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## VNLA - Professional of the Year 2008 - Koci

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*Formerly VNLA Nurseryman of the Year*



Joel Koci, Arborcare Professional Tree Service, Rockville, VA was unanimously selected as the 2008 VNLA Professional of the Year, formerly the: "VNLA Nurseryman of the Year". The award was presented at the 2009 VNLA Annual Breakfast Meeting in Baltimore on January 8, 2009.

< [Presented by Fred Duis (l) 2007 recipient to Joel Koci]

The nominator of Joel stated: "My interest perked up this year when it was mentioned that the "Virginia Nurseryman of the Year" did not necessarily have to be a nursery person, but someone who has made an impact on the green industry. I think it would be great if someone from the tree sector of the industry could win this year, and I cannot think of a better representative than my husband, Joel Koci."

**Joel obtained a B.S. in Horticulture from Virginia Tech in 1975**

and diligently traveled to the Virginia Tech Research Station in Virginia Beach over the course of several years for his M.S. in Horticulture in 1999. He spent as much time on the road as in the classroom!

**He started his company, Arborcare Professional Tree Service, Inc.** in 1982, and it has operated successfully ever since. His customers know that he handles their job as if he was doing it for himself. He has many loyal and satisfied customers.

Joel has been an active (and charter) member of the International Society of Arborists since 1982 and represents the group in booths throughout each year and is an active proctor of the Certified Arborist exam (of course of which he is one). Joel completed the strenuous academy program with the American Society of Consulting Arborists (ASCA) in 2004 and stays abreast of current standards and laws by attending their conferences.

He is on the Virginia Green Industry Council Membership Committee and has been very supportive of the VGIC for many years. He also serves on the Henrico County Extension Leadership Council.

**Joel imparts his love of trees to the many students** he has come into contact with. He has taught at J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College (Horticulture Program) and the University of Richmond School of Continuing Studies.

He shows his enthusiasm for the green industry in general by giving lectures (more than once) at the Central Virginia Nursery & Landscape Association Short Course and the Maymont Flower & Garden Show. He has taught Tree Pruning for several years for the CVNLA Certified Horticulturist Course.

All the master gardeners in the Richmond area know him from teaching them about his love of trees in their program. He has taught in James City County, Chesterfield, Hanover, Henrico, Goochland/Powhatan, etc. In fact, that is where I met him about 20 years ago. He was my teacher for Tree Pruning in my Hanover Master Gardener class. He impressed me even then with his passion for what he does. It truly does come across in his teaching and people consistently remark on it.

**Even though Joel has certainly been around a good while, he stays abreast of current standards and upcoming trends.** He attends classes, conferences, and reads about innovative findings. He definitely is on the "cutting edge" of what is going on in the industry; and not just about trees. He is well versed on many topics regarding the green industry.

**This is just a sampling of information about the marks Joel has made on the industry.**

**Joel is always there when there is a chance to "save a tree"**, but conversely, he knows when it is time to take out a tree due to a hazard situation. In the Richmond area, instead of calling the "Ghostbusters" Joel is called on. He is constantly quoted in our Richmond Times Dispatch and interviewed on T.V. He is Richmond's resident "tree expert." He was quoted several times in the recent book written by Nancy Hugo and Jeff Kirwan, "Remarkable Trees of Virginia." He was a contributor to Bonnie Appleton's "Horticulture Book of Lists."

I could go on and on regarding Joel's contributions, but I know this is getting lengthy. To sum it up I would say, "Joel is a champion of trees" and a representative of the tree (and green) industry's finest."

