

President's MESSAGE



Winds of Change

As I write this message at the end of October, the arrival of chilling winds reminds me that change is inevitable.

In the 70's flush cuts were still the thing, and a planting hole was never bigger than the ball you were installing.

Later, I began reading about Dr. Alex Shigo's C.O.D.I.T. theory. Compartmentalization, was this possible? Had we been pruning incorrectly for so long? And what was a branch collar anyway?

The 80's brought monumental discoveries and changes in our industry. Climbing equipment, ISA certification, and industry standards helped to establish the term "arborist" as a household word.

Over 20 years after I joined the WAA in 1985, the WAA has about 700 members and Dr. Alex Shigo has recently passed away, and will be greatly missed.

Change is inevitable.

But not all change, such as the weather or the term of your life, has to be uncontrollable. That significant truth became very real to me during my attendance with four other WAA members at the ISA Leadership Conference in Champaign, Illinois.

Meeting and networking with representatives from other chapters located throughout the nation and the world helped me to understand how important it is for organizational leaders to embrace change rather than resist it, and the importance of leadership positions to change within organizations.

And so it is with a renewed understanding of how necessary it is to embrace change and to harness it for forward growth that I encourage you to become leaders in communities, the WAA, the ISA, and/or the field of arboriculture.

And as you walk your own path of leadership, may your path be guided by some of the words of wisdom that I have found helpful. In his book, "Lincoln on Leadership," Donald T. Phillips points out many of Abraham Lincoln's principles. Below, I list just a few for your consideration:

- You must seek and require access to reliable and up-to-date information.
- Invest time and money in better understanding the ins and outs of human nature.
- Delegate responsibility and authority by empowering people to act on their own.
- It is your duty to advance the aims of the organization and also to help those who serve it.

And finally, a few guiding principles from me to you: work safely, sleep soundly, and never look back.

Sincerely,
Dave Graham