



## Public Relations/Media Talking Points

- Saluting Branches is a united industry-wide Arboriculture initiative to express our appreciation and gratitude for the sacrifices and services our military forces have provided to our nation.
- Our thanks to the National Department of Veteran Affairs and the V.A. District Agronomists for their **partnership** in helping to bring this day into existence.
- The Saluting Branches National Day of Service was the brainchild of Rainbow Treecare in Minneapolis, Minnesota about 4 years ago when we were looking for a way to give back to the brave troops who have sacrificed so much. We decided to do what we do best- provide exceptional tree care – to keep our veterans cemeteries safe, beautiful places for all those who visit. The Day of Service was swiftly embraced by tree care companies, associations and utilities throughout the nation.
- Since the first day of Service Saluting Branches has brought together over 2600 arborist and tree care professionals at 48 veteran cemetery sites.
- On this one day tree care professionals will provide volunteer services that include pruning, tree and stump removals, tree health evaluations, insect and disease treatments, and tree mapping. The expert volunteers will donate over 4000 hours of tree care services, which translate into more than \$1,000,000 (one million dollars) worth of donations to our veteran cemeteries!
- We are honored to be able to do this for our troops and wish to thank all of our volunteers and sponsors for helping to make this day possible.

### TIPS when/if talking to the media:

- Any time you refer to the Dept. of Veteran Affairs, please use the word **partnership only** (*do not use "sponsored"*).
- Be aware of what will show up in the background of any filming: we are not allowed to show names on headstones, funeral or memorial services in process, or people not involved in the event (without permission). The Saluting Branches banner or Cemetery sign, volunteers working, smiling laughing would be a great background.
- Please highlight that this is a tree care industry event which would not be possible without the support of everyone involved.
- Portray the professionalism and expertise in our industry, and the importance of trees.
- Highlight any veterans who may be helping at your site.
- Follow any guidelines given to you by the Cemetery Director or caretaker.
- Be natural and remember to avoid saying anything that could have a negative context (avoid any political comments). The media will cut and edit until what you said is almost unrecognizable. A ½ hour filming segment can be reduced to 10 seconds on air.