

# Jesse G Tree

## *Jesse Gonzalez Knows How to Keep Your Trees and Your Home Beautiful and Safe*

*By Jim Brumm*

**J**esse Gonzalez loves trees. He smiles when he speaks of them; his face lights up when he shares stories about trees he's known, trees he's climbed, and trees he's saved. The son of a fence maker, Jesse gained an early appreciation for wood, falling in love, as he put it, "with the feel, the touch, the grain, and the smell" of different types of wood, and by extension, the trees it came from.

After graduating from Santa Rosa High School, Jesse headed for the Lake Tahoe area to "become a professional snowboarder." He had a friend who worked for the United States Forest Service, and Jesse was intrigued by what appeared to be an exciting job. He applied to the Forest Service and was hired on to a 20-man crew, suppressing wildfires and creating fire breaks in the mountains. Living in Truckee, Jesse worked for two years with that crew, clearing trails, planting trees, and becoming certified in how to properly cut down "hazard trees."

Gaining experience and impressing his bosses, Jesse was transferred to a 20-man, elite firefighting team, known as the "Hot Shots." When fire broke out, the Hot Shots were typically the first to arrive in the most dangerous and difficult places, acting as a vanguard for the rest of the firefighting crews and equipment that followed. "That was probably the most exciting time in my life," said Jesse. "I was working with the roughest, bravest bunch of guys ever. We were given the most difficult jobs." Over three years Jesse, along with the rest of his team, fought fires in over 25 states around the country. Tested often, his knowledge of trees, fire, safety, and nature were honed in the most extreme conditions.

But even the Hot Shots weren't enough for Jesse. He applied for and was accepted into the California Smoke Jumpers, one of only a dozen to make the grade out of over 400 applicants. Over time, Jesse, swooping in low over dangerous fire conditions in custom-fitted DC3s, made 67

jumps directly into the heart of the worst mountain fires, his courage and skill, along with his team, helping to save thousands of acres of forest, and untold numbers of homes.

After a while Jesse decided he wanted to return to his beloved Sonoma County and settle down. He found a job at *Pacific Slope*, a tree service company that was glad to add his skills and experience to their mix. "I was an expert in

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'spur climbing' because of the smoke jumping," said Jesse. He laughed and said, "I had endured a *rigorous* tree climbing course." During his time with the forest service Jesse had earned a class "C" certification in tree cutting—the highest possible—making him qualified to trim or cut the very largest trees. Jesse worked hard, gaining experience in tree topping, cutting, trimming, and removal. He became known as one of their best, often climbing 100 feet or more to top the largest, most difficult trees.

In 2006, Jesse decided to take his love of trees, his skill, and experience, and launch his own tree service. Naming his company Jesse G Tree, he began offering a wide range of services to his new, happy clients, including pruning, removal, thinning, shaping, and, his specialty, hazard assessment. Because of his forest fire experience, Jesse offers something most other tree services don't: He specializes in what is called "defensible spacing," a form of landscaping that reduces brush and woody debris—the fuel that a fire loves—near homes and other structures to form a defensible space which helps greatly in reducing fire danger. Also known as "firescaping," it's beautiful landscaping with fire prevention in mind.

Jesse takes his time on each project before proceeding. "When I do my tree work, I do a lot of thinking before I touch



Jess Gonzalez is certified to work on even the largest trees

a tree," he said. "The goal is to minimize the effect on the surrounding landscaping as much as possible, while maximizing fire safety and aesthetics."

The law prohibits brush or woody debris build-up within 30 feet of a structure. Jesse pointed out that during a large fire, where there are multiple structures threatened, firefighters, dealing with limited resources, will often skip those homes that haven't done their part in defensible spacing in favor of those that have. Jesse knows the standards required to protect a home and beautify it at the same time.

"I love teaching my clients about their trees," said Jesse, smiling. "We walk their property and talk. I can point things out they hadn't considered. They come to cherish their trees that much more. Once I go through and clear the unsightly underbrush and trim up, they can see the real beauty that is on their property. Sometimes my clients end up installing lighting to accentuate the majestic views of their trees at night." He paused for a moment, then looked up and added, "I love walking away from a job well done; it feels good when I

can see that everything is safer and healthier because I was there."

Jesse G Tree uses the latest and best arborist equipment available. In addition, over the years Jesse has formed a trusted and vetted team of professionals, including arborists, stump grinders, and chippers. Whatever your needs, they can handle it. He and his crew are courteous and efficient, and love their work. In just a short time the list of Jesse's satisfied customers has grown by word-of-mouth. His knowledge, experience, good humor, skill, and love of trees have combined to make Jesse G Tree one of the premier tree service companies in Sonoma County.

Do you have many trees on your property? Are you sure they are as safe as possible? Give Jesse G Tree a call. He will treat your trees with tender, loving care, while ensuring that your family and your home are as safe as they can be.

*Jesse Gonzalez can be reached at  
707-217-0051*

