



Hey There, Partner!

As I sit here staring at my blank computer screen wondering what to write, it seems to me that one of the most used buzzwords for 2011 is going to be “partnerships.” Over the last few weeks, it seems I have heard this buzzword more than any other. Everywhere we turn in our daily lives we hear how we need to work smarter, eliminate duplication, be more innovative in how we do things, and reach out. I’m not sure where the consultant came from with this innovative concept but it certainly wasn’t Wisconsin! Partnerships are nothing new to the WAA. Two weeks ago, the WAA/DNR annual conference was held in Green Bay. This was the 20th year of this partnership!

If you look up the definition of partnership in a dictionary, you will see many definitions. To summarize, it is a relationship between individuals or groups in mutual cooperation for the achievement of a specified goal. Perhaps the concept is not new, but the importance of partnerships may be more important than ever before, for all of us.

As members of the WAA, we are individuals who come from differing backgrounds and facets of the industry. As members of the WAA, we are also a partnership of over 750 individuals who are in mutual cooperation for achieving the goal of promoting professional tree care. This partnership has been in existence since 1964! A true measure of any partnership is “How strong is it? Are we achieving all we can?” Are we a group of individuals that agree trees are good, and that gets together to celebrate that fact over a beer and pat each other on

the back for a job well done? Or are we a group of individuals that believes our work and profession make a difference and that healthy urban forests are vital to everyone’s way of life? If we believe the latter, then we need to ask ourselves “How strong is our partnership?” Is there more we can do as a member of this partnership?

I urge you as a WAA member to take a look outside of the WAA and find opportunities where as a member of the WAA you can strengthen existing partnerships and create new partnerships that can aid in educating the public and reaching a larger audience. Many times these opportunities are closer than we think. Individuals or groups that have a concern for the neighborhood we live in or places where we recreate can become partners to voice the concerns about proper tree care and the importance of trees in our daily lives.

A quote from an unknown source fits well to leave you to ponder: “If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.”

Let’s see how far we can take the WAA and promote the benefits of proper tree care.

Brian Pelot, *WAA President*

