



PHOTO/SHARON KEY

Musselman's Lake resident Jennifer Carroll works a tree in London's Springbank Park on her way to winning the 2012 Ontario championship earlier this month.

# Fast climb to top for Ontario's best tree-climber

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**T**hey scurry up trees with cat-like speed and agility and bound from limb to limb with the ease and confidence of Tarzan.

These are not superheroes stalking criminals, but professional tree climbers.

Once a year arborists get to show off their skills and compete against each other to find out who does it the fastest and best in the Ontario Tree Climbing Championships.

This year's competition took place Sept. 15 in London's Springbank Park.

The 2012 female winner is Musselman's Lake resident Jennifer Carroll, who will now represent Canada in the International Tree Climbing Championship competition being held in Toronto next year.

"For her to do this as an apprentice as opposed to fully graduated (arborist) is pretty amazing," said Mike Watson, another lake resident and co-owner of Scarborough-based Kelly Tree Care, where Ms

**'I'm a competitive person. So I don't want to look bad. ... Once you get the adrenaline going, you just kick yourself in the butt and get up there.'**

*Jennifer Carroll,  
provincial tree-climbing champ*

Carroll happens to work.

This is the second year Ms Carroll, 23, has entered the competition. Last year, she finished second in the aerial rescue event.

She placed second again in that event this year. But Ms Carroll also finished high enough in the other preliminary events of throwball, belayed speed climb, static footlock and work climb to move onto the head-to-head masters competition, where she was climbing for a spot at the international competition.

"My goal was more or less to make it up

to the top of the footlock and not get disqualified from anything. I did a lot better than expected," Ms Carroll said.

"I gave it my all, got kind of lucky," she said.

"I'm a competitive person. So I don't want to look bad. ... Once you get the adrenaline going, you just kick yourself in the butt and get up there," she said.

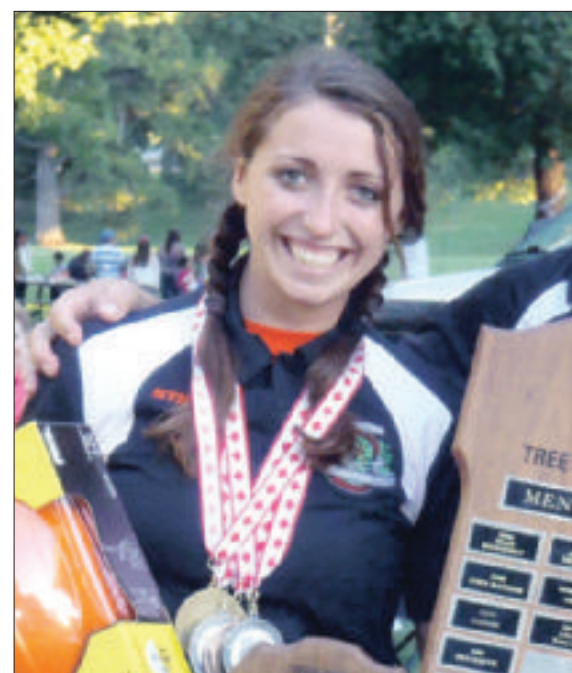
The work climb, which consists of belaying down a tree to target stations located out on limbs, was Ms Carroll's favourite event, while the aerial rescue of a 200-pound dummy was "nerve wracking".

Ms Carroll hasn't set any goals for the international competition, other than to "do my best".

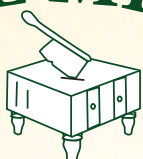
Tree climbing is nothing new to Ms Carroll who admitted she was the neighbourhood cat rescuer growing up.

Ms Carroll is currently completing her arboriculture apprenticeship at Humber College. Eventually, she wants to get into conservation work.

"I like everything about the environment," she said.



Jennifer Carroll with her championship hardware.

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