? Do you need leaders, followers, outdoor workers, independent thinkers, problem solvers, strategic thinkers? Years ago, an employee, Louis R., helped show me what we needed at my organization. Louis was a self-taught irrigation specialist. He had “old school” values. He believed in working smarter, not harder and needed very little direction from me. I would introduce him to others by saying I wished I had 3 more just like him.

If you have never had a Louis on your team and you have a minute, here are a few quick ideas I now use:

–**Capacity + Character:** I made a list of what it was about Louis that made him so valuable. Honest, dependable, self-starter, problem solver, no drama, follow up skills, mentor, created and followed operational procedures, and he saw his work as more than just a paycheck and pension. No one will get perfect alignment with all the good qualities that make a good employee, but knowing what skills they need, their willingness and capacity to learn, along with the quality of their character is a good place to start for hiring.

–**Work History:** I like to see an applicant’s work history. Over the years, I discovered that applicants that had worked while in school had a better understanding of what a workplace was like. I was recently in a session where the

instructor taught that a person who moves often and frequently may be having accountability issues. Move cautiously, dig deeper with this applicant.

–**Ownership:** Most people in the landscape location I work in need to work independently in the field. Even though they are on a team, they separate in the field and work individually from others. I have found that people who have owned their own business, no matter how small, generally have the ownership drive. They take ownership of their work on the job and caring about the work never goes away.

Remember to know what your organization is looking for. Over the years I have hired for many organizations and each one had a different list of qualities they wanted in an employee. The key is to have a good idea about what you need and work to get those qualities when hiring.

“Nothing we do is more important than hiring and developing people. At the end of the day, you bet on people, not strategies.”

~Lawrence Bossidy, Former CEO, AlliedSignal
Keep Growing your Leaders!

Jeff McManus

The Jeff McManus Group

June 14, 2023 Blog: <https://jeffmcmanus.com/how-to-identify-your-next-front-line-employee/>



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