

# **ABOUT THE CONTESTANTS**

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## ***WOMEN'S DIVISION CONTESTANTS***

### **2012 Asia Pacific Champion Australia Chapter—Kiah Martin**

2003 ITCC Women's World Champion

Kiah Martin returns to her eleventh international competition representing Australia as the Women's Asia Pacific Champion. This past world champion from Elwood, Victoria, has been competing for 14 years, and her fastest footlock time of 19.84 seconds was set at the 2011 International Tree Climbing Championships. Martin has 22 years' experience in the arboriculture industry, starting out as a bushland rehabilitator and moving on to be the senior arborist at the Royal Botanic Gardens in Melbourne for 10 years. She has worked for the past 14 years as conservation arborist and principal at Ginkgo - Urban Tree Works, and is also currently teaching Arboriculture subjects through Swinburne University of Technology. She volunteers for several non-profit organisations through the year, including the Victorian Tree Industry Organisation (VTIO) and the Queensland Arboricultural Association (QAA). When she is not working or volunteering, she enjoys bushwalking and adventures with her Mini Foxie, Scampy.

### **2012 European Champion Swiss Arborist Association—Anja Erni**

2009 ITCC Women's World Champion

The winner of this year's European regional championship is repeat winner Anja Erni from Switzerland. Erni was the 2009 ETCC and ITCC Women's Champion and has been climbing for 11 years. She is an ISA Certified Arborist and has been a tree climbing instructor for 3 years. Erni, and her partner Markus, own Astwerk tree company and have a 4-year-old-daughter, Meret. Besides spending time with her family and friends, she enjoys rock climbing, running, reading, and painting.

### **Australia Chapter—Julia Chilcott**

Julia Chilcott of North Cairns, Australia, owns her own business, Tree Tech Arboricultural Solutions. This is her first international competition.

### **Austria Chapter—Christine Sulzberger**

Christine Sulzberger returns to the ITCC for the third time. She has been climbing for 9 years and has a fastest footlock time of 23.3 seconds. Sulzberger is from Vöcklamarkt, Austria, where she and her husband founded Treetec Sulzberger KG in 2006. She is married to Gerhard, and she enjoys training rescue dogs, skiing, gardening, and rock climbing.

### **Germany Chapter— Kathrin Blessing**

Kathrin Blessing is making her second appearance at the ITCC. Living in Freiburg, Germany, Blessing studied landscape architecture before becoming a tree climber 3 ½ years ago. She has been competing for 2 years and estimates that her fastest footlock time is around 25 seconds. Blessing has done a bit of volunteering for her ISA Chapter, and when not climbing, she enjoys hiking and being out in nature.

### **Hong Kong/China— SoMan Choi**

This is the first ITCC for So Man Choi. An arborist with Modern Arboricultural Services, she has been climbing for 3 ½ years and competing for 2. Choi volunteers as a proctor and evaluator for ISA Hong Kong/China as well as a member of their steering committee. In her free time, she likes tree climbing, rock climbing, kayaking, and sailing.

### **Kentucky Chapter (United States)— Josie Spagnolo**

Josie Spagnolo of Louisville, Kentucky, is making her ITCC debut this year. Though she has only been climbing formally for 4 ½ years, Spagnolo grew up clearing trails and burning brush piles on a 50-acre tree farm. For the past 9 months, she has been a trainee at Limbwalker Tree Service, and she has volunteered her time pruning and removing trees in her community. Her fastest footlock time is 21 seconds. In addition to climbing trees, Spagnolo has been a rock climber for 10 years and is a 3-time national rock climbing champion.

### **Mid-Atlantic Chapter (United States)—Jocelyn Lohse**

Jocelyn Lohse has competed at the ITCC once before. She has been climbing 2 ½ years. Her fastest footlock time is 19 seconds. Lohse is from Richmond, Virginia, and has been a climber with True Timber Tree Service for 2 years. She was also a recreational tree climbing instructor with Riverside Outfitters for 2 ½ years. In addition to climbing, Lohse also enjoys sailing and kayaking.

### **Minnesota Chapter (United States)—Kris Frederickson**

Kris Frederickson of Waconia, Minnesota, has been climbing and competing for 4 years at the chapter level and is returning for her third ITCC this year. She has worked as a production arborist and crew foreman for six years at Northeast Tree in Minneapolis. Frederickson has an A.A.S. in Business Administration and is an ISA Certified Tree Worker. In her free time, she enjoys spending time with partner, Darcie, playing softball, watching movies, and relaxing on her boat.

### **New England Chapter (United States)—Bear LeVangie**

Bear LeVangie is returning to the ITCC for a third time. LeVangie earned a Bachelor's of Science in Forestry & Natural Resource Conservation from the University of Montana-Missoula before going on to work in arboriculture. Currently, she lives in Barre, Massachusetts, and she is a climber for the USDA specializing in the Asian Long-Horned Beetle. Climbing for 8 years and competing for 7, LeVangie's fastest footlock time is 24 seconds. She has been active in her ISA Chapter, acting as a representative and committee member in various capacities. In her free time, LeVangie enjoys hiking, fishing, motorcycles, cooking, and spending time with friends.

### **New Zealand Chapter—Nicala Ward-Allen**

Competing in her third international competition is Nicala Ward-Allen of Eltham, New Zealand. Ward-Allen has been climbing for 9 years, and her fastest footlock time is 13.26 seconds. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Materials and Process Engineering and works as an arborist through her own company, Taranaki Tree Services Limited. Married to husband Neal for the past 9 years, Ward-Allen has taken her love of climbing to the next level by volunteering with set-up and judging at several regional competitions. When not climbing, she is often busy playing rugby for the Stratford Women's XV.

### **Ontario Chapter (Canada)—Krista Strating**

Returning for the third time in the ITCC is Krista Strating from Hamilton, Ontario. Strating has a degree in Horticulture and has completed an Arboriculture apprenticeship. She is also an ISA Certified Tree Worker. Strating worked in landscaping for eight years before spending the last four as an arborist with Arborwood Tree Service based out of Caistor Center. She has been climbing for 4 years, and her fastest footlock time is 27 seconds. In her free time, she enjoys soccer, baseball, biking, camping, and rock climbing.

### **Pacific-Northwest Chapter (US/Canada)—Susan Wright**

Susan Wright of Victoria, British Columbia, is competing in the ITCC for the third time and was the 2011 recipient of the ITCC Spirit of the Competition Award. She has been climbing for 4 years. Wright works as a horticulturist at The Butchart Gardens and specializes in container gardening design. For the past 3 years, she has also worked part-time on the in-house arborist crew. She was a Journeyman Landscape Horticulturist from Kwantlen College in 2005 and is an ISA Certified Arborist. When she is not working or volunteering, Wright pursues many interests, including ecology and photography.

### **Prairie Chapter (Canada)—Emily Michaelson**

Emily Michaelson is making her second appearance at the ITCC this year. Having been climbing for only 2 years, Michaelson has been a tree worker for three years with Parkland Tree Care. She enjoys growing and cooking food in her free time.

### **Quebec Chapter (Canada)—Marilou Dussault**

This is the fifth international competition for Marilou Dussault of Montreal, and she was the 2011 North American Tree Climbing women's champion. Dussault has been climbing for eight years and has a fastest time of 20.21 seconds in the 40' footlock. Dussault holds a professional diploma in Arboriculture and Tree Pruning and has been employed as a tree climber by the City of Montreal for the past 6 years. She has a 3-year old son, Liam, and enjoys hockey, skateboarding, snowboarding, and spending time with her dog.

### **Southern Chapter (United States)—Rebecca Maynard Bishop**

Rebecca, from Woodstock, Georgia, is making her ITCC debut this year. In addition to being an ISA Certified Arborist, Bishop is a GGIA Certified Nursery Person Plant Professional and has earned an Associate's Degree in Horticulture. She has worked in the green industry since 1998 in a variety of positions and most recently has been a branch manager for Downey Trees, Inc., for the past 1 ½ years. Having been climbing for only one year, Bishop's fastest footlock time is 37 seconds. She has one daughter, Riley Mae, 4, and enjoys hiking, camping, and water sports.

### **Sweden Chapter—Veronika Ericsson**

Veronika Ericsson is competing in her third international competition. She has been involved with tree work for the past 4 years and is a self-employed contract climber as well as still working as a seaman. Ericsson is qualified as a European Tree Worker and her fastest footlock time around 16 seconds.

### **United Kingdom/Ireland Chapter—Josephine Hedger**

2008 ITCC Women's World Champion

This past champion is competing in her fifth international competition. Hedger has been climbing for 10 years, and her fastest footlock time is 15.2 seconds. She runs her own company, Arbor Venture Tree Care, working as both a climber and an instructor, since 2005. Hedger also volunteers and helps organize the United Kingdom/Ireland Chapter TCC. She enjoys gardening, playing drums, mountain biking, and rock climbing.

### **Western Chapter (United States)—Rhonda Wood**

This will be the fourth ITCC for Rhonda Wood. Wood studied at Humboldt State University and the Mt. San Antonio College Horticulture Program. After an internship with Disney, the Santa Ana, California, resident has held a variety of roles there over the past 15 years—gardener, topiary engineer, arborist, manager, and planner. She has also volunteered in different capacities for her local ISA Chapter: currently as director on the Western Chapter Board of Directors and as a Western Chapter Certified Tree Worker Judge, and as Western Chapter Women in Arboriculture Chair in the past. Wood has been climbing for 13 years, but only competing for 6. Her fastest footlock time is 29 seconds. She is married to Humberto and has a son, Isaac, 17. Wood says that climbing is her hobby, and whether it's for competition, training, or a few cat rescues, she likes to climb.

### **Wisconsin Chapter (United States)—Shelly Wollerman**

Shelly Wollerman is competing in her second ITCC this year. She worked in the landscape industry for 10 years before becoming an ISA Certified Arborist and starting work for Steven R. Bassett, Inc., where she is foreman of a tree crew. The Fitchburg, Wisconsin, resident earned a Bachelors in Landscape and Design at the University of Wisconsin—River Falls. Wollerman has been climbing for 2 ½ years, and her fastest footlock time is 36 seconds. She volunteers with climbing classes at University of Wisconsin—Stevens Point, and enjoys working out, traveling, and spending time with friends.

## **MEN'S DIVISION CONTESTANTS**

### **2011 ITCC Returning Men's World Champion New Zealand Chapter—Scott Forrest**

Scott Forrest is the returning champion for the men's division this year, making his fifth appearance at the ITCC. Currently working and living in Australia, Forrest is a self-employed contract climber with 14 years of experience in the tree care industry. He has been a climber for 13 years, competing for 10, and his fastest footlock time is 15.10 seconds. Forrest is a Level 4 Certified Arborist in New Zealand, and in his free time, he enjoys traveling, climbing, and walking.

### **2012 Asia-Pacific Champion New Zealand Chapter—James Kilpatrick**

James Kilpatrick is returning to the ITCC for the second time this year. He has been climbing for 8 years, competing for 6, and his fastest footlock time is 13.65 seconds. Kilpatrick is from Tauranga, New Zealand, and he holds a Diploma in Arboriculture from Waikato Institute of Technology. Since 2007, he has been a self-employed contract climber traveling the world. Kilpatrick has also worked as a part-time tutor at the Waikato Institute of Technology. He has volunteered as a technician and judge at past tree climbing events, and his other interests include 4x4 driving, motocross, snowboarding, wake boarding, and hunting.

### **2012 European Champion Sweden Chapter—Johan Gustavsson**

Johan Gustavsson, from Jörlanda, Sweden, competes in his sixth ITCC this year. Gustavsson has been climbing for 7 years, and his fastest footlock time is 14.23 seconds. He is an ISA Certified Arborist and Certified Tree Worker who got his start as a climbing arborist 7 years ago when he helped with damage from a storm that passed through Sweden. Gustavsson has earned a Foundation Degree in Arboriculture and holds a NPTC certificate. He has been with partner Lisa for 9 years, and in his free time, he enjoys motocross, windsurfing, and mountain biking.

### **Atlantic Chapter (Canada)—Trevor Burton**

Trevor Burton is returning to the ITCC for the fifth time this year. Burton has been climbing for 15 years, and his fastest 50' footlock time is 18 seconds. Burton lives in Aylesford, Nova Scotia. He went through an arborist program in an agricultural college and went on to gain experience in both utility and

residential tree care. Burton has had his own company, Burton's Towering Tree Services, for three years, and he also volunteers for the Atlantic Chapter through work days and trade shows. He has been married to Heather for 12 years and they have two daughters, Cara and Lily. Burton loves doing anything active with his children, in addition to fishing, hunting, canoeing, gardening, and exploring.

### **Australia Chapter—Joe Harris**

This is the second ITCC for Joe Harris of Burwood, Victoria. Having been climbing for 8 years and competing for 2, his fastest footlock time is 14.64 seconds. Harris is a self-employed contract climber and has volunteered as vice-president of the Victorian Tree Industry Organization.

### **Austria Chapter—Wilhelm Matzer**

Wilhelm Matzer is making his ITCC debut this year. Matzer is a self-employed ISA Certified Arborist and European Tree Technician in Feldkirchen in Kärnten, Austria. He has been climbing for 11 years, competing for 4, and his fastest footlock time is 16.4 seconds. Matzer is married to Sonja, and they have two children, Luis, 5, and Marie, 3.

### **Belgian Arborist Association (Belgium)—Erwin Vermuyten**

Erwin Vermuyten is competing in his third ITCC. He has been climbing for 11 years and competing for 8. Vermuyten's fastest footlock time is 19 seconds. Having studied 2 years of arboriculture in evening school in Belgium, he is now self-employed as a contract climber working in Belgium, The Netherlands, and Germany. For the past four years, Vermuyten has also been teaching climbing lessons. In addition to this work, he also volunteers with the BAA, including the organization of the veteran championship every two years. In his free time, Vermuyten enjoys working in his cabin in the forest; playing and having fun with his dog, Redwood, who is always with him on his jobs; and learning to breathe and have feelings with the trees.

### **Denmark Chapter—Thomas Hegner**

Thomas Hegner is returning for his second ITCC. Having been climbing for 6 years, his fastest footlock time is 17.56 seconds. Hegner has a background as both a computer programmer and a forestry worker, and he spent 4 years at tree care companies in Denmark and Sweden before starting his own company 2 years ago. Now living in Hornbæk, Denmark, he is married to Sanne and they have three children, Marcus, 6, Cecilie, 4, and Julius, 2. When not working, Hegner enjoys Alpine skiing, rock climbing, and spending time with his family.

### **Florida Chapter (United States)—Colin Kelly**

This is the second ITCC for Colin Kelly of Longwood, Florida. Kelly has been climbing for 7 years, and his fastest footlock time is 20 seconds. With over 10 years of experience in the tree care industry, Kelly is now foreman at Valley Crest Tree Care Services. He says that he attends “as many ISA training functions” as he can. Kelly has been a volunteer several times at tree pruning sessions around Florida as well as both a judge and a tech at International Geezers Climbing Competition. He is partnered with Tiffani and enjoys salt water fishing, firearms training, helping fellow arborists with tree climbing techniques, and spending time with friends and family.

### **Germany Chapter—Bernd “Beddes” Strasser**

1999, 2000, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2006, 2007, and 2008 ITCC  
Men’s World Champion

With more world championship titles than any other competitor in the ITCC, Bernd Strasser returns from Germany once more to the international competition. Strasser has been a self-employed climbing arborist for 23 years. Strasser and his wife Susanne are parents to Silas, 19; and Elin, 14-months. In his free time, he loves to be with his family and be outdoors.

### **ISA Hong Kong/China— Kai Wang Lee**

This is the second ITCC for Kai Wang Lee. Lee has been climbing for 6 years and competing for 3. His fastest footlock time is 15.26 seconds. Lee has been employed as a tree worker for 2 years with Climbing Brother Arboricultural, Ltd. He is an ISA Certified Tree Worker (CTW) himself as well as a volunteer for administrating the CTW exam. In his free time, Lee enjoys spending time with family and traveling.

### **Illinois Chapter (United States)—Beau Nagan**

Beau Nagan of Westchester, Illinois, is making his ITCC debut this year. Nagan has been climbing for 13 years and competing for 5. His fastest footlock time is 16.72 seconds. Nagan earned two separate Associate’s Degrees from Joliet Junior College, one in Landscape Management and one in Turf Management. He also holds a Bachelor’s Degree from Western Illinois University in Urban Forest Management. Nagan has been working with trees since his youth with his father’s landscaping, tree, and lawn care service. He also gained experience as a production climber and a vegetation management consultant before going on to his current position as an arborist at The Morton Arboretum 1 year ago. Nagan and his wife, Jessica, have a daughter, Ramona, 2. When not working or spending time with his family, Nagan enjoys running, recreational climbing, singing and playing harmonica and guitar, and working on side jobs with his father.



### **Indiana Chapter (United States)—Jeff Clark**

This is the first ITCC for Jeff Clark of Romney, Indiana. Clark has been climbing for 10 years, competing for 9, and his fastest footlock time is 20 seconds. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Forestry from Purdue University, where he has been employed as an arborist for the past 3 years. Before that, Clark spent 7 years in commercial arboriculture. In addition to working for the grounds department, he also has 3 years of experience as a teaching assistant in arboriculture at Purdue. Clark is married to Sarah, and they have two children, Iris, 7, and Lanie, 5. In his free time, he enjoys spending time with his family, music, and gardening.

### **Italy Chapter—Giovanni Ugo**

Representing Italy for the sixth time at the ITCC is Giovanni Ugo. Ugo has been climbing for the past 17 years, and his fastest 50' footlock time is 17.2 seconds. He is a six-time Italian champion, was the Portuguese champion in 2007, and his best finish in the ETCC was first place in 2011. He is a Certified European Treeworker and a supervisor for EAC certification. He has worked as an arborist for 17 years, and is an ISA Certified Arborist. Ugo does tree climbing, consulting, and big tree transplants. Since 2004, he has been a tree climbing instructor at Scuola Agraria del Parco di Monza (Mb)-Italy. Ugo and his wife, Carla, have four children, Greta, 6, Melissa, 5, Sante, 3, and Maia, 1. He enjoys spending time with his family, rock climbing, and skiing.

### **Japan Arborist Association—Naohiro Ujita**

Naohiro Ujita of Nagano, Japan will be making his first ITCC appearance. Ujita is involved in the Japan Arborist Association and Tree Climbing Japan. He works for the city of Ina, Nagano to promote public corporation. Ujita is an ISA Certified Tree Worker and is married to Saiko.

### **Kentucky Chapter (United States)—Cory Petry**

Cory Petry has competed in the ITCC once before. Having earned his Bachelors in Sociology from the University of Kentucky, Petry went on to be a production climber before starting the business he co-owns, Limbwalker Tree Service in Louisville, Kentucky, 8 years ago. He has been climbing for 12 years total and competing for five. His fastest footlock time is 23 seconds. Petry is married to Jen, and they have two children, June, 4, and Leif, 3 months. In addition to volunteering as chair for three years at the Kentucky Tree Climbing Competition, in his free time, Petry enjoys gardening, music, yoga, and watching his children grow and learn.

### **KPB Dutch Chapter (The Netherlands)—Walter Hak**

Walter Hak of Noordeloos is here for his fourth ITCC. Hak has been climbing for 14 years, and his fastest footlock time is 16.8 seconds. He has been self-employed as a tree climber with his company, Dendro Cura, for the past 12 years. When he isn't climbing, he enjoys fly fishing for pike.

### **Michigan Chapter (United States)—Kevin Bingham**

Kevin Bingham from Detroit has been competing since 2002 and returns for his third ITCC. He is the owner of Singing Tree, LLC and is an ISA Certified Arborist. Bingham has a degree in environmental studies and considers being able to play in the trees for work is a blessing. He likes to keep moving, and in his spare time enjoys gardening and riding his bike.

### **Mid-Atlantic Chapter (United States)—James Earhart**

This is the third international competition for James Earhart of Hustle, Virginia and he is the 2010 recipient of the ITCC Spirit of the Competitor Award. Earhart, an ISA Certified Arborist, has been climbing for 13 years, and his fastest footlock time is 15.20 seconds. He put on his first harness and rope at age 14 and made his first dollar at climbing half a year later. He was foreman at age 17 for Fredericksburg Tree Care, has worked for AAA Tree and Bartlett Tree Experts, but has now owned his own company, Arbor Care for 3 years. Earhart has been married to wife Stephanie for 6 years and they have a 1-year-old daughter Abigail. He likes to climb big trees, and enjoys hunting, fishing, woodworking, playing bluegrass music, and playing softball.

### **Midwestern Chapter (United States)—Jerel Converse**

Jerel Converse of Omaha, Nebraska, is making his ITCC debut this year. He has been climbing for 15 years and competing for 12. His fastest footlock time is 26 seconds. Converse has been employed at Terry Hughes Tree Service since 1997, where he works as a foreman. He has spent time teaching pruning and climbing classes for the Nebraska Arborists Association. Converse and his wife, Amber, have three children, Gage, 15, Laine, 12, and Keegan, 7. In his free time, Converse enjoys coaching his sons in sports, splicing, camping, hunting, and fishing.

### **Minnesota Chapter (United States)—Taylor Hamel**

Taylor Hamel of St. Paul, Minnesota, is competing in the ITCC for the second time. He has been climbing for 10 years, competing for 6, and his fastest 50' footlock time is 17.6 seconds. An ISA Certified Arborist, Hamel has traveled throughout the United States, United Kingdom, and Europe as a contract climber and speaker at workshops, demos, courses, and trade shows. He continues to work

as a contract climber and arboricultural consultant, providing end-user product support and video user's guides for DMM, Teufelberger, New England Ropes, and Treemagineers. He has volunteered for his chapter through the Program & Education and Conference Committees and as Summer Climbing Workshop chair. Hamel has been with his partner, Margeaux, for 6 years, and he enjoys climbing trees, running, musky fishing, and reading British science fiction.

#### **New England Chapter (United States)—Justin Donahue**

This is the sixth ITCC for Justin Donahue. A contract climber from Pembroke, Massachusetts, Donahue has been climbing for 20 years and competing for 12. His fastest footlock time is 17 seconds. Donahue has a background in both conservation and horticulture and has a hoisting engineer's license. He has volunteered at past climbing competitions and has 20 years of experience in the tree care industry. Donahue is married to JoAnna and has five children, Elisha, 10, Daisy, 9, Jenelle, 7, Daniel, 3, and Lucas, 1. In his free time, Donahue enjoys riding motorcycles, watching sports, landscaping his yard, and hiking with his son Daniel.

#### **New Jersey Chapter (United States)—Rory MacInnis**

Rory MacInnis is competing in his first ITCC this year. From Manahawkin, New Jersey, MacInnis has been climbing for 9 years and competing for 6. After learning the ropes of climbing and tree care working at Aspen Tree Expert Company with multiple-time ITCC champion Mark Chisholm, MacInnis has gone on to own and operate his own business, Pine Barrens Tree, LLC. He studied urban forest management at Paul Smith's College and is a New Jersey Licensed Tree Expert. MacInnis has volunteered at many New Jersey Chapter work days and in his free time, he enjoys trail running, obstacle and endurance races, metal fabrication, playing with his dog, and hiking with his fiancée, Lauren.

#### **New York Chapter (United States)—Jeremy Passinault**

This is the first ITCC for Jeremy Passinault. A climbing foreman for the past 7 years at Birchcrest Tree, this resident of Hamlin, New York, has been climbing for 18 years and competing for 14. His fastest footlock time is 25 seconds. Before joining Birchcrest, Passinault earned an Associate Degree from Paul Smith's College and worked as a groundman with Davey Tree and was vice-president at Birch Knoll for 10 years. Passinault has been married to Jaime for 13 years, and they have one child, Easton, 6.

### **New Zealand Chapter—Ross Kite**

Ross Kite of Hamilton, New Zealand, is a newcomer to the ITCC this year. However, he has shown strong finishes in past regional events in his nine years of climbing and competing. Always having a love of the outdoors, Kite studied arboriculture at the Waikato Institute of Technology and has also just finished his Cert 4 in Business Management. Currently, he has his own business, Arborkite Professional Tree Services. He has expanded his experience by traveling and working in England, Germany, Sweden, Norway, and Australia. Kite is an ongoing arboriculture camp volunteer and enjoys bushwalking, habitat creation, camping, fishing, and tree climbing. He has been with his partner, Bernadine, for four years.

### **Norway Chapter—Olve Lundetrae**

Olve Lundetrae is making his seventh appearance at the ITCC. Lundetrae lives in Oslo, Norway, and has been employed by ISS Facility Services AS for 7 years. He has been climbing for 12 years, competing for 10, and his fastest footlock time is 24 seconds. Lundetrae is a member of the Norwegian Climbing Committee and has been a sensor at the European Tree Worker Exam for several years. He and his wife have two children.

### **Ohio Chapter (United States)—Jacob Sauer**

Jacob Sauer of Columbus, Ohio, is making his ITCC debut this year. He has been climbing for 8 years and only competing for a few months. Sauer has owned his own tree care service for 6 years, and before that he worked as a climber in both commercial and municipal settings, as well as a member of a Trail Crew and a Firefighter for the U.S. Forest Service. He has volunteered at tree climbing competitions in the past. Sauer is married to Bess and has two children, Kayla, 5, and Guthrie, 1 ½. He enjoys rock climbing, backpacking, traveling, working as a mechanic, and spending time with his family.

### **Ontario Chapter (Canada)—Sean Hoondert**

Sean Hoondert is competing in his second ITCC this year. He studied urban arboriculture at Sir Sandford Fleming College and has been an arborist for the City of Guelph, Ontario, for the past 4 ½ years. Hoondert has been climbing for 10 years, and his fastest footlock time is 16.5 seconds. Married to wife, Meggan, he has two children, Hayden, 2, and Aurelia, 8 months. In his free time, Hoondert likes fishing and camping.

### **Pacific Northwest Chapter (US/Canada)—Robert Bundy**

Robert Bundy of Portland, Oregon, is making his ITCC debut this year. He has been climbing for 6 years and competing for 5. His fastest footlock time is 16.5 seconds. Bundy has an Associate's Degree and has worked at Peacock Tree Preservation as an

arborist for 6 years. He also has volunteered for his ISA Chapter as a conference worker. Bundy is married to April and enjoys rock climbing in his free time.

### **Penn-Del Chapter (United States)—Peter Fixler**

Peter Fixler of Malvern, Pennsylvania, is a newcomer to the ITCC. After earning his Bachelor of Science in Biology from Coastal Carolina University, Fixler worked in a variety of tree care positions before starting work as a contract climber 4 years ago with his own company, Fix-A-Tree, Inc. He has been climbing for 10 years, and his fastest footlock time is 19 seconds. Fixler is active in his chapter, serving as a chair of their Arbor Day Committee for the past 7 years. He and his wife, Karen, have two children, Paisley, 5, and Isla, 2. In his free time, Fixler enjoys surfing, cooking, and knife sharpening.

### **Prairie Chapter (Canada)—Jesse Antonation**

Jesse Antonation of Winnipeg, Manitoba, has been climbing for 12 years. That's also how long he has been an ISA Certified Arborist. Antonation is the owner of Trilogy Tree Services. His wife, Carla, is also an ISA Certified Arborist. In his free time, Antonation enjoys woodworking, woodturning, fishing, hunting, and camping.

### **Quebec Chapter (Canada)—Leilak Anderson**

Coming to the ITCC for the third time is Leilak Anderson of La Pêche, Quebec. He has been climbing for 9 years and his fastest footlock climb is 18 seconds. Anderson has a degree in business administration and is an ISA Certified Arborist involved in running a family business, Man with the Axe. In his free time, he enjoys hockey and raft building.

### **Rocky Mountain Chapter (United States)—Luke Glines**

Luke Glines is competing in his fifth ITCC. From Greeley, Colorado, this ISA Certified Arborist runs his own business, Glines, Inc. He has been climbing for 15 years and is an ISA Certified Tree Worker, and his fastest footlock time is 16 seconds. Starting off his career with a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and a Masters in Theology, Glines began tree work in line clearance and quickly decided to start his own business. He enjoys spending time with his 18 year old daughter, Hannah, reading, thinking deeply about life's mysteries, and praising God.

### **Southern Chapter (United States)—Cormac Nagan**

Cormac Nagan comes to the ITCC from Raleigh, North Carolina for the second time. He has been climbing for 10 years, and his fastest footlock time is 17 seconds. Having earned a Bachelor of Science in Urban Forest Management from Western Illinois University, he

started his career as an assistant to the campus arborist there. Nagan spent two years with Bartlett Tree Experts and has gone on to be self-employed for the past four years as the owner of Aerial Innovation Tree Care and Preservation in Raleigh. He is an ISA Certified Arborist. He has been with partner, Erica, for 10 years, and in his free time, enjoys splicing rope, climbing, gardening, and travel.

### **Sweden Chapter—Simon Bjorkstrom**

Simon Bjorkstrom of Trollhattan, Sweden is employed by Broussard Arborist. He is a member of the ISA and the Swedish Chapter.

### **Swiss Arborist Association(Switzerland)—Gregor Hansch**

This is the second ITCC for Gregor Hansch of Basel, Switzerland. He has been climbing for 10 years, and his fastest footlock time is 16 seconds. Hansch works as an arborist and is partnered with Tanja. In his free time, he enjoys fishing, hiking, camping, climbing, music, and spending time with friends.

### **Texas Chapter (United States)—Miguel Pastenes**

Miguel Pastenes of Wylie, Texas, is returning to the ITCC for the fifth time. Over the past 10 years with Arborological Services, Inc., he has made his way from groundman to climber to crew foreman. Having been climbing for 10 years, Pastenes has been competing for 9, and his fastest footlock time is 14.24 seconds.

### **United Kingdom/Ireland Chapter—Alistair Magee**

Alistair Magee of the UK is a self-employed arborist and makes his first appearance at the International Tree Climbing Championship.

### **Utah Chapter (United States)—Mark Malmstrom**

Mark Malmstrom is competing in his third ITCC this year. Malmstrom lives in Logan, Utah, and has owned Total Tree Care for 12 years. He has been climbing for 18 years and competing for 12. His fastest footlock time is 25 seconds. Malmstrom has a Bachelor's degree in Landscape Architecture and also earned an Associate's of Applied Science in Ornamental Horticulture from Utah State University. Currently, he is serving as a board member of the Utah ISA Chapter and as chair of the professional development committee. Malmstrom and his wife, Candace, have four children, Logan, 13, Maren, 10, Sam, 6, and Caroline, 2. In his free time, Malmstrom enjoys tree climbing, skiing, hiking, woodworking, cycling, and gardening.

### **Western (United States)—Jared Abrojena**

#### **2009 ITCC Men's World Champion**

Past Men's Champion, Jared Abrojena, returns to the ITCC for his eighth year. Abrojena, from Antioch, California, has been climbing for 22 years. His fastest footlock is 14.9 seconds. Abrojena is an ISA Certified Arborist, and he has worked for his family's business, Evergreen Tree Care, since he graduated high school. He is currently a field supervisor and climber. He also volunteers with the Western Chapter of ISA. Abrojena is married to Kati, and they have two children, Austin, 5, and Kiley, 3. When he's not spending time with his family, he enjoys camping, boating, working out, dirt bike riding with his son, and recreational tree climbing.

### **Wisconsin Chapter (United States)—Joe House**

Joe House has been climbing for 18 years, and this is his sixth ITCC. House is an ISA Certified Arborist living in Madison, Wisconsin, where he recently started his own tree care business, Tree House Arbor Science. He earned a Bachelor of Science in Forestry from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and has been a practicing arborist for 21 years, spending some time working in Denver and New York. House also volunteers as an Illinois Climbing Competition judge. He and wife Lori have three children, Alice, 11, Jackie, 9, and Charlie, 7. House enjoys being a parent, and spends his free time sailing, fishing, and snorkeling.