



ROB SCHUMACHER/THE REPUBLIC

John and Kim Eisenhower are owners of Integrity Tree Service Inc. in Scottsdale, the first company in the state to be nationally accredited in tree care.

## Tree service weathers downturn

By Patricia Bathurst  
SPECIAL FOR THE REPUBLIC

John Eisenhower's talent for climbing trees wasn't the sole reason the Scottsdale man and wife, Kim, opened Integrity Tree Service in 1989, but he said it was a factor.

Eisenhower had taken what he figured would be a temporary job with a local landscaping and tree company in the mid-1980s. He soon realized that he loved working with trees.

"We figured it was a good, but temporary, way to support a family," Kim said. "But it was hard, hard work at first."

John, schooled in gymnastics, climbed with professional tree climbers and has equipment designed just for tree climbing.

That's been an asset for the business, but a bigger boost has come from professional classes in arboriculture (tree studies).

The Eisenhowers gained accreditation in April 2006 as a tree-care company from the Tree Care Industry Association.

"There are only three companies in Arizona with the accreditation, and we were the first to earn it," John said.

He's on track to become a registered consulting arborist this year, a designation conferred by the American Society

### Integrity Tree Service

**Where:** 7949 E. Acoma Drive, Scottsdale.

**Employees:** Seven.

**Stats:** The business has grown 10 to 15 percent annually and now averages about \$730,000 in annual revenues, owners John and Kim Eisenhower say. Tree services generally start at about \$200.

**John:** "I once climbed a 300-foot redwood to the top. It was a once-in-a-lifetime experience. When the first branch is 150 feet off the ground, that's serious climbing."

**Information:** 602-788-0005 or [www.itreeservice.com](http://www.itreeservice.com).

of Consulting Arborists. While the business has grown steadily over the past 20 years, the region's economic stress hit the Eisenhowers.

"We had to cut staff," Kim said, "and are down to only seven (from 14) crew members." Still, both Eisenhowers are confident their business will thrive again.

The Eisenhowers are also confident they'll be able to maintain a business that is true to its name.

"Integrity holds us accountable to do things right in every way. It's how we run our business." John said.