



## He Decided to Plant Trees

**Tim Womick**  
Self-Employed, Contractor with State Forest Agencies & Nonprofit Organizations, Performance Artist  
Asheboro, North Carolina

Tim Womick was once a successful actor and competition chef, but he wasn't happy in those professions. The weekend after Earth Day, 1990 in the Joyce Kilmer National Forest in western North Carolina, Womick had an epiphany to plant trees instead.

As a self-employed state forestry services contractor, Womick once ran through the state of Georgia to spread the message of how \$18 billion in jobs is added to the economy there thanks to trees. For 10 years, the National Tree Trust gave Womick the industrial backing to educate, plant, and promote community volunteerism. Those ideals are still part of his agenda. Co-founding the nonprofit,

Trees NC, is considered one of his best accomplishments as a True Professional. This year, Trees NC will offer the first-ever "Yes! I Can Program." Womick says any student in North Carolina is eligible to write a grant request for a community planting project to be funded by Trees NC.

"Not only do we promote the practices and standards of ISA, but we target the underserved in what we do. We take the party where they need it the most – where the challenge is the greatest and the success rate is often the least. We've been working with one group for seven years, and we've seen kids graduate from high school. These kids live there. It's their community. It's important they see we care."

Womick's training as an actor makes him a natural communicator, especially with children. His "Trail of Trees" show goes on the road to schools around the world, offering a good dose of humor and props, but everything he teaches about trees is based on science. He partners with programs that have catchy titles. "Making the Shade" offers energy solutions for schools and playgrounds. "Acorns of Hope" supports an annual bike ride where arborists and tree advocates restore live oaks along the Southern Louisiana coastline.



# True Professionals of Arboriculture

## 2011 Recipients

The True Professionals of Arboriculture recognition program honors arborists and tree care professionals for their positive impact on the industry in and around their communities.



## The Right Tree in the Right Place

**Richard Adkins**  
Forestry Supervisor:  
City of Phoenix Parks and Recreation Department,  
Phoenix, Arizona

As Forestry Supervisor with the city of Phoenix, Richard Adkins is dedicated to preserving the urban canopy which he believes is a keystone to everyday life.

"A lot of people don't consider trees a part of the urban infrastructure. Trees are a valuable asset with multiple benefits and need to be considered beyond just a green space for a community. Trees are an important design tool that should be considered for sustainability of our urban environments. A position like mine teaches and reiterates this point daily."

As a True Professional, Adkins is constantly teaching about trees. He says managing trees and the urban forest is not clearly understood by city leaders and the public. It's why he leads programs like the Tree Care Academy for city maintenance staff, Brown Bag Lunch presentations for city employees, and the Shade Phoenix 2030 Master Plan; all of which show trees are critical to the city's infrastructure and sustainability.

Another critical area for urban forestry is not losing trees to utility line conflicts. In recent years, the city of Phoenix discovered more than 12,000 trees in competition with above ground lines. Adkins developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which outlined the responsibility of removing and replacing the trees with a goal of keeping the conflict from happening again. Adkins impressed city leaders and others in the industry for his willingness to work with local utility providers for the greater good.



## A Tree Tender in His Community

**Casey Combs**  
ISA Certified Arborist, Municipal Specialist: Pennsylvania Horticultural Society,  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

An ISA Certified Arborist, Casey Combs manages numerous creative and formative tree care programs in Eastern Pennsylvania, such as Philly Tree Map, Plant One Million, and the Tree Tenders. In addition, he remains active in both education and communication through Twitter and his Tree of the Month blog.

"I just try to be as professional as I can. I think that's just staying in-tune to current research and what people are asking me. A lot of times people don't know much about trees or tree care, so you have to figure out their experience level."

As a True Professional, Combs is credited for his work with the non-profit, Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS.), while operating with a lean budget. Philly Tree Map is a free computer software resource which identifies tree species and maps them. The goal is to help people get more interactive with urban forestry.

He's also involved with Plant One Million, one of the first tri-state partnerships between Philadelphia, the New Jersey Tree Foundation, the state of Delaware, and PHS. The planting of one million trees in 13 counties in Pennsylvania is already underway, though Combs says they are still determining how to count them all. Combs main focus these days is the Tree Tenders Program where he teaches people about tree care and choosing the right tree for the right place. Combs uses social media tools to remind people to give their trees extra water when it's hot and alert them to upcoming events. His "Tree Twitters" came about after last summer's dry spell. He also continues to blog about other current arboriculture topics.

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## Setting a Benchmark for a Greener Industry

**Mike Galvin**  
ISA Certified Arborist and  
Former Deputy Director:  
Casey Trees, Washington, D.C.

An ISA Certified Arborist, Mike Galvin believes his most important contribution

to arboriculture is his work on the urban tree canopy. He's pleased that trees are now part of the Clean Water Compliance Strategy for the Chesapeake Bay.

"Baltimore, Maryland and Washington, D.C. were the first two air sheds (granted by the EPA) that had trees in their state implementation plans for non-ozone attainment. They put trees in as one of the devices they were going to use to meet clean air standards. That's really exciting."

As a True Professional, Galvin is also responsible for developing the nation's first Tree Report Card. Galvin says the idea came from the board of directors at Casey Trees where he was brought on as a Deputy Director three years ago. A main fixture on the Casey Trees website, the Tree Report Card looks at the tree canopy in Washington, D.C., showing how many trees there are and where they are located. It grades the city in five key areas: awareness, coverage, health, planting, and protection. Unfortunately, last year's Tree Report Card was the worst yet, dropping from a "B" in 2009 to a "C" in 2010.

Galvin says a tough budget prompted local leaders to take money from the tree fund and pool it in with the general fund, which meant tree protection was not a priority. He says the Tree Report Card brought it to attention.

Among Galvin's other achievements is improving tree care licensing in Maryland. The state had one of the most stringent licensing programs in the country, but Galvin, working with the Tree Care Industry Association (TCIA), helped put the regulations together, got rid of some loopholes and stepped up enforcement.

save every tree, but we could do a better job of saving others."

As an ISA Certified Arborist, Mann believes his greatest contribution to arboriculture is using industry standards to make good decisions about trees. He owns Mann Made Resources, an arborist consulting, training, and tree-friendly products company. As a True Professional, Mann says raising the standard of workmanship in a community starts with encouraging the people who are doing things the right way, not focusing on a problem company.

Mann is often focused on raising more money for tree research. When a United Nations World Environment Day was celebrated in San Francisco in 2005, he decided to hold a local event connected to the Tour des Trees, an annual fundraiser for tree research and education endowment (TREE Fund). He also helped launch the nonprofit, City Trees, in Redwood City. An initial goal of planting 1,000 trees in 1,000 days was met in less than three years. Today, volunteers and city workers continue to plant trees and change neighborhoods.



## Never Compromise on Quality

**Carl Mellinger**  
ISA Certified Arborist,  
Consultant, Business Owner:  
Mellinger Tree and Landscape  
Service, Pacific Palisades,  
California

Carl Mellinger is an ISA Certified and Consulting Arborist and owner of Mellinger Tree and Landscape Service. He began as a volunteer with ISA's Western Chapter and believes being around people so committed to tree care immediately rubbed off on him.

Mellinger's best practice as a True Professional is never compromising on quality as an arborist and business owner. In fact, he makes a point to ask his clients to name their favorite tree so he can share the benefits of that tree and others in their yard. He believes keeping the line of

communication open with his crew and office staff helps maintain a much stronger company. Mellinger supports his workers by offering uniforms, registers them for regular conferences and workshops, provides them with Spanish handbooks—all as a focus to improve customer service and apply the best in tree care.

"A good portion of my employees are Hispanic, so I give them everything they need to help them do their job as best they can. You give your employees the feeling that they belong. They're respected. I think constantly educating yourself and being open to communication—whether good or bad—are important so that everyone feels like they are being heard."

Because of the need in Southern California, Mellinger pushed for increasing the translation of arborist publications into Spanish as well as expanding seminars in Spanish. He helped launch the John Britton Fund to raise money for tree research. He's also a volunteer consultant on tree work at schools and advises local garden clubs. Mellinger is currently revising a book, *Trees of Pacific Palisades*, to update tree locations.



## With Outreach Comes Opportunity

**Gordon Mann**  
Arborist Consultant, Business  
Owner, and Former Municipal  
Forester: Mann Made Resources,  
Auburn, California

Gordon Mann served as a municipal forester for three cities in 30 years. When he graduated college, forestry jobs were in short supply, so Mann went to work for a city. His appreciation for taking care of trees grew along with the population as more people moved to urban areas.

"A lot of times with the building process, developers cut all of the trees out of the way, build their buildings, and put a few trees back. To me, it's kind of a tragedy that we remove some of those larger trees. You've got to be realistic that you cannot



## A Champion of Community Trees

**William Spradley**  
Instructor, Consultant, Lecturer,  
Business Owner: Trees,  
Forests and Landscapes, Inc.,  
Kirkwood, Missouri

Bill Spradley believes a lot of the credit for his professional success goes to the international organization recognizing him with this honor.

"ISA helped me develop into a True Professional. They've given me an education without having to go to a university for a Master's or Ph.D. I've met so many talented and dedicated arborists in my world travels. I am constantly challenging other arborists to self-improve, step up, and make our industry more professional."

One of Spradley's best practices is supporting workers at his business, Trees, Forests and Landscapes, Inc. He learned

years ago that training staff in practice, safety, and customer relations gives clients a better understanding of what arborists are doing in the field. He welcomes opportunities to get his employees involved in community service. A consulting job at Boys and Girls Town in St. James, Missouri showed the campus landscape was suffering and there wasn't any money to accomplish the restoration goal. Thanks to donations of trees, mulch, equipment, and manpower, Spradley and his crew pared down what would have been a \$30,000 to \$40,000 landscape project to a cost of only \$3,000 to \$4,000.

Spradley also launched a tree recovery program at William Woods University in Fulton, Missouri, after a major ice storm damaged historic pin oaks and red oaks there. He donated trees, bringing in various species to help with diversification. Three of his arborists planted and pruned them. Spradley's daughter, a student at Williams Woods, founded a club called "Knowing the Woods," where students became stewards of those campus trees. Now, William Woods is the first university in Missouri to obtain the status of Tree Campus USA.