

TREE CARE INDUSTRY

M A G A Z I N E

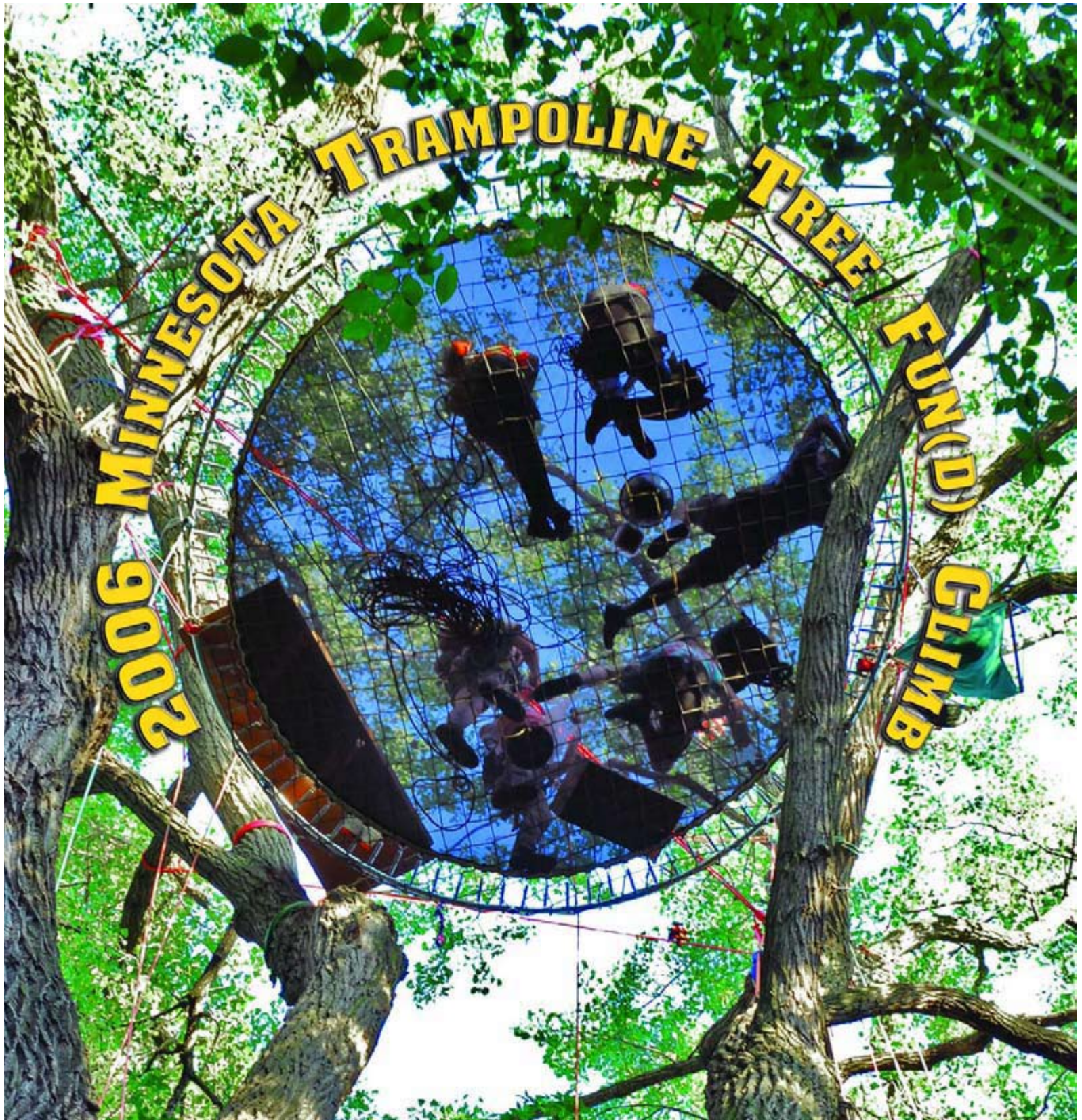
The Official Publication of the Tree Care Industry Association

Volume XVIII, Number 2 - February 2007

**2006
MINNESOTA
TRAMPOLINE
FUN(D) TREE
CLIMB**

**Down, But Not Out —
Marketing Waste Wood**

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By Dave Nordgaard

On Aug 3rd, about two dozen climbers played on a 14-foot trampoline hung 60 feet up in a majestic 5-foot in diameter cottonwood. This event, donated by the Minnesota

Chapter of ISA, was auctioned off last year to benefit the Tree Research and Education Endowment Fund (TREE Fund) during its Gala Auction held in conjunction with the 2005 ISA conference in Nashville, Tennessee.

When Tobe Sherill won the bid for the climb, I wonder if he knew it would

include watching an arborist cook his dinner while enjoying the ambience of the 60-foot high tree café? Guests who accompanied Tobe for the day were Anne Sherrill, Dwayne and Nancy Neustater, Scott Prophet, Bruce and Lita Smith, Dan Kraus, Mike Kraus, and Ken Palmer. Other guests included Glen Palokangas, plus Todd Sirbasku and his

wife, Jo, who stopped by for a climb. Tobe brought a film crew to document the day. Watch for the upcoming DVD.

I sincerely thank the Minnesota Society of Arboriculture (MSA) volunteers who installed the trampoline the previous week and executed an exceptional TREE Fun(d) Climb. Ralph Grieling, Greg Krogstad, Dave Nordgaard, John Sirbasku, Pierce Wasmund, and Gary Wiemier acquired permission, secured donations and spent two days rigging a helicopter cargo net fitted with a trampoline cover into a large old cottonwood at Fort Snelling State Park. For the day of the climb they assembled boat drivers, a bucket truck team, gear donors, a cadre of chefs, 20 pounds of fresh walleye, a zipline and a hydraulic-powered elevator.

Two visiting arborists, Michael Oxman from Seattle, Washington and Carl Rutherford from Mississippi, also helped with the rigging. Except for Carl and Oxman, who arrived in advance of the ISA conference, this core team of local friends has worked together through the MSA in the Twin Cities for years. Their dedication to the advancement of arboriculture is what made this a fun, safe, extraordinary recreational climb.

Many thanks to our two generous sponsors:

Randy Nulle at the Samson Arborist Rope Division out of Ferndale, Washington donated a ½ mile of rope. A featured item was the 500-foot spool of half inch Amsteel rope. This stuff is ridiculously strong and made for a super secure zipline.

Kris Kirk at CMI (Colorado Mountain Industries) graciously gave our climb over \$1,000 in rigging gear. Rigging blocks, pulleys, slings, and 8's allowed the versatility needed to rig a helicopter cargo net to a big old cottonwood. These two companies understand the importance of supporting the TREE Fund.



All of this gear was up for bidding at the MSA fall conference auction to benefit the TREE Fund. Used one time, of course. All for a good cause!

Securing a large net inside the canopy of a large cottonwood presented quite a challenge. Thank goodness John Sirbasku's experience hanging the net in numerous trees made him a world expert in tree trampoline installations. A donat-

ed 5/8-inch Samson Stable Braid was used to lash the limbs of the tree together into a reinforcing network, creating a temporary cabling system to brace the limb structure. The stress from tensioning the cargo net and the zipline was effectively transferred to the entire limb structure, distributing the load more evenly.

Guests and volunteers spent the morning installing the zipline and the rest of the day climbing, riding the zipline and the winch, and laying around on the tramp. Tree stories, jokes and Ralph's exceptional catering kept everyone smiling all day. The highlight of the day occurred when Ralph, his son, and his friend Joe served a six-course meal to everyone, including the seven lucky people up on the trampoline. All the food and a kitchen were elevated into the tree where pan-fried walleye was transformed into the main course and devoured by our hungry guests. I think everybody there would agree to chock the day up to "a very good time!"

I encourage all ISA chapters and Tree Care Industry Association member firms to conduct your own (fun)draisers. A TREE Fund fundraising guide, including a 'how-to' recipe for a tree climb, will be available in 2007. For more information contact Lynn Day at the TREE Fund (ldaytreefund.org). 🌲

